

Iraq Waterkeeper Environmental Law and Advocacy Project



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Training for Environmental NGOs in Kurdistan Region of Iraq



Nature Iraq, under the environmental law and advocacy project and in cooperation with Italian Water Right Foundation, implemented a training course for some of the Environmental NGOs in Kurdistan Region. The training was done in six days from the 8th of November 2016 to the 15th of November 2016. The training was for two different groups from Sulaimani and Erbil in AbuSana hotel hall in Sulaimani and there were 42 participants from both groups.

The training was about the ways of creating a modern campaign. It was taught by two Italian experts Elisa Tachis and Manrico Benelli. They participated from WRF and they are in partnership with the project of Nature Iraq.

Throughout the course, various workshops as well as campaigns were done in the training hall. The participants were taught and familiarized with various ways of creating a campaign by showing short videos, presenting presentations and workshops on various environmental topics. The third day of the training course was dedicated to holding a specific campaign on various environmental issues such as (Water, air, and land pollution, increase in the number of cars, lack of green areas, increase in the number of factories, hunting, increasing in the amount of plastic etc.) The actual practical campaigning for the Sulaimani group (participants) was held in front of the Public Park in Sulaimani. For the Erbil group (participants), the actual practical campaigning was held at Cihan University in Sulaimani.

On the third day of each group, the trainers had some remarks that it is hugely important for the NGOs to work cooperatively dealing with environmental issues. NGOs should have an effective role mediating the relationship between the government, the people and the environment though campaigning on local and international environmental issues. On the same day, the participants were given the certificate of participation and completion of the course.



Advocacy Project Joint Meetings in KEDO Hall in Sulaimani

On 26th October 2016, Nature Iraq Organization with attendance of Razhan Aso, lawyer/legal assistant of advocacy project, held a joint meeting in Kurdistan Economic Development Organization (KEDO) hall in Sulaimani, the meeting was focused on environmental and health subject and finding a suitable solution for the problems that currently exist, it's also worth mentioning that the meeting was attended by 26 experts and environment specialists, which gave their opinions and suggested possible solutions to the problems. In the end everyone agreed on forming a joint committee consisting of legal persons, parliament members of Kurdistan, university Professors, governorate members, civil society organizations, Health care representatives and specialists. On the same day the aforementioned committee was formed and should start working in the near future to solve the problems and advocacy project is included in the committee.



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Advocacy Project Joint Meeting at the Directorate of Water in Sulaimani

Under the Advocacy Project, Nature Iraq held a joint meeting at the Directorate of Water in Sulaimani on 7th November 2016. The meeting was attended by two Italian experts and/or trainers: Elisa Tachi and Manrico Benelli (who are skillful environmental trainers from the Italian Water Right Foundation and are in partnership with the advocacy project). Diary Mohammed Rashid and Razhan Aso as coordinator of the meeting also attended, a number of representatives of different parts of the Directorate such as infringement, partnerships, shares, geology, laboratory etc. also participated in the meeting. The aim of the joint meeting was to listen to the government officials and Policy maker in person about the organization of laws and guidelines on disobediences and fines on the issue of wasting water. Another goal of the meeting was about the importance of working with and engaging the NGOs and the experts before issuing any laws and guidelines related to water along with the fines, their kinds and the amounts for the people who don't comply.



The attendants from the directorate of water in Sulaimani discussed two main issues. One was about that no specific law is enforced (about protecting and building water tube and sewage in Kurdistan Regional Government) from the laws issued in 2013 since it has not been formally accepted by the Kurdistan Parliament. They also discussed that although the kinds and amounts of the fines have risen, they cannot be as effective since they are not fully enforced. Since the amounts of the fines are not as much now, people are not complying with the laws as they can pay small amount of money as fines. The attendants also discussed that there isn't a special number of polices/ forces that can monitor and check on people who do not comply which is another issue.

Also in the meeting, the role of media was discussed that unfortunately it hasn't had an effective role in publicizing the laws and guidelines to people along with explanations on the fines, their kind and their amounts.

The Italian trainers discussed the strategies and plans in European Union Nations and Italy for enforcing the laws and principles.

The meeting concluded that:

1. It is important to engage people in keeping the environment.
2. It is also vital that people are given awareness. The governmental officials and policy makers have to work with the NGOs for such awareness.
3. If the Directorate of water in Sulaimani believes that they can change the behaviour and attitude of people alone, it might take a really long time. So they need to engage and work with the Media, NGOs and the people.

For more News about the Project, visit: www.natureiraq.org > Projects > WaterKeeper Law and Advocacy Program

The Project Activity in November, 2016

On 22th November 2016, Advocacy project attended a seminar in KEDO hall in Sulimani about importing environment friendly vehicles (Hybrid), with attendance of authorities on the manner and civil society organizations. As we all know environmental problems are increasing year by year and solving them involves different steps including using Hybrid vehicles as it is called Environment friendly and It's main feature is operating using electricity which results in reducing carbon dioxide consumption and poisonous gases which are produced by other type of vehicles, as such we suggested to Kurdistan and Iraqi Governorates to force all companies that import vehicles to bring at least 5% to 7% hybrids starting next year and help consumers that buy these kind of vehicles. As such we sent a formal letter about this matter to the head of the province of Sulaimani to direct it to the responsible authorities.

