

Local

# Cutting plastic waste essential for Kuwait's SDGs: Environmentalist

KEPS official urges use of reusable bottles to cut plastic waste



KUWAIT: This photo provided by environmentalist Jenan Bahzad shows a camel near a stack of plastic bags at a desert location in Kuwait.



This photo provided by Jenan Bahzad shows remains of fishing gear in the marine environment.

By Majd Othman

**KUWAIT:** According to the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the amount of plastic waste in Kuwait is estimated at about 18 percent of total solid waste, or around 200,000 tons annually. Member of the Board of Directors of Kuwait Environment Protection Society Jenan Bahzad spoke to Kuwait Times about the importance of reducing the use of plastics and its dangers to the environment.



Jenan Bahzad

"Every year, according to scientific and field studies, more than 8 million tons of plastic end up in the oceans, which causes damage to marine life, fisheries and tourism, and incurs losses to the world of at least \$8 billion due to the damage it causes to marine ecosystems," Bahzad said, adding 80 percent of all trash floating in our oceans is plastic waste. "With the current rate of dumping of waste such as single-use plastic cans, plastic bags and cups in the oceans, by 2050 the oceans will carry more plastic than fish and 99 percent of seabirds will have ingested plastic waste," she said.

**500 billion**

Bahzad said global reports estimated the world uses around 500 billion plastic bags every year, but the danger lies in the way of disposing them, as they mostly end up in oceans. She spoke about steps that should be taken by people to reduce plastic waste. "Everyone can reduce their daily consumption of plastic by replacing plastic water bottles with those that can be reused or made with biodegradable materials."

Bahzad stressed: "To achieve the 2030 sustainable development goals of Kuwait, we should contribute to protecting environmental, economic and social sustainability by advancing the application of laws and supporting local and international decisions. Changing environmental culture on the extent of plastic damage and societal awareness of alternatives is the solution. All solutions are available, and the consumer is the one who chooses - the choice is only limited by their culture and concern for the environment."

"This in addition to setting a helpful law to prevent the use of products that are not environmentally friendly and finding alternatives subsidized by Kuwait for both consumers and investors, in order to facilitate the use of alternatives," she added.

Bahzad said all types of waste are expected to grow to 3.40 billion tons by 2050, more than double



This photo provided by Jenan Bahzad shows the remains of marine fishing lines among the microfluidics marine organisms.



This photo provided by Jenan Bahzad shows macro plastics washed on the beach.

the population growth over the same period. By 2050, total waste generation will triple, stressing all countries in the world must unite towards reducing the use of plastic and finding environmentally friendly alternatives, and this requires urgent action.



**Waste expected to grow to 3.40 billion tons by 2050**

**Solutions**

About the steps KEPS has taken towards the waste issue, she said the society presented in July 2021 a list of solutions to reduce waste in Kuwait, in cooperation with the Research Group for Natural Environmental Systems and Technology, Warah Environmental Consultancy and Vision Consulting Company, which includes reusing surplus foods by turning it into organic fertilizer and encouraging home

farming, motivating and empowering young people to engage in self-employment in waste recycling projects, such as waste sorting centers, organic fertilizer industry projects, centers dedicated to collecting one type of waste, and identifying shops of symbolic value to sell recycled products," Bahzad explained.

She said other steps include improving the waste recycling system and facilitating the collection of recyclable waste with household waste once a week; integrating awareness, environmental education and training on waste separation and reducing food waste; activating the laws related to littering violations in disposing garbage in places not designated for it; stopping the import and use of non-recyclable or single-use plastic, including plastic bags; awareness to reduce waste and surplus food, especially in restaurants and weddings.

Bahzad also recommended a national initiative in agreement with legislative bodies to develop an organizational structure to reduce waste and recycling; making industries dependent on waste, and this leads to solving major societal problems such as unemployment, thus transforming society from a consumer to a producer; urging schools and universities to adopt Islamic values that urge us to rationalize our consumption of food; and work on preparing a new generation based on the culture of achieving sustainable development.



This photo provided by Jenan Bahzad shows plastic waste on the beach.



This photo provided by Jenan Bahzad shows plastic spoons on the beach.

In my view

## Re-Engineering Administrative operations (2)



By Yousuf Awadh Al-Azmi

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"A successful administrator is one who can organize matters in a way that work will no longer need his presence".

— Ghazi Abdelrahman Al-Gosaibi

It is supposed, in the general administration of various entities, to have an administrative mentality and the charisma and tools of a leading personality to be able to manage in the best way possible. Administration begins with the human being managing himself, then managing his close relationships with his parents and brothers, then his management of relations with people such as those near his residence, school-mates and friends, until we reach marital relations and family members.

In public and private work, we see the same concept, but with greater development, as a relationship is built to achieve the goals of this work, be it in the public or private sectors. Here stages of administrative mentality start with early confrontation of crises, followed by maturity and gaining of experience that qualify for administration.

There is no doubt that there are exceptions with merits, but I am talking about the general framework. It is worth mentioning that for the post of manager or general supervisor, it is not necessary to be specialized in the same field. The most important thing is administrative mentality, and when administrative mentality is innovative, a specialist in general management can run a group of hospitals while not being a doctor, or manage specialized entities dealing with roads or even culture and arts, because what is wanted is a brain that understands how to manage and places the right person in the right place.

Misunderstanding by some occupiers of higher administrative positions creates a problem within the administration. Imagine a minister who has signing routine administrative papers that are considered part of daily work among his responsibilities - is this not wrong? This is the duty of executives. How will he set policies and how will he follow them up? He will hold executives to account, but not as long as he carries out the job himself!

There is, of course, a bad explanation of this phenomenon, which is one of two:

- To keep signatures to himself and freeze executives whose job is supposed to be this, for moral gains such as to build a reputation among people, or to have relations with politicians and parliamentarians to serve interests based on the give and take policy to protect the ministerial chair from any repercussions that may affect him negatively, such as facing a grilling, etc.
- Not to trust his executive assistants and consider them a hindrance, so he does not rely on them!

Likewise in the private sector, the manager, as the most senior figure in the entity, is not supposed to preoccupy himself with jobs any executive can do. He should focus on supervision and development of plans and policies and choose qualified executives in order to achieve the general interest of the entity. Of course, the intention is profits and achieving the highest returns.

To be continued...