

**Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran**  
**A/69/356 para 107**

**Full recommendation:**

*He calls upon the Government to take immediate and effective steps to stop and reverse the desiccation of Lake Urmia and upon the international community to support the conservation efforts further.*

**Assessment**

Lake Urmia is a saltwater lake in Iran, located between East and West Azerbaijan. Lake Urmia was once the second-largest saltwater lake in the world, covering over 5000 square Kilometers at its peak. Environmental rights advocates have continuously raised the issue of the lake's shrinking over the years as it has been reported to drain to less than 20% of its average size.<sup>1</sup> Research points to water overuse and inefficient water management in local agriculture, besides climate change issues such as declining rainfall and rising temperatures as the main issues causing the drying out of Lake Urmia.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of his presidency, Hassan Rouhani promised to address the environmental issues surrounding the shrinking of Lake Urmia. After coming to power, Hassan Rouhani ordered the formation of the "Lake Urmia Rehabilitation Committee" and this committee, in cooperation with the government, carried out a series of measures, some of which successful. Despite positive developments, Lake Urmia's condition is not close to being fully rehabilitated. According to the government, if the planned measures continue to be implemented, the environmental conditions of the lake will improve in the next 4 years.<sup>3</sup>

Recommendation Status:

This recommendation has been **PARTIALLY  
IMPLEMENTED.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/pictureshow/2019/11/12/751360322/the-death-and-life-of-irans-lake-urmia>

<sup>2</sup> <https://theconversation.com/iran-decades-of-unsustainable-water-use-has-dried-up-lakes-and-caused-environmental-destruction-140565>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.irna.ir/photo/84029819/> and <https://waterhouse.ir/content/131>