Status of cooperation for Regional Preparations for UNFCCC COP-18

By: Tarek Sadek
Water Resources and Climate Change Officer
Sustainable Development & Productivity Division- UN ESCWA
I. Outcomes of COP17 and key relevant issues…
II. Proposals for activities during the COP-18 in Qatar
The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) entered into force in 1995 as an international treaty to cooperatively consider what countries could do to limit average global temperature increases and the resulting climate change, and to cope with its impacts.


The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC have been meeting annually to assess progress in dealing with climate change.
• The COP also serves as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), which also adopts decisions and resolutions on the implementation of its provisions.
• The outcome is a COP document that includes all decisions e.g. Copenhagen Accord, Cancun Agreements, Durbin Platform…
• COP-17 was held in Durban, South Africa during 27 November- 9 December 2011 with the attendance of about 20,000 delegates.
Key issues….

- Adaptation
- Mitigation
- Capacity building
- Finance
- Technology transfer
- Reducing Emissions from Deforestation & Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD).
- ……..
A significantly advanced framework for the reporting of emission reductions for both developed and developing countries was also agreed, taking into consideration the common but differentiated responsibilities of different countries.

Governments agreed the full implementation of the package to support developing nations, agreed last year in Cancun, Mexico.

The package includes the Green Climate Fund, an Adaptation Committee designed to improve the coordination of adaptation actions on a global scale, and a Technology Mechanism, which are to become fully operational in 2012.
The UN Climate Change process will be led by the climate science in the IPCC’s Fifth Assessment Report and the global Review from 2013-2015.

The next major UNFCCC Climate Change Conference, COP 18/ CMP 8, is to take place 26 November to 7 December 2012 in Qatar, in close cooperation with the Republic of Korea.
Countries agreed to take a ‘review’ of the climate science in a few years… The Regional Initiative can provide support on this (Modeling outputs in side events during COP18 and feed into IPCC reports)

Build capacity of ESCWA countries on key negotiation issues towards COP 18 (UNEP/ROWA)

Qatar proposed to establish an Alliance Initiative for Arid and Semi-arid Countries to deal with drought and impacts of CC at the global level.
The Subcommittee on Climate and Climate Change of LAS during its 17th meeting (10-12 Jan. 2012) proposed to support the COP-18 by establishing an Arab Pavilion/Exhibition during the meeting and conduct side events on developments in the region on CC such as:

- Development of the Arab Framework Action Plan on Climate Change (AFAPCC).
- Development of the Arab Atlas by the UAE Met. Office.
- Regional Initiative on Impacts of Climate Change on Water Resources and Socio-economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region (Lead by ESCWA and partners: UN-LAS organizations)
- Role of Arab Regional Centers in Climate prediction and modelling (RCC’s)
- etc.....
Outcomes....Durban Platform

• Governments decided to adopt a universal legal agreement on climate change as soon as possible, but not later than 2015 and to come into force in 2020.
• Work will begin on this immediately under a new group called the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action.
• Governments, including 35 industrialized countries, agreed a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol from January 1, 2013.
• To achieve rapid clarity, Parties to this second period will turn their economy-wide targets into quantified emission limitation or reduction objectives and submit them for review by May 1, 2012.