

World Environmental Problems and Iran's Legal and Managerial Perspectives on Environmental Problems: The Case of Lake Urmia

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Abstract: Today, most states are insufficient on the environment alone. To overcome these insufficient, multinational agreements are made at the global level. The reason of this is that, environmental events are caused with the increased impact of the development of states. Environmental problems attract more attention in a fragile region of the World like Middle East.

Environmental problems are even more important for Iran, where water-based industrial and agricultural areas are high, particularly in part of its economics. Iran which is an important country in the Middle East, faces environmental problems and the threat of drying the Lake of Urmia which is a particularly important waterbed.

Keywords: Environment, Iranian, Urmia Lake

Introduction

Environmental problems around the world have been increasing over the last forty years. The increasing proportions of environmental problems have brought states to the point of taking measures (s). Within the scope of these measures, multilateral agreements have been made since the 1970s. Considering that the number of these agreements is in the hundreds, it will be revealed more easily how big the environmental problems are. These problems are no longer unilateral and have evolved into problems involving multilateral actors.

The issue of how to solve environmental problems in a complex and developing world constitutes one of the politically important agenda items of the countries. In the Middle East geography, which is one of the problematic regions of the world in terms of water, this situation has a more serious importance especially for Iran. The embargo and related political problems of the country, serious water reductions in the rivers feeding the country due to the use of water potential in agricultural

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areas and industry, and the resulting drought are among the major dangers that await Iran in the future.

This study focuses on the environmental problems experienced on Iran's Urmia Lake, the largest saltwater lake in the Middle East. The first part of the study will focus on global environmental problems and environmental law. Then, Iran's environmental problems and Urmia Lake will be focused on, and in the last section, the legal regulations in Iran regarding environmental problems in Iran will be included.

1- Environmental Problems and Environmental Law

Does democracy push developed and developing countries or North and South countries to be a coercive factor in rational and effective decision-making in international environmental policies? The answer to this question is obviously in the waiting room for years even though it has been fidgeting for the last forty years. Because in the period from the 20th century until today, this question still does not seem to have found a satisfactory answer. The motives behind this can be attributed to the existence of many factors such as social, cultural, urban, ideological, national and economic. But there is no doubt that the most special reason is an understanding that works according to market logic (Çokgezen, 2007: 99).

Environmental problems did not occur suddenly, they accumulated over time and announced their existence to the nations and societies of the world. As a result of the deterioration of the environment in time and the danger of reaching the vital area of the society, environmental problems caused the nations of the world to turn their attention to this area. For example, the death of approximately 4000 people in a week due to polluted air in London, England in 1952, which is regarded as the cradle of democracy, is remarkable in that it constitutes one of the first examples of environmental problems in the World (Keleş ve Hamamcı, 2002: 21).

Human's desire to dominate nature accelerated with the industrial revolution. The transition from an agricultural society to an industrial society has caused the struggle with nature to turn in favor of human beings. With the diversification and development of means of production during and after the industrial revolution, it paved the way for the rupture between the environment and the human (Ökmen, 2004: 329). Therefore, rational decision-making has led nations or societies to a choice in the direction of marginalizing the environment and the growth and development associated with the economy. As a result, the environmental problem has not only become a simple pollution problem by expanding over time, it has also changed the appearance of the environment-economy, environment-growth, environment-politics, environment-democracy relations.

Today, environmental problems have gradually become global problems and have reached a new dimension with the globalization of the economic system. With the rapid spread of the global economy in the world, environmental problems have also become widespread (Tuna, 2007: 198). As a result of this prevalence, it has caused nations to be unable to get out of business on their own about environmental problems and accelerated their transfer of environmental problems to the international arena. Known examples of environmental problems today are the effect of greenhouse gases, water pollution (the most serious threat to Iran today) the threat of deforestation, nutrition, energy, world population, global warming, etc. constitute. For example, forests that make up 30% of the world and provide a fifth of the world's population with a livelihood, despite all conservation efforts, between 1990 and 2015, the world lost 3% of its forest population (129 million hectares), and 16% of Brazil's Amazon forests are also in this decimated forest area (World Development Indicators, 2016: 32). Another negative aspect of deforestation is that it is directed towards a decrease in biodiversity.

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Scientists have warned that one fourth of the species in the world could be extinct since 1980 (Chasek et al. 2010: 9).

Pressures on forests, increase in world population, acceleration of urbanization, etc. It is seen that the destruction of forests will continue to increase as a result of the events. Although decisions were taken in Rio in 1992 regarding the protection of forests, during the 15-year period until 2007, these decisions were passed as a negotiation process rather than being binding (Saribeyoğlu Skala, 2014: 49).

Environmental problems, some of which are given above, are determined in terms of development between developed and underdeveloped countries. Considering the energy consumed by developed countries due to industrialization - BP 2016 and World Energy Council 2016 data - it can be easily understood from which country cluster the contribution to environmental problems comes from. Li and Reuveny (2006: 938-939), on the other hand, drew attention to the damage caused by the understanding of democracy in developed countries to the environment and they took the view of environmental problems to another dimension. According to them, they stated that democracy does not serve to eliminate environmental damages in developed countries, on the contrary, it can increase environmental damage. On the other hand, Gallagher and Thacker (2008: 3-5) stated that the damage to the environment has decreased due to the increase in the income of the countries and technological effects and changes.

Another situation in environmental problems can be shown that national or multinational companies want to maximize their profits in economic areas dominated by the logic of the market, and the international competition market serves to deepen the difference between North and South instead of eliminating it (Keleş and Hamamcı, 2002: 189). In addition, the increasing uncertainty in domestic policies in today's states other than economic areas and the environmentalist movements' orientation towards ideological rather than democratic actions are other factors that affect the continuity of environmental problems.

The Britain has announced that it will completely shut down its thermal power plants by 2025. After this statement, it was seen that large companies were opposed to this closure (www.Yeşilekonomi.com e.t. 12.05.2017); In addition to companies trying to weaken the effective forest protection system in Indonesia, Volkswagen's war on climate protection rules in Europe and the United States (Mitler, 2013: 83) stands before us as a clear indicator of how difficult and complex the fight against environmental problems is. Therefore, instead of struggling alone against the environmental problems surrounding the world with globalization, it has made it compulsory for states to act together in actions against environmental problems. As a result of this obligation, it has prepared an environment for the development of international environmental law as a step towards the solution of environmental problems.

1.1- International Environmental Law

The most important development that led to the development of International Environmental Law is the international treaties that have arisen or have the potential to emerge and are created regarding the protection of threatened places that are thought to have an international dimension (Ertürk, 2011: 188). In this context, the first and most important step towards covering the whole international community (Keleş and Hamamcı, 2002: 191) is the Stockholm Environment Conference taken by the United Nations in 1972.

The remarkable aspect of this conference is that it is a meeting where the seriousness of environmental problems of many nations is put forward, leaving the developed-undeveloped,

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socialist-capitalist and similar distinctions aside (Ökmen, 2004: 340). According to Ertürk (2011: 188), this conference is important for the formation of international cooperation and coordination under the umbrella of the United Nations. The fact that the public and different segments of society, formed by the Stockholm Conference, were informed about environmental problems, caused many people to focus their attention on environmental problems. In this context, it has led to the acceleration of environmental movements in the West (Görmez, 2018: 61) and the rise of groups (Görmez, 2007: 240).

In 1992, 20 years after Stockholm, the Rio Environment conference was held in Rio, Brazil. In the beginning of this conference, it was stated that the principles of the Stockholm Conference were adhered to and the basic framework of an international environmental policy was tried to be drawn in order to realize them. In this context, it was emphasized that it is necessary to agree on environment-development that will protect common interest (Keleş and Hamamcı, 2002: 195).

The conferences and conventions made in the following years due to the interests of the nations and their development priorities and the decisions and articles taken after them resulted in not going beyond the "wish in the waiting room". To give a few examples, the failure of the Kyoto Protocol, which witnessed the participation of a multinational cooperation in 1997, did not function as desired, and the "Summit of leaders who dispersed without taking a meaningful decision" at the Copenhagen Climate Conference in 2009 (Arkan, 2013: 163).

Apart from those mentioned above, international organizations have certain policies regarding environmental problems. One of these is the Environmental Action Programs put into practice by the European Union (EU) to solve environmental problems. Finally, the Union put into effect its 6th Environment Action Program in 2001 under the title of "Our Future is Our Choice". In this program, the union has determined its priorities on improving the existing legislation, integrating environmental requirements into other policies, working closely with the market, aids for changing people's habits and taking into account the environmental issue in administrative decisions. In addition to these priorities, it has revealed four areas of action as climate change, biodiversity, environment and health, sustainable management of resources and wastes (Ertürk, 2011: 403-404).

Considering that there are more than 700 multilateral environmental agreements that aim to solve global environmental problems or common problems in the world today, it depends on the compliance and implementation of the contracting states in order to overcome environmental problems and achieve the goals of environmental agreements (Ertürk, 2011: 192). However, the treaties did not achieve the desired success in solving the problems they dealt with. The problems behind this are; Failure of the contracting countries to be sufficiently stable or flexible conclusion of agreements, leaving the implementation of the agreements to the parties, the weak authority of the units responsible for monitoring the agreements, the lack of a fair solution between conflicting interests and preferences, the lack of resources and personnel, the articles of the agreement and the rules of international trade organizations and international companies. The contradictions are that the agreements repeat themselves or contradict themselves, and the socio-economic structures of the countries are not taken into account (Kaya, 2012: 33-37).

2- Environmental Problems in Iran: Lake Urmia

Although the measures taken against environmental problems in the world have been embodied in the text in the international arena, their effects in practice are not so successful in giving the same result. Therefore, environmental pollution in the world is increasing. For example, water scarcity affects 40% of the world population (www.aa.com.tr, e.t. 05.06.2019). It is also unclear how

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sustainable a growth-oriented world is. The disappearance of natural areas, the extinction of the creatures in nature, the endangerment of human health as a result, the increase in migration, the congestion of the human population in the cities and the allocation of serious funds for health. This also indicates the existence of a chain. The return of the profit gained from growing and not growing again, the common defeats rather than the winners in the relentless struggle of human and nature.

The theme of the World Environmental Protection Day, June 5, 2019, as “Meeting Against Nature” is an indicator of where the problems have reached. It seems that meeting with nature will be delayed a little longer, as growth-oriented policies focus more on individuals and the priority of countries is to increase the livelihood and welfare of their own people. The expansion of industry, population growth and efforts to meet increasing needs, environmental degradation, pollution of the biological biosphere foundations (air, water, soil and energy) caused resource conflicts (Kavianirad, 2013).

The conferences and the decisions taken since the 1970s have shown that the priority of the 2016 Paris Climate Change Conference is to increase the welfare of the states, and that it is not possible for now. In developed and developing countries, their own environmental policies and their sensitivity to environmental problems are becoming closely related to their economies.

The way a region like the Middle East has a complex and uncertain future's perspective on environmental problems can give us important clues. For example, how important environmental problems are for Iran, which has been under embargo since 1980. The environmental policies that Iran will determine by considering the situation it is in affect not only Iran but also the future of the Middle Eastern countries.

Ajadi (2011) states the following for environmental problems in Iran. “The environmental crisis is not separate from the economic and social crisis. The destruction of forests, lakes, lagoons, air and water will have negative and worrying consequences in various areas. Wrong government policies have devastating and aggravated effects on society as a result of economic and industrial activities. Moslahzadeh (2016) states that the growth of the industry in Iran creates social anomalies such as environmental pollution and unemployment.

Many environmental degradation occurs in Iran depending on the development. The triggers of this deterioration are the inadequacy of political policies in terms of environmental policies and industrial growth. An important example of environmental degradation is the drying up of the Zayendehrud river. An area of 350 km of the river has now dried up. As a result of drying, most of the creatures living in the river were damaged or destroyed. The people living around the river were greatly affected by the drying out, unemployment, as well as the digestive system and dermatological diseases spread. What makes the Zayendehrud river important is that it is the largest water source in the center of the country and the only water source that flows into the plateaus since 2007. In the drying of the lake, the excessive water use of the Mobarakeh Voyages, oil pollution and urban wastewater are effective in the iron and steel industry. 300,000 farmers had to move their agricultural activities to Isfahan due to the drying up of the river.

Isaac Alizadeh, vice president of Iranian General Research and Center Studies summarizes the root of environmental problems in Iran in three articles. Exposure to extraordinary colonization, not paying attention to the root of the crisis, not focusing on a long-term plan (Iran Student News Agency, 2018). One quarter of Iran's land consists of deserts. Therefore, Iran's priority problem will be reaching water in the future. Because of the heavy industry and agricultural policies, Iran's water resources are getting dry.

Water shortage is among the top 20 environmental problems of Iran. It is stated that the water industry such as steel and petrochemicals should be closed or transported to the Oman sea, farming and livestock methods should be changed, and the unconscious use of groundwater by the inhabitants of cities and villages should be prevented in order to eliminate water shortage (İran Dönemi, 2019).

One of Iran's most important and vital water lakes is Lake Urmia. This lake is the sixth largest saltwater lake in the world and the Middle East. Urmia Lake in the northwest of Iran has an area of approximately 5700 km² and the lake is fed by 13 rivers. Lake Urmia is located in the northwest of Iran, between the provinces of East Azerbaijan and West Azerbaijan. Lake Urmia was registered in the Iran National Parks List in 1979. Lake Urmia National Park is one of the natural habitats of animals in Iran. It has an area of 46,200 hectares. There are 311 species of living things. This ecosystem has been registered by UNESCO as an internationally protected area (Hafezieh, 2016). Around Urmia Lake, there are 16 wetlands of 5-1200 hectares (some of them dry), most of which are fresh water and some salty and have high ecosystem value (Ministry of Energy, Environment Affairs, 2013). In addition, it was determined as a region of international importance according to the UN wetlands agreement signed in Ramsar, Iran in 1972.

However, the surface of the lake has started to shrink since 1995. As of August 2011, the surface of the lake is 2366 km². According to the 2013 UN Report, this area has decreased to 700km² (www.thejakartapost.com, e.t. 30.05.2019). Due to the heavy rains in Autumn 2018 and March 2019, the surface of the lake approached 3000 km². 70 dams have been built on the river that feeds the lake so far. Land use changes and agricultural land expansion are one of the most important factors in increasing water consumption in the lake basin (Iran Ministry of Energy, Environmental Affairs, 2013).

The most important reasons for the ongoing destruction of Lake Urmia can be summarized as follows (Iran Ministry of Energy Environmental Affairs, 2013; Kheyravar; 2016; Aghlmandcivil & Abbasi, 2017; Shayan et al., 2013; Almasi, 2018; Ahmadi, 2018). “The construction of a bridge over Lake Urmia (Iran's longest bridge) in order to shorten the distance between East and west in East Azerbaijan has contributed to the deterioration of the ecological balance in a way that damages the flow of water, food exchange and oxygen ratio, the destruction of a rare and unique ecosystem, the destruction of the migration path of migratory birds, and the decaying of the natural state of wild natural life. In addition, the inability to overcome the problems in financial support, the loss of freshwater lakes, which are the source of livelihood of the people in the south of the lake, the damage to the fertile plains of West and East Azerbaijan, Ardebil and Qazvin, caused the loss of agricultural lands. In addition, due to the resulting social and economic problems, unemployment and increasing salt mist dry up and cause problems created by the storm, which together inhaling the salty air and pulmonary cancer, have a high rate of urbanization, unbalanced and unsustainable development and the withdrawal of water from the Renewable Water Resources in the basin, climate fluctuations and land in the lake in the basin in recent years the burden of lack of adequate water supply, lake level and volume reduction has led to the intensification of the process.” The point reached today is the fact that Lake Urmia has dried up at a rate of 85%.

As short and long term solutions for Lake Urmia; “The use of new energy resources to reduce production costs and the establishment of appropriate sub-bases, educating households in the water and land improvement system, improving the organization of production and the efficiency of agricultural sector institutions, implementing incentive programs (financial and non-financial) for the development of irrigation systems, acting together on reclamation, strengthening water exchanges, water market to attract investors, establishment of a data bank for water and soil for agriculture,

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establishment of a Water Regulatory Board for water in the region, engagement of stakeholders, liberalization of environmental flow from rivers to the lake, preventing unauthorized harvests on the waterway, reviewing the agricultural strategy, providing sufficient financial support "(Kheyraavar; 2016; Ahmadi & Akbarzadeh, 2018; Faraji, 2013).

For the improvement of Lake Urmia, environmental practitioners and academics have proposed to establish a special environmental court to deal with environmental violations more strongly, so that it is intended to be used to compensate these environmental damages with penalties. However, this has not happened yet. The next step that the assembly can take is to act on this issue. In 2013, a government initiative was initiated to save the lake. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has promised to revive Lake Urmia as his election promise. The head of the Iranian Environmental Protection Agency said that the government spent about \$ 1 billion last year to restore Lake Urmia and that if another billion dollars are transferred, Urumiye Lake could only come to ecological balance by 2024 or 2025.

3- Legal Ground for Environmental Problems in Iran

One of the most important reasons for the environmental problems to take up a large area in Iran is that the country has been under embargo since 1980. Although the embargo has been softened in recent years within the framework of the agreements made with developing countries, embargoes have been put into practice again as of 2019. Due to the country's orientation to agricultural areas, serious environmental impacts on wetlands have occurred. Among these problems, human health has been seriously affected as a result of the drying up of the largest saltwater lake of the Middle East, such as Lake Urmia, due to excessive consumption, and the shrinkage of another important lake, Zayendehrud. In addition to dermatological diseases, cancer cases have also started to be seen. In addition, respiratory failure is another problem caused by the loss of wetlands.

Legal regulations regarding environmental problems in Iran, Article 50 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1980 is as follows regarding the environment. "In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the protection of the environment that current and future generations should have in social life is considered a public duty. Therefore, all kinds of economic or non-economic activities against environmental pollution or environmental degradation are prohibited "

Environmental Protection Law

This law is the highest environmental law in all kinds of decisions made on environmental issues in Iran, including the laws enacted by other ministries regarding the environment. And the decisions taken by this law are binding for all institutions and organizations in the country. It is the Environmental Protection Agency that ensures the enactment of this law. Some articles of the Environmental Protection Law are as follows.

The Environmental Protection Agency is fully authorized to regulate environmental problems in Iran. This agency has administrative and financial autonomy under the Presidency (Law Article 1). The President of the Environmental Protection Agency is elected by the President and appointed to the High Council (Law Article 5).

Presidency of the High Council for Environmental Protection with its President and members: Agriculture, Interior, Industry, Housing and Urban Development, Jihad-Construction (a unit affiliated to the Ministry of Agriculture), Ministry of Health and Medical Education, Head of Planning and Budget Organization, Head of Environmental Protection Agency and Environment Four persons from the person or authorities proposed by the head of the Protection Agency and approved by the President are appointed for a three-year term (Law Article 2). If necessary, approval of the President

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of the Environmental Protection Agency from other ministries is invited to participate in the High Council if deemed appropriate. Thus, Ministers invited to the meetings have the right to vote in the decision of the Council.

In addition to the duties and powers specified in the Hunting and Hunting Law and Hunting Control, the High Council for the Protection of the Environment has the following duties and powers: Determining the areas under the name of National Nature Reserve, Protected Area National Park; Organization of forests and pastures as well as the Law on Hunting and Fisheries; Granting exploration and exploitation licenses for specified minerals for areas designated as Wildlife Refuge and National Natural Resources Park of Protected Areas.

Hunting and Fishing Organization in addition to the duties and powers stipulated in the Hunting and Hunting Law; To conduct scientific and economic researches on the protection and improvement of the environment, prevention of pollution and prevention of environmental degradation; establishing wildlife gardens and the Natural History Museum; to establish and implement educational programs to encourage and guide the public (Law Article 6).

Determining the level and scope of pollution (Law Article 10), as well as provisions on the prevention or prevention of environmental pollution and the prevention of the emission of harmful sounds into the environment.

The Agency, with the approval of the High Environmental Protection Council, may delegate some of its duties and powers to the implementation of Law Articles 11, 12, 13 of this law, within the boundaries of the city and country regions, to the relevant municipalities or any public institution, as the case may be. Municipalities and organizations will be responsible for its implementation (Law Article 20).

Law on the Protection and Operation of Water Resources of the Islamic Republic of Iran 13.09.1995

Islamic Republic of Iran National sovereignty and protection of peaceful water resources are among the duties of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The administration is obliged to work for the protection of these resources in order to secure the national interests of the Country in accordance with this law (Law Article 1 and 2).

To increase the quantitative and qualitative production of seafood products, Iran has appointed Shilaat Company. This company is authorized in many areas such as support, management and development for real and legal persons active in the field of aquaculture and aquaculture. In addition, the supervision and control of the companies and enterprises to be opened under the real or legal personality of all fisheries will be carried out by the Shilaat company (The content of the articles 3 and after is related to the practices that will and will be carried out by the Shilaat company).

Air Pollution Prevention Act

In order to protect the air against pollution and protect the air, all facilities and institutions and all natural and legal persons are obliged to comply with the regulations and policies stipulated in this law (Law Article 1).

Any action that causes air pollution is prohibited (Law Article 2)

Air pollutants subject to the provisions of this law are divided into the following three categories (Law Article 3); i. motor vehicles; ii. factories and workshops and power plants; iii. Commercial and home resources and various sources.

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The Islamic Republic of Iran adopted the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in 1994 within its legal framework. Although the EIA has been legalized in Iran, the results show that there is an increase in environmental degradation in Iran. In 2013, a plan titled "Iran's Environmental Assessment" was proposed to the government by lawmakers, but this plan was returned in July 2014, with a government proposal.

One of the key tools to achieve sustainable development goals in the environmental sector is to plan to evaluate the environmental impacts of development projects and projects. Despite the progress made in assessing environmental impacts around the world, scientific capacity and environmental impact assessment need to be supported, strengthened and expanded by many countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is necessary to change the construction methods and the process of using development projects. In this way, if technology, efficiency and the results of the studies can be applied strictly, it will be beneficial not only for Iran but also for the countries of the region and the world.

4. Iran's Managerial Perspective on Environmental Issues

A participatory strategic approach has been adopted to prepare a comprehensive management plan for Lake Urmia. This program builds on existing work and aims to achieve a common approach and an agreed vision through consensus and exchange of views with key relevant groups (Salim Türkmani, Hojjat Bahar, 2011).

In addition, the state has tried to ensure that such plans participate in administrative decisions and that their knowledge and opinions are taken into account in the planning process. This approach will ensure the sustainability of the program and increase the support and participation of the relevant groups in the implementation of this program.

In the management planning process, besides defining the values and threats of wetland development, the most important objectives of the capacity of the relevant stakeholders were identified, and management actions were mainly focused on achieving a common vision (Kaviani Rad, Murad Bahar, 2011). This approach is consistent with the approach recommended by the Ramsar Convention for the preparation of wetland management programmes. Wetland management in Iran has attracted a lot of attention in recent years. This is often due to a lack of knowledge about the nature of management problems and inadequate wetland management measures (Lak, Razieh, Darvish Khatouni Javad, 2011).

A consistent and efficient wetland monitoring program can provide managers and decision makers with the information they need to address deficiencies. Monitoring is a systematic process of collecting baseline information over time to compare it to a predetermined standard. It should be noted that a monitoring program is not necessarily complex or costly, but the effectiveness of the program depends on the relevance and timeliness of the information collected. A well-designed monitoring program can be simple and efficient. Even a well-designed monitoring program will be worthless if the information collected is not used or does not affect the wetland management process. Ideally, each wetland should be under a management plan that aligns with all objectives and specific objectives. Information collected under a monitoring plan should be used in line with management objectives and to influence the management plan (Mohammad Wali Samani, Jamal, 2010).

The Urmia Wetland Monitoring Program was prepared based on the results of a two-day consultation and training workshop on wetland monitoring held in Urmia in May 2008. A total of 45 experts from local communities as well as government and academic institutions and non-governmental organizations participated in the workshop. In this workshop, after the basics of wetland monitoring

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are presented by the international consultants of the wetland protection plan and the necessary explanations are given about the methodology of preparation of the monitoring protocols, the participants are divided into three thematic groups according to the objectives of wetland management, biological diversity and economic and social issues. In other words, the success rate of the management plan and the rate of achievement of management objectives are determined by the monitoring program. Ideally, a monitoring program is a coherent and comprehensive program that uses information monitoring protocols to individually provide the necessary information about the indicators in the management plan to experts, decision makers and other stakeholders, including the local community. For this reason, the information needs of the decision-making managers must be met for the successful management of the desired wetland. Information should be provided in a way that is useful to managers (Urmiye İl Çevre Teşkilatı, 2008).

CONCLUSION

Today, 40% of the world still suffers from access to clean water is just a typical example of environmental problems. This situation is valid for Middle Eastern countries. The water problem in Iran, which is one of the most important countries of the Middle East today, has increased gradually in recent years. The basis of this increase is the increase in population-dependent consumption and the excessive consumption of water used in agricultural activities and industry as well as the embargo. Lake Urmia, which is one of the most important lakes of Iran today, feels more anxious for the future. However, although there has been an increase in the lake surface since 2013, it cannot prevent serious concerns about the future existence of this lake.

Efficient results of the improvement works in the country will affect not only human health but also the re-development of the species living in the lake area. The fact that Urmia, the largest salty lake in the Middle East, is under international protection is also an indication that the lake is important for the world. Taking serious international steps will at least give hope for the saving of the future of Urmia.

It was decided that it would be monitored and announced to other stakeholders, including the local community, through the monitoring program determined by the Urmiye Wetland Monitoring Program, which took place in 2008. But it does not appear to be explained to communities. It is far from this transparent state practice, and it also harbors doubts as to whether these data are really followed. Therefore, it is recommended that these data be made public.

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