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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Charting Pathways for Lebanon's Green Transition: The AUB Nature Conservation Center and the World Bank Hold Joint Event**

In an effort to examine Lebanon's pressing climate challenges, the American University of Beirut (AUB), through its Nature Conservation Center (AUB-NCC), and the World Bank held a joint event to mark the closing of the AUB-NCC 2023 roundtable series "Navigating Climate Change and Environmental Activism in the MENA Region: Challenges and Opportunities" and to present the World Bank's Lebanon Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR).

AUB Provost Zaher Dawy, in his opening remarks, encapsulated the ethos of AUB's commitment to environmental advocacy: "At AUB, we find, we flag, we propose, and we execute. Our university holds the space for a multidisciplinary and multi-level exchange of findings, expertise, and views and we follow through with like-minded partners until sustainable positive impact emerges."

He added, "Today, we are proud of the success of the 'Navigating Climate Change and Environmental Activism in the MENA region: Challenges and Opportunities' series and its outcomes, and we are delighted to join efforts with the World Bank today in what models a necessary collaboration between academia, donors, and decision-makers where they all become crafters of a much-needed change."

The event's discussions were enriched with diverse insights, highlighting the critical role of a multidisciplinary and whole-of-society approach in addressing environmental challenges. Esteemed speakers and panelists included key actors in Lebanon's green transition. The first panel was moderated by Anna Fleischer, director Beirut Office of the Heinrich Böll Foundation; and included Dr. Nasser Yassin, caretaker minister of environment; Dr. Jean Christophe Carret, World Bank country director for the Middle East; Dr. Alain Daou, director of AUB-NCC and founding dean of the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business at AUB – Mediterraneo; and Ziad Abdel Samad, co-founder and executive director of the Arab NGO Network for Development.

Whereas the second panel was moderated by Dr. Joanna Doummar, associate professor and chairperson of the Department of Earth Sciences at AUB, who was joined by a group of renowned experts from diverse sectors: Lamia Moubayed, president at the Institute of Finance Basil Fuleihan and vice-chair at the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration; Dr. George Mitri, professor of environmental sciences and director of the Land and Natural

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Resources Program at the Institute of the Environment, University of Balamand; and Dr. Ali Ahmad, climate change specialist at the World Bank Group.

The event also served as a platform for Antoine Kallab, associate director at AUB-NCC, to recap the impactful “Navigating Climate Change and Environmental Activism in the MENA Region: Challenges and Opportunities” series, which has been instrumental in addressing the pressing environmental, transgenerational, and geopolitical challenges in Lebanon and the broader MENA region, spotlighting the essential roles of both governmental and non-governmental entities in mitigating these critical risks.

Dr. Ali Ahmad, presented the World Bank’s first Lebanon Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR). The report provides a strategic roadmap for Lebanon’s transition towards a greener, more sustainable future, outlining actionable strategies and investments necessary to pivot from the status quo towards a reform-driven recovery.

The World Bank’s presentation of the report shed light on the Lebanon CCDR’s objectives, emphasizing the urgent need for policy actions and investments across critical sectors such as energy, water, transport, and solid waste to combat climate risks and spearhead a climate-responsive recovery for Lebanon.

For the closing remarks, Maria Mouzannar, environmental policy researcher and Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP28) Lebanese youth delegate invited Salim Rouhana, sector leader for sustainable development at the World Bank Group, and Antoine Kallab, for a discussion around the central role of youth as key actors in Lebanon’s green recovery.

AUB's Nature Conservation Center was highlighted for its role in promoting environmental stewardship, community development, and biodiversity conservation, showcasing AUB's leadership in driving sustainable solutions not just for Lebanon, but for the region and global community.

For a deeper dive into the Lebanon Country Climate and Development Report and to revisit the presentations and discussions from the event, please explore the following resources:

Event Recording: [Watch here](#)  
AUB-NCC 2023 Roundtable Series: [View here](#)  
CCDR Overview Video: [View here](#)  
The Lebanon CCDR: [Read the report](#)

## ENDS

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### **Note to Editors**

About AUB

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Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 750 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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