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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1. 1. Location and accessibility

The study area represents the central part of the northern Eastern Desert, occupying the area between the northern scarps of the El Galala El Bhariya plateau to the southern scarp of Gabal Ataqa to the north. It is bounded by Lat. $29^{\circ} 30' - 30^{\circ} 00' N$ and Long. $32^{\circ} 00' - 32^{\circ} 30' E$.

In the northern Eastern Desert, two main paved roads exist and are oriented nearly E-W with some deviations. These roads, from north to south are the Cairo – Suez and the Maadi – Sukhna. The Maadi - Sukhna road connects the Suez - Sukhna paved road along the Gulf of Suez coast.

At the southern part of the study area, there is also a desert track from Helwan through Wadi Garawi, Wadi El- Sheikh, Wadi El – Shuna, then Wadi Ghoweiba, to Ghubet El – Boos on the western side of the Gulf of Suez.

The main mountains in the study area are: Gabal Ataqa, Gabal Kahalyia, Gabal Abou Treifiya, Gabal Akheider and El Galala El Bhariya plateau. The main wadis in the study area downstream into the coastal plain and the Gulf of Suez, these are from north to south, Wadi Hagoul, Wadi Beda, Wadi Akheider, Wadi Hammath and Wadi Ghoweiba (Fig. 1).