

- Impact Assessment in Iran – We only have the conventional EIA in which the social and cultural aspects are briefly mentioned.
- The screening is a table with capacity limits and locations of the project, in which there is NO implications for Cultural Heritage components
- Iranian NGO and activists do quite a great deal using and harvesting the capacities.
- The benefits and potentials have for impact assessment have been recognized and reported very frequently: typical examples of consulting with stakeholders, engaging communities, to newer initiatives in monitoring of impacts and so on
- We selected 4 cases Studies: the most controversial projects in the last decades in terms of cultural heritage impacts
- Systematically collected contentions, debates, arguments, discussions etc. on the Social Networks (Mainly Facebook) and weblogs



- Very close to a social unrest
- One of the first time that Face book, text messages and other capabilities of the 'Digital era', help the protestors to organize themselves, influence public opinions and turn them into their sides
- Years later, these would become the main tool for political unrests as well as many other environmental campaigns and so on.
- No (or very very low) environmental concerns could be heard



**After 6 years now reveals:**

- The dam has never reached its technical / economical objectives (*Unverified reports*)
- A wetland in downstream (Ramsar site) now is completely dried out
- **But there is no a single objective evidence that the tomb affected**



- This has been **ascribed to a various possible causes** form draught and lack of deposition, poor engineering design, underestimation of the evaporation rate etc etc. which none of those arguments can be easily proven or rejected

**3 other case studies**

Fake news and manipulated data

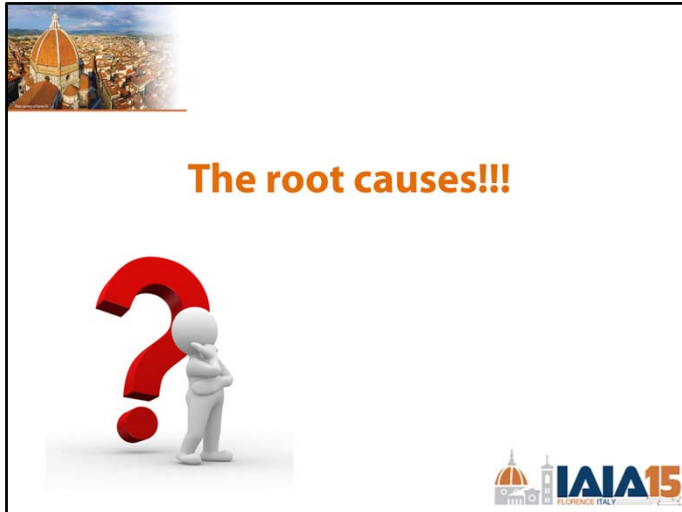
No EIAs

Un-verified / unverifiable arguments

**BUT**  
Real and legitimate *concerns*

IAIA15  
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- We also had three more case studies. The position of those projects from many aspects **are different**
- We systematically collected and sorted facebook and weblog posts and other medias
- Same time **searched for EIA** reports to see **whether the concerns have been addressed**
- No EIA report, because all those three projects located in the urban areas, and / or not included (**e.g. urban subway, or a big commercial building / shopping mall etc.**)
- These are the common findings:
- Again, Tsunami of Facebook posts, SMSs, Vibers, V Chats, Linked in, twits etc. etc.
- The vast majority of them were again based on rumors, fake news and superficial photos, manipulated data etc.



- Almost impossible to be proved scientifically, but not too difficult to guess
- Lack of right of influencing decision making or being consulted, or even being informed about decisions, the voices have not been heard?? ....
- Lack of free space to talk and protest legitimately ....
- Lack of trust .....
- Even Conspiracy theory / maybe the proponent (government) itself has triggered this? ....

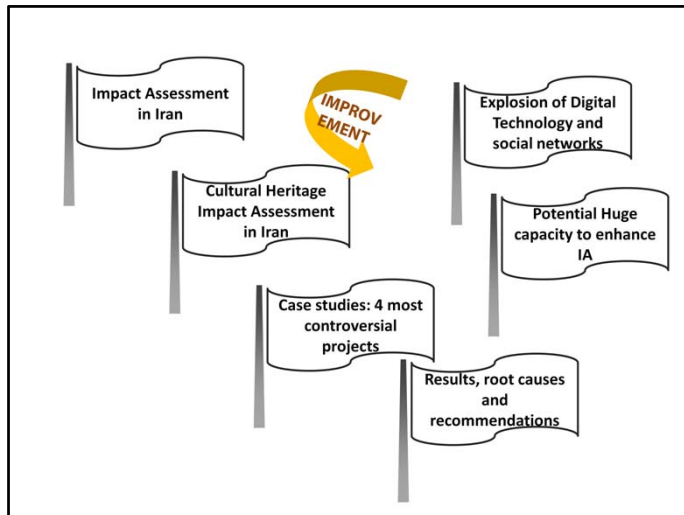


## Recommendations

- **Capacity building, awareness raising and training for the both Cultural Heritage activists and the EIA practitioners, reviewers etc.**
- **IA practitioners and also CH Activists to use the Social networks and other medias proactively**
- Clear Scoping / screening requirements to cover any project with likely negative impacts to Cultural Heritage
- Stakeholder engagement and public participation Shall be come



- This is the simplest part to recommend, probably the most difficult to implement (at the national level)
- It seems that EIA practitioners and involved parties (including reviewers and approvers in the DOE) and the ICOMOS members .... lives in two different planets **(Venus and March if you like)**
- IAEA for instance and ICOMOS ....
- Formal University curriculum and journal papers
- The first one, we are just started to work on it through the Iranian Association for Environmental Assessment (Now an affiliate of the IAIA) and ICOMOS, to implement some training courses for both sides
- Two second parts are much more difficult, but still possible



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