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## Urmia

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### Topic:

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**Topic author:** NikolayAladin

**Subject:** Urmia

**Posted on:** 18 Apr 2014 02:35:31

**Message:**

Based on years of successful work on lakes and reservoirs in various countries, ILEC (International Lake Environment Committee) formulated the ILBM Platform Process (Nakamura and Rast, 2011). ILBM (Integrated Lake Basin Management) is based on six fundamental governance pillars, including: (1) policies; (2) institutions; (3) participation; (4) information; (5) technology, and (6) finances. Based on these pillars, it is possible to build a healthy house of rising Urmia Lake.

ILBM is a way of thinking that assists lake basin managers and stakeholders in achieving management of their lakes and basins for sustainable use. It takes into account that lakes have a great variety of resource values, whose sustainable development and use require special management considerations unique to their lentic (static) water properties. Good lake basin management can be realized only through ILBM, which represents a continuous lake basin governance improvement integrating institutions, policies, participation science, technology and finances. ILEC promotes ILBM globally, with long-term and strong political commitment, in order to improve the state of world's lakes. A primary characteristic of ILBM is that it is not a prescriptive planning procedure. Rather, it is the result of a compilation of lessons learned from the global experiences of past lake basin management, synthesized to address complex planning issues with a basin governance framework reflecting the unique features of lentic waters such as lakes and reservoirs. These features include a long water retention time, complex response dynamics, and an integrating nature (Nakamura and Rast, 2011).

Successful lake basin management requires that we fill the gaps between what has already been done, and what remains to be achieved in facilitating its application, based on long-term and strong political commitment. Continuous efforts will be necessary to further expand and refine the ILBM concept to achieve a brighter future for lakes and other water bodies that are experiencing serious degradation threats, particularly those attributable to human activities and climate change (Nakamura and Rast, 2011). To achieve this goal, the following governance pillars, which constitute the basic components of ILBM, and which are all potentially available in the Islamic Republic of Iran, must be addressed:

- 1) Institutions: A management system with an appropriate organizational setup will help ensure sustainable benefits for lake basin resource users;
- 2) Policies: Policy tools must be better developed to facilitate concerted societal actions for sustainable lake basin management;
- 3) Participation: All lake basin stakeholders should participate in decision-making process for managing lakes and their basins for sustainable use;
- 4) Technologies: Although their effect often tend to be limited in certain areas and over short time periods, physical interventions, such as shoreline and wetland restoration, provision of sewerage and industrial waste treatment, water treatment systems, afforestation, and mitigation measures for siltation control, can play a significant role in improving the lake environment. It also will be necessary to initiate actions for Irrigation Revolution (best practice of irrigation) and Green Revolution (using newly-selected domestic plants requiring less irrigation water);
- 5) Information: Scientific and public perceptions regarding lake basin management can differ from case to case. Without knowledge generation and sharing, human and financial resources

mobilized in the lake basin management efforts may not be effective;

6) Finances: Financial resources should come from all basin stakeholders that directly or indirectly benefit from the use of lake resources. Efforts must be made to develop innovative approaches for generating locally usable funds.

Based on these ILBM elements, the roadmap for Saving Urmia Lake should be wide and short, as follows:

- 1) Only the water resources in the local catchment area should be used. There is no need to import water from areas outside the Urmia Lake catchment area;
- 2) Only animals and plants in the local area should be used. There is no need to import or bring in animals and plants from outside the catchment area;
- 3) Only local people and local nations should be involved. There is no compelling need to bring people from outside the catchment area;
- 4) Only local people and local leaders should have the authority to decide how to save Urmia Lake and its catchment area. Any experts sought from abroad should only be requested to evaluate the positive and negative parameters of restoration efforts;
- 5) Professional bodies from throughout the Islamic Republic of Iran should be invited to participate in saving Urmia Lake and its catchment area. In addition to scientists and decision makers, religious Leaders, philosophers, historians, artists, writers, sportsmen, etc., of all ages (young and old), and from all parts of the Islamic Republic of Iran should be involved.

The above type of road map was used to save the Northern Aral Sea, which is now exhibiting the first signs of success. And as stated at the outset of this message, it will likely not be possible to achieve a healthy Urmia Lake and basin without creation of the six fundamental ILBM pillars. To this end, the six ILBM governance pillars within Urmia Lake and its basin should be evaluated and refined as appropriate during 2015 – 2017. This approach would work for all continents, and should also work in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Indeed, it would be very beneficial to develop appropriate policies, create the institutes to carry them out, and allocate the necessary funds to develop capable staff, and accomplish the desired goals. If so, the day will come when the house of the rising Urmia Lake will be built. Indeed, it would be inspirational to build a symbolic ILBM "Pavilion" on the shores of Urmia Lake. This would be a first step towards developing a healthy house of the rising Urmia Lake by 2017. It will be one small step for people in the Urmia Lake catchment area, but a giant leap for all people and regions of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This Pavilion will become a physical symbol for all people involved in the restoration of Urmia Lake and its catchment area.

It would be desirable if new poems and songs were written about Urmia Lake and its catchment area, and new films and new photo albums about the Urmia Lake landscape also should be developed. New books about the lives of people around Urmia Lake and within its catchment area should be written. Further, it is not sufficient only to write scientific and technical papers about the problems of Urmia Lake and its catchment area. Rather, hymns and songs also should be written, would come become spiritual symbols for all people in the Urmia Lake 'Rescue Team.'

In order to overcome the Urmia Lake crisis, people engaged in scientific and cultural activities relevant to the lake and its catchment area should unite in developing one bridge directed to the better future of this lake system. To this end, please remember what is being saved in such efforts:

First – all the people and regions living in the Urmia Lake catchment area and coast region;  
Second – all types of environments and all types of human activities in the Urmia Lake catchment area; and

Third – all types of environment and all types of people activities in the Urmia Lake coastal environment and islands, and in the lake itself.

References

Nakamura M. and W. Rast (2011). Development of ILBM Platform Process. Evolving Guidelines through Participatory Improvement. RSCE – Shiga University and ILEC. 76 p.

<http://www.ilec.or.jp/en/>  
<http://www.ilec.or.jp/en/activity>

## Replies:

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**Reply author:** aoren

**Replied on:** 27 Jul 2014 00:30:13

**Message:**

Thanks to Nick Aladin for all the information supplied. I will now lock this topic.

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