

Lebanon sinks old tanks to create underwater dive 'park'

July 28 2018



Environmental activists drop off an old mechanised armoured personnel carrier provided by the Lebanese Armed Forces into the Mediterranean Sea, about three kilometres off the coast of the southern Lebanese port city of Sidon, on July 28, 2018

Lebanese environmentalists on Saturday sank 10 old tanks and armoured vehicles to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea in a novel attempt to attract divers and create new habitats for marine life.

Three kilometres off the [coast](#) of the city of Sidon, a huge crane on the back of a ship manoeuvred the military hardware into place over the water before dropping them down to the seabed one after the other.

The initiative to create an "underwater park" is spearhead by a local group, Friends of the coast of Sidon, which got the Lebanese army to hand over some of its old vehicles for the project.

"This will be a paradise for divers and a place where we can develop underwater life," said NGO representative Kamel Kozbar, who hopes seaweed will soon cover the vehicles.

Lebanon boasts some 200 kilometres of Mediterranean coast but beaches have not been spared from a waste and garbage crisis that has plagued Lebanon for years.

In Sidon, a mountain of smelly trash has scarred the shoreline, despite the presence of a new waste management facility.

In a region fraught with tensions the latest project also has some political undertones.

The tanks have been placed with their turrets facing towards Lebanon's southern foe Israel "out of solidarity for the Palestinian people", Kozbar said.



Environmental activists drop off an old battle tank provided by the Lebanese Armed Forces into the Mediterranean Sea, about three kilometres off the coast of the southern Lebanese port city of Sidon, on July 28, 2018

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Citation: Lebanon sinks old tanks to create underwater dive 'park' (2018, July 28) retrieved 8 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-07-lebanon-tanks-underwater.html>

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