

IBDAA¹

*The International Biodiversity Day * At AUB*

* The United Nations proclaimed May 22nd the International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. In December 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted 22 May as IBD, to commemorate the adoption of the text of the Convention on 22 May 1992 by the Nairobi Final Act of the Conference for the Adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

On May 22, IBSAR, the Nature conservation center for sustainable futures at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, will hold its yearly event, *International Biodiversity Day At AUB*, which constitutes an opportunity for AUB students to present and share their works highlighting the innovative, creative, and leading role of the AUB community in addressing how we can conserve and use nature sustainably.

On this day, more than 200 students will display their works in an open air forum at the University Green Oval. The event will take place between 2:30 pm and 5:30 pm. Students will explain their works to their peers, to AUB faculty, staff, and upper administration, as well as select members from the private and public sector.

What is the form of the final product? Student contributions include demonstrations, models, posters, and description of research findings. The contributions will come from various disciplines including novel natural products for personal and home use, marketing campaigns for natural products, creative writings, artistic expressions of nature, studies describing biodiversity, nature, and habitats, as well as various aspects related to the environment.

In preparation for this event, which started in February, participating students are given the opportunity to address biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization from various angles to develop a new understanding of the subject as they enroll in a problem solving, critical thinking and decision making process.

We are interested in the feedback of the private sector regarding these projects. We hope IBDAA will stimulate professional feedback and encourage in further development and investment in promoting the students contributions.

On May 22, the winning teams in each class will be officially recognized and awarded certificates by the University Provost. Winning teams will be selected by class instructors/advisors based on their academic merit. To honor the winners, we will announce during the event that one hundred and fifty native Lebanese trees will be planted next fall in Lebanese villages in rural communities (*part of IBSAR's 'seeds of hope, trees for tomorrow' campaign*).

The announcement for IBDAA will be sent to the United Nations CBD secretariat and a news article about the event will be produced and distributed to the local media. Five hundred booklets that will include all contributing student and faculty names and summaries of the works presented will be distributed.

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¹ IBDAA in Arabic means creative excellence

About the organizing body: This event is organized by IBSAR

IBSAR, nature conservation center for sustainable futures, was established in 2002, as an interfaculty research center dedicated to biodiversity research, development and knowledge dissemination. IBSAR serves as a platform for innovative research in biodiversity that will expand economic opportunities and promote sustainable practices.

IBSAR-AUB conducts programs in five main areas:

- **Traditional Knowledge and Biotechnology:** *Based on Arab ancestral knowledge in medicine and the use of biotechnology and clinical research, the Center focuses on characterizing, verifying, and validating the beneficial effects of plants and other natural resources, while exploring their safe use and marketability.*
- **Identification, Characterization, and Monitoring of Biodiversity:** *The Center conducts its scientific activities on both nature and people that are marginalized, and it seeks to re-position them as central to a sustainable future.*
- **Landscape Approach to Biodiversity Conservation:** *Landscape research at the Center aims to develop efficient spatial planning of project sites to ensure the preservation of local landscape character and sustainable use of land resources.*
- **Sustainable Use of Biodiversity:** *Through research, studying market needs, and optimizing production and cultivation techniques of plants native to the region, researchers have partnered with the private sector to generate ideas leading to the introduction of new products and the creation of new industries.*
- **Knowledge Sharing:** *The Center seeks to increase awareness of the value of biodiversity and interest in nature conservation. Through projects and partnerships, the Center expands interest in nature conservation and sustainable utilization to private businesses, the arts community and communities to expand their capabilities and impacts.*

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