

Iraq Waterkeeper Environmental Law and Advocacy Project



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Building on the great success of Swimmable Water Weekend held in August of 2013 on Dukan Lake



Waterkeepers Iraq is raising the stakes this year with an even longer marathon swim across the Lake from its start near Rania southwards to the Dukan Dam. What is the Swimmable Water Challenge?

Waterkeepers Iraq wants to highlight the importance of

swimmable, drinkable and fishable waters throughout the communities of Kurdistan. As its recent RiverWatch Report Card shows, the rivers and waterways of Kurdistan are quickly deteriorating as rivers become choked by garbage, sewage and industrial toxins and diverted

without thought to their natural function and services. The once clear flowing rivers and streams of our land are becoming muddied, polluted and dried. Nabil Musa, the Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeeper is a voice for our local rivers and river-dependent communities. He's taken up the challenge to swim

40 kilometers from Rania to the Dukan Dam to raise attention and promote the cause of clean water and healthy rivers in Kurdistan. As the Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeeper, I'm here today at Lake Dukan on the Lesser Zab River to stand up for clean swimmable, drinkable, and fishable waters.

Trees Not Walls



We, as the Waterkeeper at Nature Iraq, are continuing our efforts to restore our environment by advocating sustainable use of natural resources, which will ultimately cost us less in the long run and boost our economy. The Trees Not Walls action was undertaken by the newly-formed, non-profit art-through-environment group called ArtPlus with support by the Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeeper. It took place at the Sarchinar intersection where the walls were covered with a thick layer of dust accumulated over the years. The drawing was done without causing damage to the wall and no paint was used. It was simply done through cleaning some of the dust from

the walls with a damp sponge. Nabil Musa, the Iraq Upper Tigris Waterkeeper said, "if environmental issues remain as they are today, we will most likely be facing serious threats in Kurdistan." The action was kick-started with support by the Sulaimani Directorate of Media and Journalism and cost just 10,000 Iraqi Dinar to accomplish (the cost of a few sponges and buckets for water). Our motto for the action, "trees not wall," promotes a greener Kurdistan: Let's tear down walls and plant more trees. The organizers are trying to send a humanitarian message by spreading environmental awareness with a spirit of volunteerism.