



**Workshop on: “Best practices in supporting green production sectors in the Arab Region”,  
El Gouna, 16-17 June 2014**

**Information Note**

**1- Background and justification**

At Rio+20 in June 2012, governments agreed that green economy is an important tool for achieving sustainable development and in the Regional Implementation Meeting of Rio+20 in May 2013 in Dubai, discussions on green economy in the Arab region affirmed that the transition towards a green economy should generate new job opportunities in green sectors, support the integration between policies targeting water, energy and food security, and mobilize adequate financial resources and facilitate technology transfer.

The green economy is a relatively new concept and some countries in the Arab region have begun implementing significant national green economy initiatives (including the UAE, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia).

In a post-Rio+20 context, the Region will need to consider how the transition to a green economy can best be implemented through sustainable development programs and strategies and what regional mechanisms and initiatives can help build capacity of governments to develop national policies and leverage financial resources and green technologies .

During 2013 the Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD) at ESCWA produced a report on “Monitoring the Transition to Green Economy in the Arab Countries: the SME perspective”. The study aimed to reflect the progress in the Arab region in the adoption and implementation of green economy policies and on their achievements in different sectors as well as to identify the various challenges and highlight potential opportunities for countries in the region to green their economies. While highlighting the specificities of the region, the study presented indicators to monitor the transition towards a green economy and policies to support the green economy and the emergence of green productive sectors.

In addition, the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) of the League of Arab States requested from ESCWA and UNEP/ROWA to develop a regional green economy investment vision and roadmap which comprise two main outputs:

- A detailed report on the regional investment vision and opportunities for the transition towards green economy.
- Proposals for activating mechanisms of green financing and technology transfer in the Arab region.

To complement the “Monitoring” study and contribute to the practical implementation of its proposed policy recommendations and the realization of the Green Road Map, ESCWA has also established pilot Green Help Desks in selected countries. These Green Help Desks are important tools to support

capacity-building and information-sharing among all national stakeholders to promote green production, with a special focus on those sectors that can represent an added value in each member country.

Green Help Desks have been established in Lebanon, Oman, Jordan, Tunisia, Egypt and Iraq and are meant to support the production sectors – particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – to engage in the emerging green economy sectors (i.e. green tourism, waste management, renewable energies, cleaner production...) by developing their products and/or their production processes to become in line with the principles and objectives of sustainable development.

Moreover the GHDs purpose is to:

- Inform the production sectors/SMEs of national and regional green practices and exchange information on successful initiatives;
- Increase access of production sectors/SMEs to information and resources on national/local green production opportunities and options;
- Improve access of production sectors/SMEs to capacity-building and training opportunities supporting green production, with equal opportunities for men and women.

ESCWA, in cooperation with UNIDO, is organizing this workshop to discuss the role of the Green Help Desks and of other service providers of Green Production Sectors (Cleaner Production Sectors, Chambers of Commerce, Research Institutions) present in the Arab Region and their potential as supporting mechanisms to transitioning into a Green Economy. Moreover, the participants will discuss a Green Help Desk Management Guide developed by ESCWA to support the activities and operations of the GHDs. The meeting will be the second of a series of workshop which started in 2013 in the framework of a Project to enhance the capacities of Member countries to support the development of green productive sectors.

## **2- Objectives**

The objectives of this workshop are to:

1. Raise awareness on the effectiveness of different programs and projects that aim to promote green production applicable in the ESCWA member countries (Green Help Desks, Cleaner Production Centers, Switch Med, MENA CEO Platform);
2. Enhance the regional knowledge on matters related to the different governmental policies and programmes aiming to advance in the transitioning to green economy ;
3. Coordinate among the different national actors/stakeholder to achieve the desired impact
4. Enhance regional cooperation and knowledge sharing on best practices and experiences.
5. Discuss the need to establish a framework for a regional umbrella for the different GHDs.

6. Present and discuss with experts the different tools and approaches to transitioning into the Green Economy in the Arab Region;
7. Present the Green Help Desk Management Guide

### **3- Focus areas**

The workshop will provide opportunities for relevant experts to discuss the different institutions, approaches, tools and mechanism to support the development of the Green Productive Sectors and the transition into the Green Economy.

The Workshop will also focus on the Green Help Desk experience and the Management guide, discussing how to structure the helpdesk to deploy resources so as to identify needs, collect necessary and relevant data, standardize information, run a motivated and productive team, and prioritize the services to be provided and manage their delivery.

Finally, the workshop will discuss approaches to regional cooperation and coordination, ensuring best practices are shared among the regional stakeholders, including establishment of a framework for a regional umbrella for GHDs. In addition, the workshop will discuss ways to coordinate between the different actors/stakeholders at the national level to ensure wide service coverage.

### **4- Participants**

The participants of this workshop are the responsible staff of the existing Green Help Desks , Regional Cleaner Production representatives, relevant UN agencies, economic policy development and green economy experts together with green entrepreneurs from the region and abroad.

The Green Help Desks are hosted by the Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI), Ministry of Trade and Industry in Oman, Ministry of Environmental Affairs in Egypt, Ministry of Environment and Equipment in Tunisia, the Royal Scientific Society in Jordan and, soon, the Baghdad University of Technology in Iraq.

### **5- Date and venue**

The meeting will be held at the Mövenpick Resort & Spa El Gouna in La Gouna (Egypt) 16-17 June 2014. The logistical note will be provided to the participants in due time.

### **6- Language**

English will be the official language used during the meeting.