



Ahwazi Source word for Agenda Item 2:

During the past three decades, Iran built dozens of dams and tunnels to transfer water of Ahwaz rivers to the central plateau of Iran. These projects disrupted the lives of thousands of Ahwazi families and displaced them forcefully.

The complete drying up of Karkhe River, the drilling of 100s oil wells in the Al-edaim wetland and the complete drying of this wetland to facilitate the extraction of oil from the Azadegan oil field, stopped the existence of thousands of Arab families around the wetland, and these families were forcibly displaced.

The life of the indigenous people of Al-ediam marshland has been formed around the existence of this marshland for thousands of years. Drying this marshland without the consent of the indigenous residents is considered a massive violation of the rights of the indigenous people. Thousands of families living in the villages of Dabiya, Hascheh, Luliyeh, Ume, Kasr, Macharia, Muhaira, Siydiyah, Abu Chalach, Meshimshiyeh, Jarayeh, Tabar, Shat Ali, Zahirieh, Bargeh, and Bars and other villages were forcibly displaced by the government and a unique indigenous community, called “Mea’dan” with a lifetime of several thousands of years was completely abolished.

In the southern part of Ahwaz region, in Abbadan and its surroundings, millions of palm trees died due to the decrease of more than 70% of the water entering the region, and thousands of Arab farmers were unemployed and forced to evacuate their villages and migrate.

In the cities, systematic discrimination against Arab people is practiced in a much stronger sense than in the past, and an unemployment ban against Arab people has been implemented in all governmental organizations. To find employment many Arabs have changed their names to Persian mainstream names to appear as non-Arabs to the employers. Meanwhile, the government has hired thousands of employees from outside the province and relocated them with their families to Ahwaz to change the demographics of this region.

The storage of water behind the dams has created a dangerous environmental and health crisis in this province, and the number of cancer cases has increased more than five times in the last three decades and several thousands of Ahwazi people die every year due to air, soil, and water pollution.

We demand the government of Iran to recognize the property rights of the indigenous Arab people of Ahwaz. We ask united nations not to allow the Iranian government to destroy the communities of the indigenous Arabs through managing or completely cutting off the water and through land confiscations. Also beware that the lives of tens of thousands of the



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indigenous people of Ahwaz depend on the water of rivers and marshlands and a sustainable environment. The destruction of the ecosystems of Ahwaz has destroyed our communities such as villages and districts. We demand a stop on these policies. We demand Iran to return the confiscated lands of thousands of villagers and to restore life to our destroyed villages by restoring water in the riverbeds and in the marshlands.

We at Ahwazi Source organization are ready to provide you with more details about the massive destruction caused by Iran water policies in Ahwaz region.

Mahdi Hashemi