

Discussion of Sustainable Development in Amman

1. Share your reactions in small (3 person) groups.
 - a. React to the assigned readings for the day (“The modern king...,” and “collapse, environment, society”), making sure you reflect on each article’s main points, what you find interesting, and any questions you may have.

2. Relate the Abdali project in Amman to the sustainability & social sustainability frameworks we have considered in class (see handout).
 - a. Where does the Abdali project fit in these frameworks?
 - b. What conflicts are managed well?
 - c. What conflicts stand out as unresolved?

3. Consider King Abdullah and his interest to sustain the regime of the Hashemite kingdom amidst pressure from the Arab Spring, rapid modernization, and competition among states in the Middle East to capture mobile capital investment.
 - a. Where does the King’s interest fit into the sustainability frameworks we have studied?

4. Imagine yourself in King Abdullah’s position. How would you handle development of the Abdali project, especially in light of the project’s critiques and shortcomings?
 - a. What would you prioritize in investing \$5 Billion into the country’s biggest city?
 - b. What sustainability conflicts or tensions do you think would be the most challenging to face?

5. Reflect on the long-term view of sustainability in the Middle East offered by Butzer et al. (“Collapse...”)
 - a. What roles do elites play in both potentially triggering the collapse of civilizations and fostering their stabilization and recovery? (it may help to refer to the figure on p. 3636)
 - b. What role do you think the Hashemites are playing in Jordan?
 - c. Relate this long-term view to the previous discussion about what you would do in King Abdullah’s position. Does this lead you to reassert or rethink your original position? Explain why.