



Lebanon Eco Movement

الحركة البيئية اللبنانية - علم وخبر 1236

Beirut, 14th of August 2020

Dear Mr. Kumar Jha,
Regional Director of the Mashreq Department at the World Bank,

Hope this email finds you well.

Lebanon Eco Movement had participated last Wednesday in the Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment meeting organized by the World Bank in collaboration with donors, including the European Union and United Nations.

However, Lebanon Eco Movement is surprised that the World Bank is still pushing the ministries to proceed with Bisri dam project knowing that the World Bank suggested to redirect the budget of Bisri dam project and use it for combating poverty in Lebanon and to boost economy and that as the opposition movement had gained considerable support by October 2019 followed by the resignation of the Government and the appointment of a new one by January 2020, and COVID-19 emerged last February, as well as the economic crisis worsened in the last months.

Lebanon Eco Movement warns every party that insists on the construction of Bisri Dam and holds it responsible for threatening national security in Lebanon as they will be risking the lives of the Lebanese again, similar to the port explosion, not taking into consideration the experts' warnings and studies.

Lebanon Eco Movement would like to reiterate the urgent need to stop Bisri dam project considering the risks stated in the studies presented by experts and communicated to the World Bank earlier. To mention again that the future water body behind the planned Bisri dam will overlie an active fault, with huge potential for fault movement underneath the dam footprint, liquefaction around the dam foundations, mass movements near the dam site, and direct effect on inducing seismicity on a delicate fault system that can potentially trigger a major earthquake that can affect the whole Lebanon and its surroundings. Are we ready to face a seismic threat after the catastrophe of Beirut port while considering the economic crisis Lebanon is going through?



Lebanon Eco Movement

الحركة البيئية اللبنانية - علم وخبر 1236

As the World Bank suggested earlier, the money allocated to Bisri dam project could be redirected to overcome the consequences of the enormous explosion where at least 150 were confirmed dead and around 5,000 were injured, and some people were still missing.

Lebanon is witnessing a huge catastrophe, the blast devastated entire neighborhoods of Beirut and the estimated cost of damages exceeds \$5 billion, therefore Lebanon Eco Movement suggests to reallocate the budget of Bisri dam project for:

1. An alternative solution to Bisri dam project. As mentioned earlier, alternatives to Bisri dam project are many and could be studied and funded in less environmental damages and risks to the citizens and in a timely manner. We recommend that you look into the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources "BGR" suggested alternatives.
2. Environmental priorities that emerged after Beirut blast:
 - a. Sorting and recycling of construction waste and demolitions
 - b. Asbestos waste collection and treatment
 - c. Public transportation from/ to Beirut
 - d. Restoration of historical buildings in Beirut
 - e. Increase of green spaces in the city

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Regards,
Paul Abi Rached
President
Lebanon Eco Movement