Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Second Regional Training Workshop on Capacity Development for Climate Change Negotiations for the Arab Countries
Amman, 26-28 May 2014

INFORMATION NOTE

A. BACKGROUND

Climate change and its impacts have been recognised as a major challenge in the Arab region to national sustainable socio-economic development. The global negotiations on climate change are highly relevant to the people and their future livelihoods in the whole region aiming at meaningful international agreements to (1) limit or reduce the root causes of climate change (mitigation) and (2) develop mechanisms for adapting to unavoidable impacts from climate change (adaptation).

The governments of Arab countries have shown a keen commitment to actively participate in the preparatory processes at regional and global levels. While each country in the region has slightly different needs and interests, it has been recognised that many of the challenges in the Arab region are similar and hence the national interests and approaches to the negotiations tend to show significant similarity.

To move the agenda forward towards successful future negotiations, negotiators and those supporting the national negotiation teams require an in depth understanding of the history of the negotiation process on climate change and the recent developments and outcomes from COP meetings. To improve the chances for achieving meaningful results in future negotiations, communications and exchange between the countries in the region can be further enhanced to reach a better understanding of common interests and improve common positions. For future negotiations in the COP 20 and beyond it is also important to expand a common vision and further develop national capacities for climate change related negotiations: This is particularly important for more junior staff from the respective government institutions which will support their negotiation teams and may eventually take over the role of negotiators in the future.

B. SCOPE

Upon a request for support through Technical Cooperation from the League of Arab States (LAS) ESCWA jointly with the LAS conducted between 22 and 24 October 2013 a three day “Regional Training Workshop on Capacity Development for Climate Change Negotiations for the Arab Countries” in Amman, Jordan. The workshop was hosted by the ESCWA Technology Centre at the facilities of the Jordanian Royal Scientific Society and attended by 16 participants from nine Member States. The ESCWA- LAS training course contributed to enhanced knowledge and strengthened capacity of representatives and negotiators from Arab countries to adequately address issues related to climate change and the respective national concerns for mitigation and adaptation actions for upcoming future negotiation processes on climate change. With the acquired knowledge the Arab negotiators and representatives are better equipped to address climate change related negotiations at regional and global level.
Furthermore, Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) in its 25th Session held in November 2013 issued a resolution 421 commending the cooperation between LAS and ESCWA in holding a training workshop in October 2013 to improve national negotiation skills for climate change negotiators. The resolution also requested holding two such workshops in 2014, with at least one of them taking place before the meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies that is taking place in Bonn, Germany from 4-15 June 2014.

In this respect ESCWA and LAS are organizing this second workshop during 26-28 May 2014 in Amman, Jordan, aiming to develop a better understanding of the climate change policy framework, and shall consider also the challenges currently faced by climate change negotiators in making progress towards new agreements, taking into account the on-going negotiations. This training will be based on ESCWA’s newly developed “Guide on Climate Change Negotiations for Representatives and Negotiators from Arab Countries”, to exchange experiences and knowledge between today’s negotiators and the future generation of negotiators from different countries in the region and to develop strategies to prepare for improved common positions from Arab countries for future negotiations related to climate change.

C. OBJECTIVES

The workshop seeks to:

- Develop an understanding of relevant factors contributing to successful negotiations on climate change, including methods to bring in new proposals and amend proposals by others, building partnerships with other parties to achieve common goals;
- Learn about the history of the negotiation process on climate change, the recent developments and outcomes from COP 19 and the implications (opportunities and challenges) for countries in the region;
- Receive guidance for future negotiations based on the “Guide on Climate Change Negotiations for Representatives and Negotiators from Arab Countries”, and discuss respective national experiences;
- Build links between the future generation of climate change negotiators from Arab countries to facilitate improved coordination and the development of common positions;
- Develop an improved understanding of potentials for common positions between countries in the region, challenges and limits of such common positions and how to make best use of these in the context of future climate change negotiations;
- Foster on-going dialogue as part of a continuous process between Arab countries.

D. ORGANIZATION AND VENUE OF THE MEETING

The workshop is organized by the League of Arab States and ESCWA to jointly support a capacity development initiative for young potential negotiators and climate change experts from the Arab countries. The meeting will be held in the Keminski Hotel, Shmeisani, Amman, Jordan.

E. PARTICIPANTS

Climate experts from ministries responsible for climate change negotiation in the Arab member states are invited to participate in the workshop.

Government representatives who are nominated by their ministries are kindly requested to send their registration form to ESCWA by 25 April 2014 in order to assure arrangements for the workshop. A block of
rooms have been reserved by ESCWA at the Kempinski Hotel - Amman at a preferential room rate. ESCWA, can assist in booking for the participants as shown in the attached logistical information note.

F. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence and inquiries concerning the workshop should be addressed to:

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