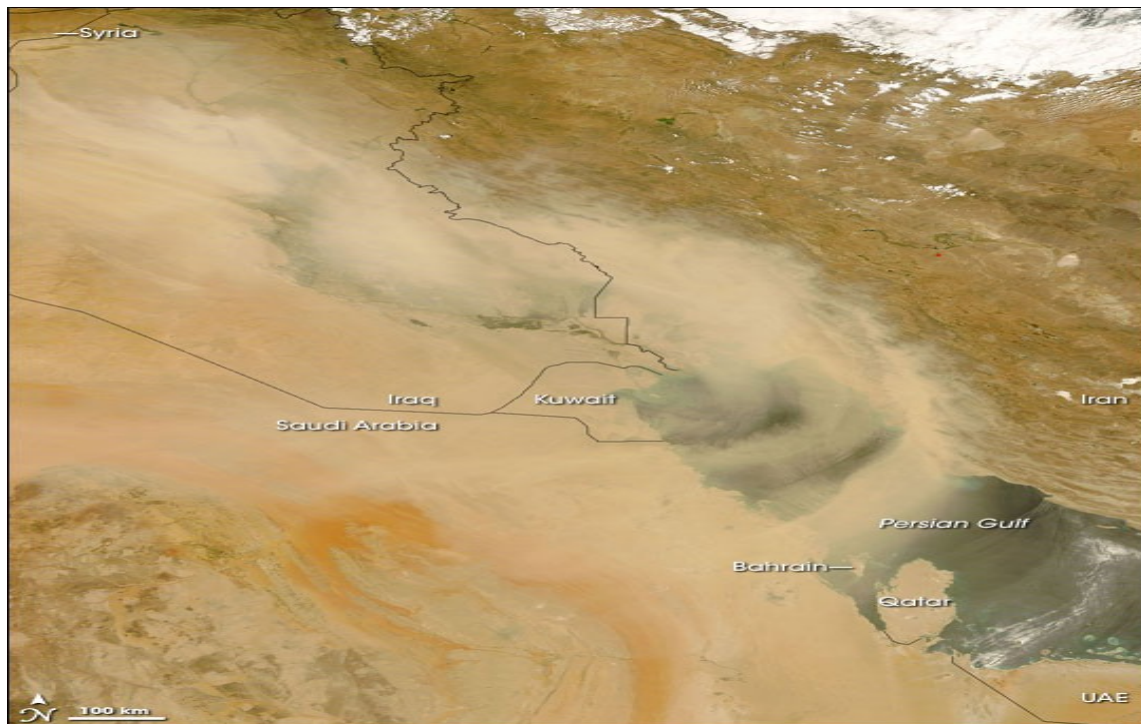


## An Introduction to the Scientific Forum

Dust storm phenomenon in the arid or semi-arid areas of the world, especially desert areas, has been understood as a natural and seasonal phenomenon since long time ago. Iran is also located in arid and semi-arid region; therefore, dust has been a natural phenomenon in this area. Over the past decade, an increasing trend in the natural airborne dust has been observed. Increase in the occurrence frequency, length of duration, physical and chemical characteristics and concentration of the dust lead a need for more serious attention. Changes in air pressure, severe winds, climate changes, successive droughts, and reduction of rainfall and humidity of air and soil are the most influential factors which contribute to the natural airborne dust. Change in the environmental resources management, dam construction, wars, and change of people life style in the region are also the other factors that increase the incidence of this phenomenon. Dust phenomena have directly and indirectly have many damaging effects. In addition to economic and social impacts, some of adverse effects of dust storms are soil degradation, reduction of plant production, animal procreation and the prevalence of dangerous diseases.

The dust phenomenon affected large areas of the Middle East. In Iran, for example, dust transported from the deserts of Saudi Arabia, Iraq and North East Africa, has affected on southern, western and northern regions of the Persian Gulf and even center and North of Iran.



Natural airborne dust phenomenon and sand storm have begun for 10 years in Abadan, Khorramshahr and Shadegan. Nearly after 8 years it has spread to the west, North West, south and center of the country. Consequently, dust phenomena have caused many problems for the residents of 20 provinces of South and South West regions of the country. The provinces of Khuzestan, Ilam, Bushehr, Kermanshah, Lorestan and Yasouj have had the highest concentration of dust during dust storm. In addition to some negative effects, these particles are carrying pollutant particles.

Islamic Republic of Iran has started multilateral negotiations with all the countries engaged in the region to deal seriously with this phenomenon. Then, some strategies have been designed. In the line with this, Kermanshah Medical Science with collaboration of Razi University has the honor of organizing the first international Scientific Forum on natural airborne dust phenomenon on 23-25 May 2012.

The secretariat of the Forum is in Environmental Health Engineering Department, Health Faculty.

The Scientific Subjects:

Source identification

Emission and transmission

Quantitative and qualitative assessment

Environmental and health impacts

Control and prevention approaches

Hereby, all professors, researchers, scholars and practitioners of environmental health and other professionals who work in this field from the country and abroad are invited to participate in the Scientific Forum to present their valuable experiences and their latest scientific findings to managers, scholars and researchers. It is hoped that the findings and outcomes of this Scientific Forum present some practical solutions to control this crisis.

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