

World Bank Group Statement on Red Sea-Dead Sea Water Conveyance Study Program

Contact

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Washington, D.C., June 29, 2009 - A meeting was held between Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Regional Development Silvan Shalom of Israel and World Bank Group President Robert B. Zoellick on June 25, 2009 in Washington, DC.

During the meeting a number of regional issues were discussed, including the ongoing Red Sea - Dead Sea Water Conveyance Study Program involving Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority that is being managed by the World Bank. In 2008 the World Bank launched the Study Program based on terms of reference developed by the three parties (Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority). These studies are examining all relevant technical, economic, financial, environmental and social factors. They will be completed in early 2011 and will help determine further World Bank involvement which will of course be a matter of discussion with the three parties.

During the meeting a number of other issues were discussed including a new initiative for a private sector led proposed Jordan Red Sea Water Project that has no World Bank involvement.

The World Bank Group recognizes the regional importance of expanding drinking water supplies in a sustainable manner, as well as supporting the three parties with a possible solution to the environmental problems facing the Dead Sea, and wants to be helpful. While no agreement on funding of either project has been reached, the Bank is working with all the parties to explore ideas, including the possibility of phased implementation.

Any involvement by the World Bank requires consultation with all affected stakeholders, careful analysis to ensure that the project would be implemented in adherence with the World Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies which are designed to protect the environment and affected populations, and approval from the Bank's Board.

We wish to emphasize again that the World Bank remains committed to supporting the three parties on this very important issue.