

The CEDEJ Environment and Social Policies Seminar Series: Eco-tourism

“We’re in a situation where, if we want to avoid catastrophic climate change, eco-tourism is probably the only strategy for the future of tourism. It may be not a simple prospect, but it sure is a necessary one.”

-Simone Abram

On the 17th of February, another event of the CEDEJ Environment and Social Policies Seminar Series took place and was moderated by FES program manager Waleed Mansour and CEDEJ representative Agnès Deboulet. The online seminar thematized the necessity and possible implementations of eco-tourism as the future of touristic travelling.

After a bilingual introduction to the topic, Simone Abram gave the audience an insightful overview on the negative effects of traditional tourism and the challenges of promoting eco-tourism. Abram is a Professor of Anthropology at Durham University and author of the books “Tourists and Tourism” and “Green Ice: Tourism ecologies in the European High North”. She stressed the fact, that eco-tourism is based on principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability, although the preservation of the nature is in the focus of this concept. She further highlighted the need for educating tourists about this better form of experiencing a new culture. Abram also stated a few dilemmas that eco-tourism is object to, such as the conflict between local and global sustainability, the danger of eco-washing the term, the fact that tourism remains an economic necessity for the locals and the conflict between nature conservation and social benefits. By listing different questions related to conceptualizing eco-tourism, Abram concluded her short speech by mentioning the main challenges of successfully promoting this concept.

The second speaker of the event was Barcelona-based staff member of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, Mohammed Elrazzaz. He started by elucidating the concepts of Blue Economy and Blue Tourism. The latter is a project that aims to identify the practices for managing negative externalities and foster sustainable development. Elrazzaz further stressed that the Mediterranean, the region that accounts for 20% of the gross marine products worldwide, is especially affected by the destructive nature of traditional tourism. The fact that tourists use 3-4 times as much water as locals and that over 50% of the plastic litter in the ocean comes from the former, demonstrates just how bad this luxury is for our environment. The Professor of Mediterranean Heritage highlights that some locals are severely bothered by commercial travelers, which, as he states, is expressed by posters in Barcelona’s streets saying “Tourism = Cancer”.

Hence, the local's consciousness of the serious damages that tourism can cause to the cities' cultural heritage, is increasing. Finally, Elrazzaz tackled the issue of the freedom to operate in Egypt. As the concept of eco-tourism is still not established enough, alternative travelers might still face problems with Egyptian authorities when travelling on their own.

Following this presentation, tourism consultant Sandrine Gamblin and eco activist Hashim Morsy, showcased possible implementations of eco-tourism.

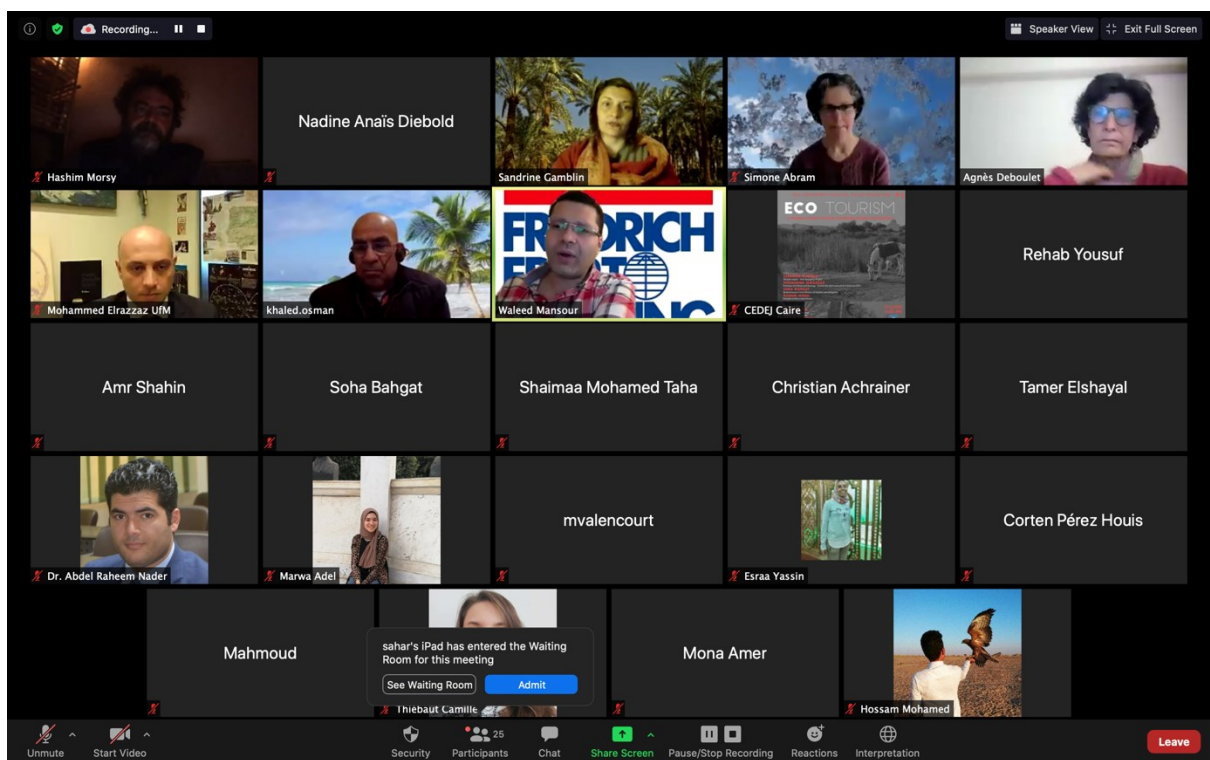
Gamblin gave a presentation on how the EU-funded project "Visit Badrashin" aims to redefine tourism in Egypt. The project's objective is to support rural development by combining responsible tourism, economic growth, market access and competitiveness in the area of Badrashin. It gives people the chance to stay on a farm with locals and thus to support transforming local rural assets into resilient, tourism-based products and services.

Morsy, the founder of the Heissa Camp Ecolodge and Azaaola, talked about how he established the two camps in a way that they are a 100% ecofriendly, without changing the ecological character of the locations. The Heissa Camp gives travelers the chance to watch birds, while it protects their habitat. Morsy emphasized that the clientele of his lodges mainly consists of visitors who want to have the authentic nature and culture experience in Egypt – unlike the stereotypical tourist.

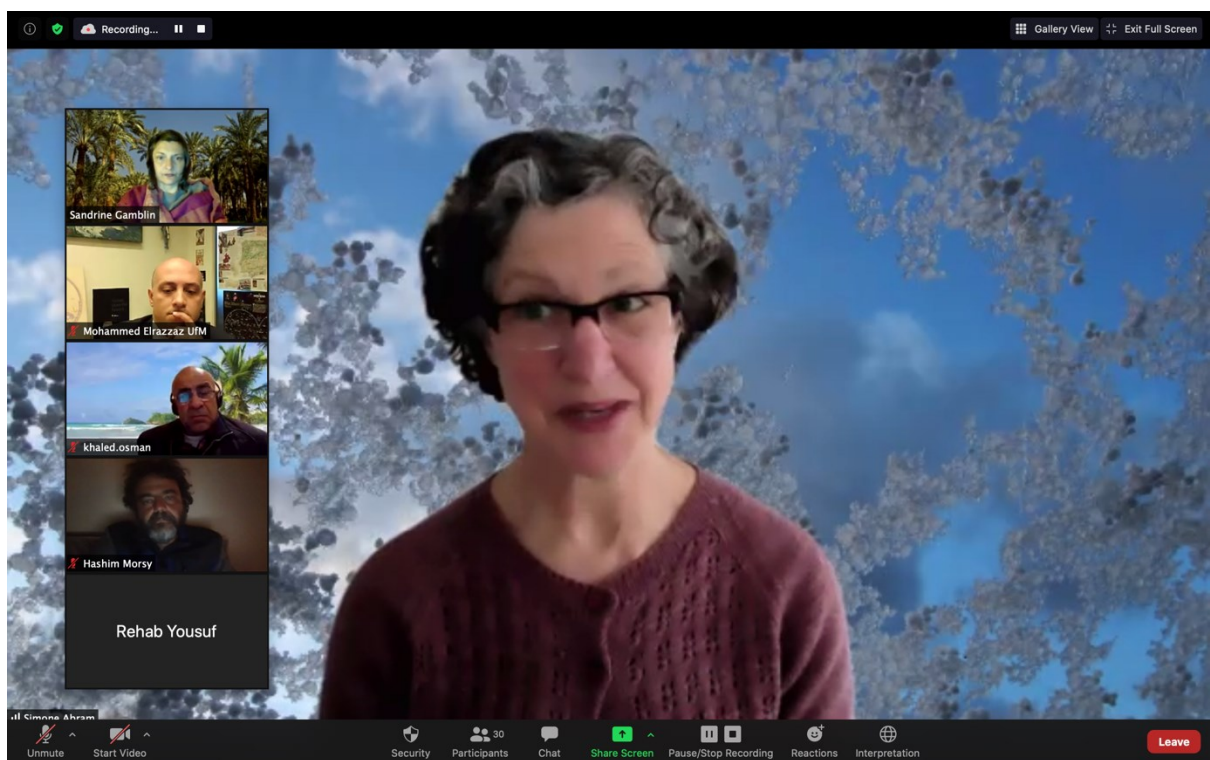
Finally, Soha Bahgat, Assistant Professor in Tourism Studies and spoke person to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities elucidated Egypt's two strategies for tourism. According to Bahgat, the government will set a stronger focus on sustainable as well as ecological tourism, to preserve the country's nature and archeological sites. She further stated that the government is setting certain standards for ecolodges to set a regulatory framework for eco-tourism.

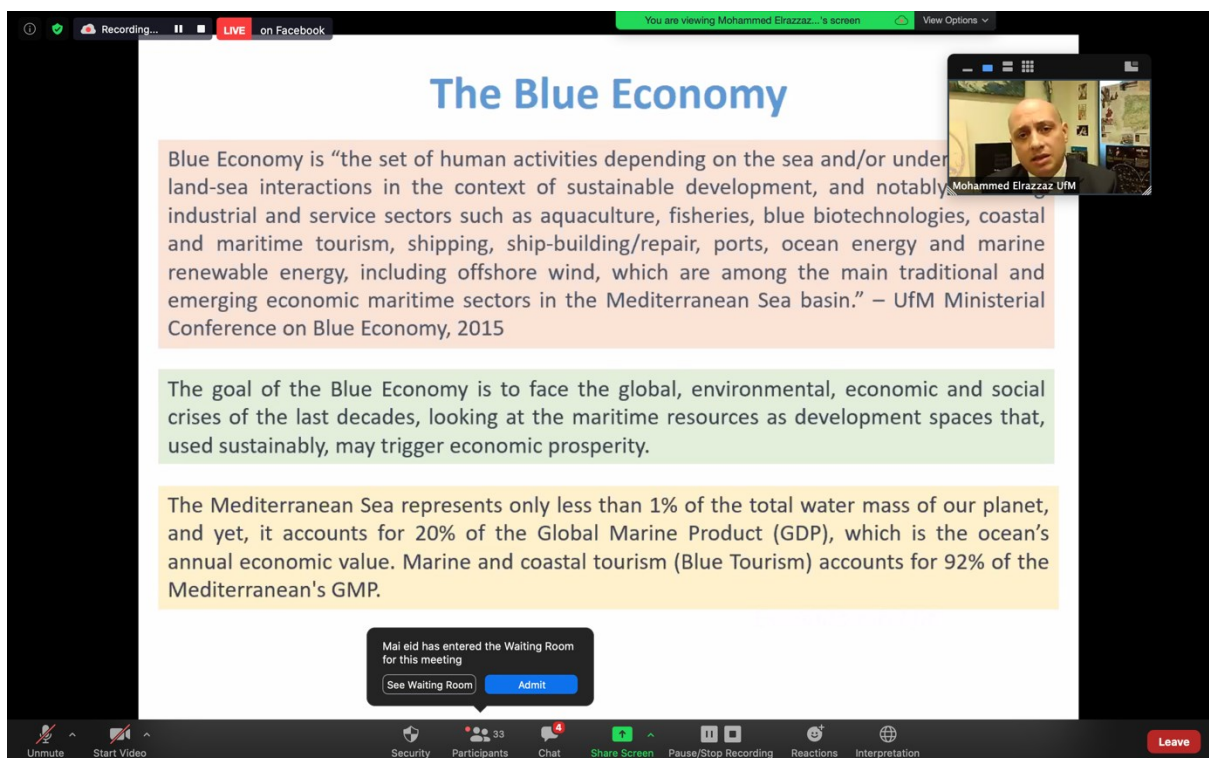
After Bahgat has finished, questions like whether and how Egyptian authorities will respect the environment by not setting up projects in the midst of fields or cultural sites, opened the stage for an urgent discussion about continuing drawbacks in the environmental and cultural consciousness within the Egyptian society.

The event ended after all of the speakers were given the chance for some final words about the future of eco-tourism in Egypt.









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A Price Tag on Mediterranean Blue Economy

US\$ 5.6TN THE VALUE OF THE TOTAL OCEAN ASSET BASE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA IS AT LEAST US\$5.6 TRILLION	US\$450 BN THE ECONOMY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN, WORTH AT LEAST US\$450BN, IS THE 5TH LARGEST ECONOMY IN THE REGION	2.9% TOURISM IS EXPECTED TO GROW BY AROUND 2.9% PER ANNUM OVER THE NEXT DECADE
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Source: WWF Report on "Reviving the Economy of the Mediterranean", 2017.

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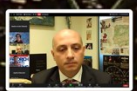
Nadine Anaïs Diebold

Simone Abram

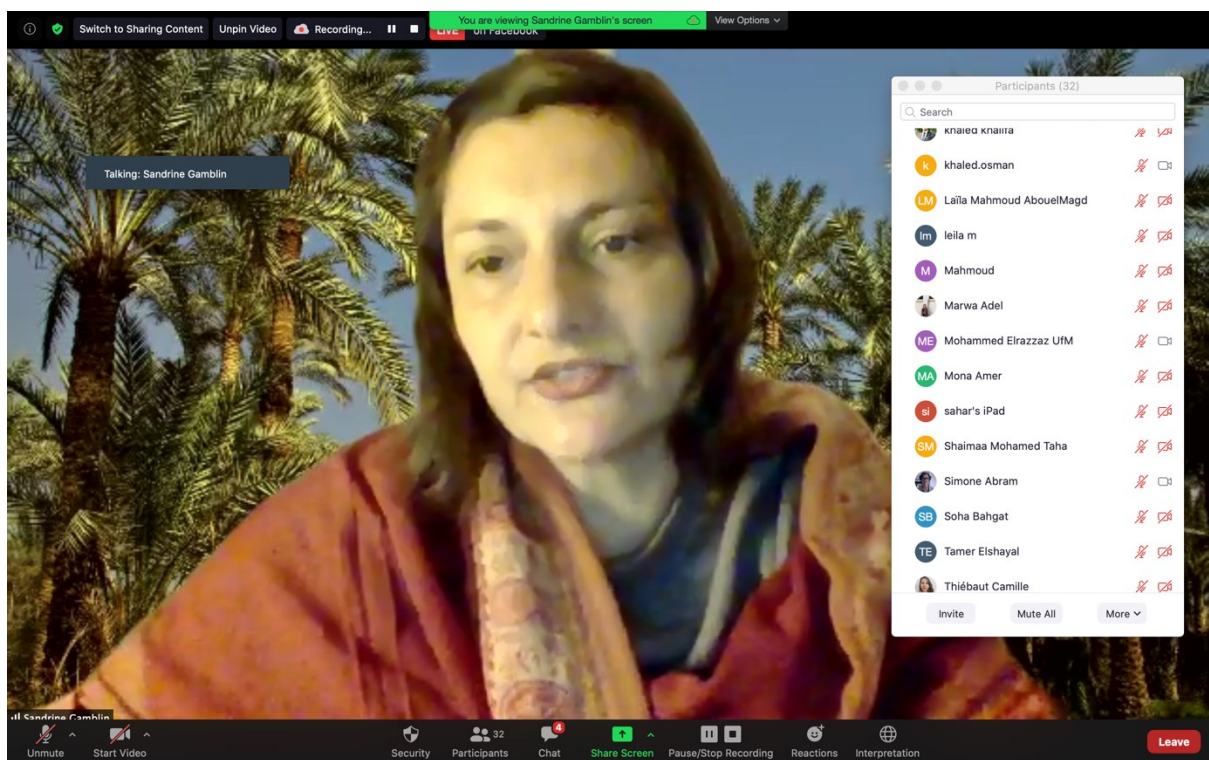
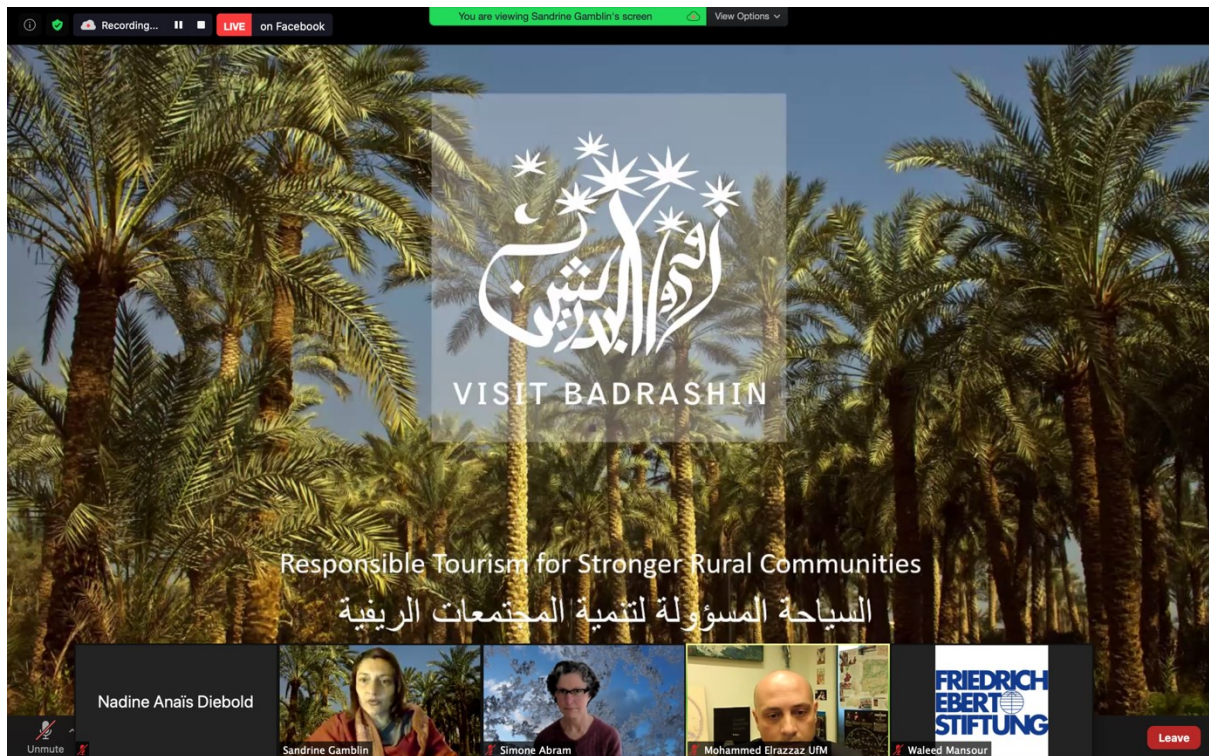
Mohammed Elrazzaz UFM

Waleed Mansour

Agnès Deboulet



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About the Project



ARC Agricultural Research Center



This project is funded by the European Union



North South Consultants Exchange Professionals in Sustainable Development



VISIT BADRASHIN

Visit Badrashin! Project is funded by the European Union (EU) under the Inclusive Economic Growth Program (IEGP – 15 projects)

Visit Badrashin! Project is implemented by North-South Consultants Exchange (NSCE) and the Agriculture Research Center (ARC - Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture)

Sandrine Gamblin

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Talking: Sandrine Gamblin

Participants (32)

Participant	Status
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khaled.osman	/x
Laila Mahmoud AbouelMagd	/x
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Mahmoud	/x
Marwa Adel	/x
Mohammed Elrazzaz UFM	/x
Mona Amer	/x
sahar's iPad	/x
Shaimaa Mohamed Taha	/x
Simone Abram	/x
Soha Bahgat	/x
Tamer Elshayal	/x
Thiébaud Camille	/x

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Sandrine Gamblin

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Project objectives

2018-2021

Responsible Tourism
Inclusive economic growth
SMEs competitiveness
Innovative products and services



Badrashin on the Responsible Tourism map
Discovery tour designing
Public awareness (hosts & guests)

Training workshops
Enhancing service and production quality
Individual project counselling
(Food processing, handicraft, hospitality and tour guiding, hygiene and Covid crisis, entrepreneurship, digital marketing)

Nadine Anaïs Diebold

Sandrine Gamblin

Simone Abram

Mohammed Elrazzaz UfM

Waleed Mansour

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG

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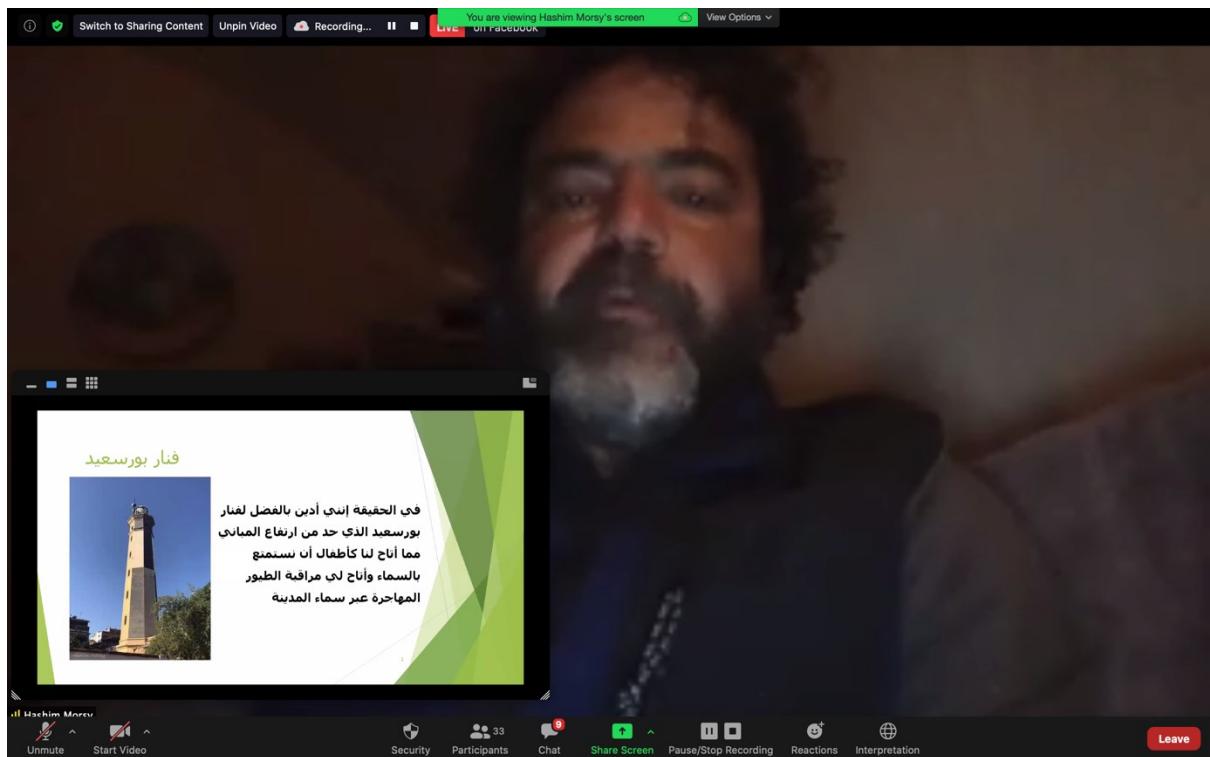
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Amr Shahin	Soha Bahgat	Shaimaa Mohamed Taha	Christian Achraier	Tamer Elshayal
Dr. Abdel Raheem Nader	Marwa Adel	Esraa Yassin	Corten Pérez Houis	Mahmoud
Thiébaut Camille	khaled khalifa	Laila Mahmoud AbouelMagd	leila m	Zeinab LE GUELLEC
Zohra Merabet	Tristan Lesage de La Haye	Beshoy magdy	Mona Amer	Noor Ali
Abou Ndiaye	Jenna LE GUELLEC	heba ragab	sahar's iPad	iPad de Richard

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Participants (33)

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- Shaimaa Mohamed Taha
- Simone Abram
- Soha Bahgat
- Tamer Elshayal
- Thiébaut Camille
- Tristan Lesage de La Haye
- Zeinab LE GUELLEC
- Zohra Merabet

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Talking: Hashim Morsy

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علم الارض



لم نفرق في أسعار الإقامة بين المصري والأجنبي وكنا نستهدف فئة المسافرين "Travelers" حيث ان معظمهم يعيشون الإقامة في الأماكن البيئية التي تتيح لهم الفرصة للتواصل مع الطبيعة ومن حسن الحظ كانت هذه الفئة من المسافرين هي الأكثر سفرا خلال أزمة كورونا على عكس فئة المسافرين "Tourists" والتي كانت أكثر حذرا في السفر.

Hashim Morsy

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Talking: Soha Bahgat

Participants (32)

- NA Nadine Anaïs Di... (Co-host, me)
- CEDEJ Caire (Host)
- WM Waleed Mansour (Co-host)
- SB Soha Bahgat
- AD Agnès Deboulet
- RY Rehab Yousuf (Interpreter)
- AN Abou Ndiaye
- AS Amr Shahin (Interpreter)
- Beshoy magdy
- CP Corten Pérez Houis
- Dr. Abdel Raheem Nader
- Esraa Yassin

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FRÉDÉRIC EP

Nadine Anaïs Diebold

Mohammed Elazzaz UJM

Agnès Deboulet

Simone Abram

Waleed Mansour

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