



مركز المنصة للتنمية المستدامة  
PLATFORM CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# Report on the Launch Session of the Iraq Climate Platform





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## About the center:

Platform for Sustainable Development is a center registered at NGO Department under the registration number(1S2106012) It is platform for knowledge exchange and dialogue that seeks to nurture positive change.

## Vision

We seek to establish a platform for dialogue and policies to contribute to achieving sustainable development goals in Iraq.

## Mission

Bridging the gap between the state and society in a way that ensures the realization of the essence of democracy represented by the participation of citizens in the decision-making processes, through training, monitoring, analyzing, researching, raising awareness, and conducting advocacy campaigns.

## Strategic Goals

- Preparing Youth to fulfill their societal obligations by analyzing root causes of problems, proposing feasible and desirable policy alternatives and advocating for their implementation.

- Presenting statistics and issues that occupy the political and societal scene to reflect a deeper understanding of Iraq's realities

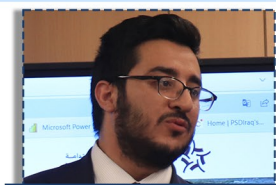
- Encouraging youth to work towards achieving sustainable development goals

- Establishing a network of active, informed, and committed citizens towards Iraq's state-building project



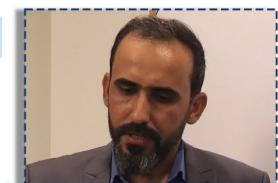
- The Platform Center for Sustainable Development (PSDIraq) hosted a session on Thursday, August 31st, attended by a distinguished group of experts and researchers in the field of climate change. During this session, the Iraq Climate Platform was officially launched, and discussions revolved around its content, which encompasses awareness-raising, data provision, and policy alternatives.

The session commenced with opening remarks by **Mr. Hashim Al-Rikabi**, the founder and President of the center,



who spoke about the current and future projects of the center. These projects include the Iraq Policy Program, the Economic Reform Monitoring Program, the Emerging Scholars Network, the Platform's Magazine, Monthly Issues & Analysis, and most recently, the Iraq Climate Platform. He emphasized that the center has been striving to shift from identity politics towards policy-focused initiatives since its inception. This is because all components of society, regardless of their sub-identities, face common challenges. Therefore, the center aims to build a network of policy-oriented researchers that jointly create fact-based content that enhances awareness and encourages the adoption of realistic and feasible policy alternatives. In this context, the issue of climate change is deemed as a severe threat, given its adverse effects on thousands of families and individuals, pressuring them to leave their areas of origin and fall victim to life-threatening transmittable diseases, among other consequences. However, the problem is that most people are unaware of its existence. Hence, the idea of the Iraq Climate Platform was conceived to raise societal awareness about climate change. Other solutions, such as negotiations with upstream countries to share the burden of climate change, require governmental efforts and cooperation from neighboring and upstream countries.

**Hashem Al-Husseini – PSDIraq Research Director**



Mr. Hashem Al-Husseini presented the Iraq Climate Platform's website, which was the result of months of efforts. The website contains information about climate priorities, data, and an expert assessment that involves decision-makers, experts, and researchers. It was designed to include both public awareness aspects and data and analysis for researchers. Additionally, it provides solutions and alternatives for decision-makers, which are mature proposals adaptable to climate change impacts. The website comprises five tabs:



- **Climate Knowledge:** This section offers an overview of Iraq's realities, international climate efforts, and stakeholders.
- **Climate Priorities:** This section addresses water scarcity, desertification, extreme weather phenomena, energy consumption, and Iraq's climate change policies.
- **Climate Data:** It includes data on water imports to Iraq, per capita water availability, annual temperature averages, rainfall levels, total energy generation, the percentage of cultivated land in Iraq's total area, and the percentage of forested land.
- **Expert Assessment:** This section is divided into methodology and assessment results. The survey will be conducted annually to monitor progress in mitigating climate change impacts.
- **Climate Monitor:** This section covers climate news, local and international reports, and climate activities.



Mr. Ghazwan Al-Minhalawi, PSDIraq's Executive Director



mentioned that the center aims to make the platform interactive, as it focuses on a single issue: climate change. He emphasized that this launch is experimental and subject to development in light of attendees' feedback.

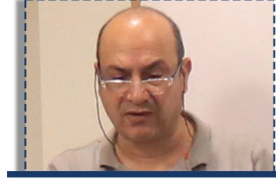
Al-Minhalawi also presented climate data and the scale of the problem in each data category. He discussed the methodology used for the expert assessment, which is based on targeted sampling, reaching decision-makers, experts, researchers, and activists in Iraq's climate change area. The results of the assessment are published and will be updated annually to measure progress. He emphasized the importance of this annual repetition due to the changing nature of climate variables.

The Climate Monitor aims to provide a comprehensive resource for those interested in climate research, containing daily and weekly updates on local and international reports, studies, and news related to climate change.





**Dr. Haider Al-Manshi, a specialist consultant in climate and environmental affairs**



chaired the session from a technical and scientific perspective. He assessed the platform's compliance with requirements and data provision and began his remarks with the following points:

- The term "desertification" is not precise, as deserts are a part of the environment. The more accurate term is the deterioration of agricultural land due to the encroachment of desert areas. Statistics regarding land degradation could be added to the data.
- Iraq does not experience sandstorms but rather dust storms, which are even more damaging to health. It might be more accurate to merge this with water scarcity issues since they are interconnected.
- Official figures indicate that the Minister of Agriculture reduced agricultural land by 50% in January 2022, resulting in a decrease in cultivated land from 32 million dunams to 18 million dunams. Iraq no longer practices summer farming as before, and crop yields per dunam have decreased.
- Data regarding the sources of water inflow to Iraq, categorized by consumption (agricultural, industrial, municipal), as well as daily per capita water consumption for Iraqis, should be provided, as well as, the inclusion of data on water reservoirs in Iraq.
- Regarding temperature, average annual temperature and evaporation data, which are high due to Iraq's exposed irrigation projects and the presence of unlined canals, should be included.
- Adding air quality to climate priorities.
- Adjusting "Extreme Weather Phenomena" to "Climate Extremes."
- In terms of energy consumption, data on the percentage of renewable energy in total energy production can be added.
- Suggesting the inclusion of the "windy.com" website as a resource on the platform.

In conclusion, the attendees expressed their appreciation for the efforts of PSDIraq in promoting climate awareness and the importance of joining efforts in mitigating climate change domestically and globally.





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