

CONFERENCE

Religious Perspectives on the Environmental Crisis in Lebanon

October 29, 2026

Saint Joseph University of Beirut (USJ)
Innovation and Sport Campus (CIS)
Auditorium François Bassil

“A
Continuous
Faith for a
sustainable
tomorrow.”



— TOGETHER FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE LEBANON —

Conference: Religious Perspectives on the Environmental Crisis in Lebanon

October 29, 2026

AGENDA

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Registration & Welcome

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Opening Remarks

Introduction: Dr. Marguerite El Asmar Bou Aoun, Department of Sciences of Religions - USJ

Welcome addresses by:

1. Prof. Fadi El Hage – Chairholder, Chair of “Fondation Diane”- CEEDD, USJ
2. Dr. Lina Iskandar Hawat – Dean, Faculty of Religious Studies, USJ
3. Ms. Kirsten Auken – Regional Director, Danmission
4. Dr. Michel Abs – Secretary General, Middle East Council of Churches
5. Prof. François Boëdec, s.j. – Rector, USJ
6. H.E. Dr. Tamara El Zein – Minister of Environment

9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Panel I: Discussion

Plenary exchange on the ethical, political, and legal bases of environmental responsibility in religious teachings, highlighting challenges, values, and faith perspectives on sustainability, moderated by Prof. Fadi El Hage and Dr. Marguerite El Asmar Bou Aoun

Panelists: Cheikh Wissam Tai Abou Dargham, Cheikh Judge Mohammad Jouzou, Cheikh Dr Jaafar Fadlallah, Fr. Antoine Al Ahmar, Fr. Bassam Nassif, Rev. Dr. Hadi Ghantous, Prof. Dominique Salameh

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Coffee break

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Thematic Workshops

- Workshop 1:** Religious Education and Environment
- Workshop 2:** Faith-Based Organizations as Actors of Environmental Action
- Workshop 3:** Religious Leadership, Ethics and Environmental Governance

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Lunch break

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Panel II: Synthesis & Reporting

Plenary session to present and discuss the key outcomes of the workshops moderated by Ms. Kirsten Auken and Dr. Zeina Hobaika.

Panelists: Prof. Nada Mallah Boustani, Dr. Liliane Barakat, Prof. Charbel Afif, Dr. Saad Iskandarani, Ms. Samar Bouzeineddine, Mr. Antoine Abdelmassih

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM

Coffee break & Networking

Registration Link: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/aZWwFv1Sim>

PANEL 1: DISCUSSION

PANELISTS

Prof. Dominique Salameh is a scientist, academic, and international environmental expert at Saint Joseph University of Beirut (USJ). His work focuses on environmental sciences, waste management, circular economy, resource preservation, and sustainable development. He has extensive experience as an international consultant and advisor, contributing to environmental policies, national strategies, and sustainability programs across Europe, the Middle East, and internationally. His approach combines scientific expertise, environmental responsibility, and social justice.



Prof. Dominique Salameh

Cheikh Wissam Tai Abou Dargham is a senior Human Resources Director and HR Business Partner for the Middle East, Africa, Turkey, and Latin America at SOMFY Group, with extensive international experience in organizational transformation, talent development, and leadership. He is also a long-standing public speaker engaging youth in Lebanon and across the Lebanese diaspora on identity, cultural heritage, history, and connection to homeland. His work combines expertise in people and leadership with a strong commitment to human and intergenerational development.



Cheikh Wissam Tai
Abou Dargham

Fr. Antoine Al Ahmar is a Catholic priest and member of the Lebanese Maronite Order. He is Professor of Fundamental Theology at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, where he previously served as Dean of Theology and President of the University. Since 2021, he has served as Director of the Theological and Ecumenical Department at the Middle East Council of Churches. His academic and ecclesial work focuses on theology, ecumenism, and fostering dialogue and collaboration among the Churches of the Middle East.



Fr. Antoine Al Ahmar

PANEL 1: DISCUSSION

PANELISTS

Cheikh Judge Mohammad Hani Al-Jouzou is a Sharia Judge at the Sunni Court of law of Mount Lebanon. Representative of the Mufti of Mount Lebanon. Son of the current Mufti of Mount Lebanon Sheikh Mohammad Ali Al-Jouzou, he has represented the Dar al-Fatwa at numerous religious, social, and public events. He leads the main religious court in Mount Lebanon. Judge Al Jouzou runs a number of philanthropies, health, and social institutions in Iqlim al-Kharroub and Mount Lebanon. He remains actively engaged in the religious and community affairs of the region.



Cheikh Judge Mohammad
Hani Al-Jouzou

Cheikh Dr. Jaafar Fadlallah is a Lebanese religious scholar and sociologist. He serves as General Religious Supervisor of the Al-Mabarrat Charitable Association and President of the Contemporary Islamic Thought Foundation. He holds a PhD in Sociology of Knowledge from the Lebanese University where he teaches Qur'anic jurisprudence and Religious Anthropology. His work focuses on contemporary Islamic thought, values and education, social issues, and interfaith and interdenominational dialogue, combining religious scholarship with academic research.



Cheikh Dr. Jaafar Fadlallah

Rev. Dr. Hadi Gbantous is an Ordained Minister of the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon, Executive of its Committee of Ecclesial and Spiritual Affairs, and Pastor of the National Evangelical Church of Minyara, Akkar. He holds a PhD in Old Testament Studies from the University of Bern, Switzerland, and is a member of the European Association of Biblical Studies (EABS) and the Biblical Federation in the Middle East. Member of the General Assembly of A Rocha Lebanon, with numerous publications in Biblical Studies, Theology, and Interfaith Dialogue.



Rd. Dr. Hadi Gbantous

PANEL 1: DISCUSSION

PANELISTS

Fr. Bassam Nassif is an Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Saint John of Damascus Institute of Theology, University of Balamand, and a protopresbyter of the Roum Orthodox Church. He holds a Ph.D. in Theology and a Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Care and Marital Counseling, alongside a background in Mechanical Engineering. His research focuses on contemporary pastoral and ethical challenges, marriage and family, social and environmental issues, and the dialogue between pastoral theology, human sciences, and patristic anthropology.



Fr. Bassam Nassif

MODERATORS



Prof. Fadi El Hage

Delegate of the Rector for
Professional Development |
Chairholder CEEDD



Dr. Marguerite El Asmar
Bou Aoun

Assistant Professor of
Philosophy of Religion and
Program Manager

THEMATIC WORKSHOPS

*Interactive sessions to explore ideas, share experiences,
and build actionable solutions.*



WORKSHOP 1

Religious Education and Environment

Prof. Nada Mallah Boustani and Prof. Charbel Afif



WORKSHOP 2

Faith-Based Organizations as Actors of Environmental Action

Mr. Antoine Abdelmassih and Ms. Samar Bouzeineddine



WORKSHOP 3

Religious Leadership, Ethics and Environmental Governance

Dr. Saad Iskandarani and Prof. Liliane Barakat

PANEL 2: SYNTHESIS & REPORTING

PANELISTS

Prof. Nada Mallah Boustani, PhD-HDR, is Full Professor of Finance at Saint Joseph University of Beirut, where she is actively engaged in teaching and research. Her academic interests focus on sustainable finance, ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance), innovation, and organizational transformation. Her work explores the intersection of finance and sustainability, with particular attention to how innovative approaches and organizational change can contribute to more sustainable practices and decision-making.



Prof. Nada Mallah
Boustani

Dr. Liliane Buccianti-Barakat is a Geographer and urban planner specializing in urban spaces, migration, the environment, tourism, and heritage. Founder of the Department of Geography at USJ (1995) and researcher at CREEMO, her research focuses on Lebanon, Beirut, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. Member of the Chair CEEDD's steering committee (USJ), the Lebanese National Committee of ICOMOS, and the Board of Directors of Erasmus Expertise (France).



Dr. Liliane Buccianti
Barakat

Prof. Charbel Afif is an international expert in atmospheric sciences with over 20 years of experience. He is Professor at the Faculty of Sciences of Saint Joseph University (USJ) and the Cyprus Institute, and leads USJ's "Emissions, Measurements and Modelling of the Atmosphere" (EMMA) research group. His work focuses on air pollution and climate change, with research and consulting projects across several continents and collaborations with leading international organizations. He has also advised numerous environment ministries, particularly across the MENA region.



Prof. Charbel Afif

PANEL 2: SYNTHESIS & REPORTING

PANELISTS

Ms. Samar Bouzeineddine is a Senior Instructor and Researcher at the Modern University for Business and Science (MUBS), with expertise in effective teaching practices, teacher professional development, and innovative educational approaches. She holds a Master of Arts in Education in Educational Management and Leadership and a Teaching Diploma from the Lebanese American University (LAU). Her work also includes social-emotional learning and environmental education initiatives in Lebanon.



Ms. Samar Bouzeineddine

Cheikh Dr. Saad Iskandarani is an Imam and Preacher at the Great Al-Omari Mosque in Downtown Beirut, and Lecturer at Al-Makassed University.

Director of “Maharat” Institute for Development and a social activist, holding a Master’s degree in Political Sociology and pursuing a PhD in Sociology at Beirut Arab University. Holder of a Diploma in Islamic-Christian Dialogue from Saint Joseph University (USJ), he is the author of two published books and several academic studies and research papers.



Dr. Saad Iskandarani

Mr. Antoine Abdelmassih is a Program Manager at Danmission, with over 20 years of experience in program management, peacebuilding, development, and social cohesion across Lebanon, Egypt, and Syria. He has managed internationally funded projects focused on resilient communities, intercultural dialogue, youth empowerment, livelihoods, and natural resource management. He holds a Master’s degree and a D.E.A. in Business Management from Saint Joseph University of Beirut and brings strong expertise in grant management, proposal writing, reporting, MEAL, and outcomes harvesting.



Mr. Antoine Abdelmassih

PANEL 2: SYNTHESIS & REPORTING

MODERATORS



Ms. Kirsten Auken

Regional Director, Middle East,
Danmission



Dr. Zeina Hobaika

Associate Professor in Biochemistry and
Technology Transfer Office Director, USJ

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