

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT: H.E. NAZEM EL-KHOURI: I AM FOR IMPLEMENTING THE OLD PRACTICE OF HAVING GUARDS TO PROTECT OUR FORESTS AND PREVENT FIRES

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A major slogan was adopted as part of the Ministry of Environment plan, namely: "The political environment should serve the policy on environment". There should be a strong Ministry of environment, fair, transparent, well informed, with multiple partners, in order to fulfill its role.

A good Environmental policy would stress on protecting the Lebanese natural resources and practice a good risk management for environmental problems.

The Ministry nowadays is in a continuous working session. Despite the foggy political situation, we have achieved much more than any previous periods. Within this framework, we have drafted all appropriate laws and decrees necessary to establish organizations and councils to manage the environmental sector on one side and to organize the human activities, promote human resources, and enhance environmental education for the public.

In line with this policy, the Ministry incorporates now 23 permanent staff that has been working for 15 years with the ministry as contractors.

In addition, awareness about the environment has increased especially among youth, recognizing that life quality would be better in a healthier environment.

H.E. stressed the importance of optimal management of medical waste and the major part of responsibility is on the shoulders of hospitals. Concerning the protection of the forests and prevention of



fires, H.E. added that he is for the implementation of the old policy of having guards for the forests.

As for the production industry we have to provide some support, financial or otherwise, to allow these institutions to implement the environmental rules and regulations. This will lead to an improvement of the quality and facilitate marketing.

Finally, regarding the budget of the Ministry it is too small to do major projects. It is about 12 billion Lebanese Pounds, it like symbolic. However, we were able to have an active presence in all other ministries.

This is partly a summary of a dialogue that took place in an interview with H.E. at the Ministry.



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