

For Immediate Release



AUB studies on oil exploration, cooling, and solar energy highlighted during workshop on energy and natural resources

Beirut, Lebanon- 27/05/2011 - Lebanon's high risk profile does not affect the level of profit a company could make from oil exploration and production, according to new research conducted by a team of AUB engineering professors.

Professors Ali Yassine and Bacel Maddah overviewed the results of a study they are conducting to help the government and oil companies determine the optimal decisions regarding exploration and production of oil reserves found off the Lebanese coast.

The team presented their findings during the Second Annual Workshop on Energy and Natural Resources, which was held on May 20, 2011 at the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture at the American University of Beirut.

Organized by the Munib R. and Angela Masri Institute of Energy and Natural Resources, the workshop gathered a pool of researchers who overviewed research on eco-friendly cooling systems for buildings, solar energy and biotechnology.

The research team noted that according to the U.S. Geological Survey, offshore prospectation has revealed 1.7 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 3.45 trillion cubic meters of gas, which means oil companies will soon take heed.

For this reason, the team developed an innovative dynamic programming formulation that allows companies to plug in reserve levels and price risk levels to maximize profit and make the best decisions regarding exploration, production and decommissioning. The team also suggested plausible ranges for an efficient production sharing contract (PSC) that the government signs with interested oil companies for offshore exploration and production in Lebanon.

Associate Provost Nesreen Ghaddar, a mechanical engineer and the chair of the Masri Institute's steering committee, welcomed participants and later presented her research on providing fresh water needs and a thermally comfortable environment for building by relying on a dehumidification system that collects water from Beirut's humid atmosphere, while also acting as an air conditioning system.

Other researchers included Professors Bilal Kaafarani and Tarek Ghaddar from Chemistry who presented on organic photovoltaics and dye-sensitized solar cells respectively. PhD candidate

Sophia Ghanimeh also presented on biotechnological advancements in sustainable solutions to energy insecurity in developing countries.

During the opening remarks, Acting Dean of Engineering Fadl Moukalled noted that the institute helps AUB fulfill its strategic research goals and serve as a focal point for collaborative research among scientists, engineers and professionals in Lebanon and the region. Main topics of research will be energy, water, and petroleum, among others.

Arts and Sciences Dean Patrick McGreevy said that through research on photovoltaic cells for solar energy and energy policies, the University will make advances to address the acute problems of energy and water resources in the region.

AUB Trustee Munib Masri, after whom the institute is named, said that collaborative research on energy and water that takes into consideration environmental sustainable is even more crucial now at a time when crude oil prices have hit an all-time high.

"We are proud of this institution and will never forget what AUB has done for this region, producing the most important leaders in this area," he added.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of more than 7,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full service 420-bed hospital.

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