Preparations for the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC/COP-21)

Economic And Social Commission For Western Asia

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Introduction

• ESCWA organized in coordination with the League of Arab States (LAS) four workshops on climate change, based on resolutions adopted by of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE).
• The workshops aimed to achieve the following:
  • Raising the awareness of new Arab negotiators on climate change negotiations;
  • Identifying joint opportunities and challenges in preparing for the drafting of the new climate change agreement at the UNFCCC/COP-21;
  • Ensuring an ongoing dialogue on climate change between Arab States;
  • Identifying the necessary factors for successful negotiations and building partnerships with non-Arab actors to achieve common goals;

Training Workshops and Other Activities

• ESCWA held the first regional training workshop on capacity building for climate change negotiations for Arab countries in Amman, from 22 to 24 October 2013, in collaboration with the LAS.
• The workshop was attended by 16 experts from nine Arab countries and representatives from the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, LAS and ESCWA.
• It aimed to prepare for the UNFCCC/COP-19, held in Warsaw, from 11 to 22 November 2013.
Training Workshops and Other Activities

- The second regional training workshop was held in Amman (26-28 May 2014) and attended by 40 participants from 13 Arab countries.
- It aimed to prepare for the Fourteenth session of the subsidiary bodies of UNFCCC, held in Bonn (4-15 June 2014) and for the Climate Summit, held in New York, on 23 September 2014.
- The third workshop was organized in Kuwait (11 to 13 November 2014) in collaboration with the LAS and the Environment Public Authority of Kuwait.
- It aimed to prepare for the UNFCCC/COP-20 held in Lima (1 to 12 December 2014). The workshop was attended by 55 participants from 12 Arab countries.

Training Workshops and Other Activities

- ESCWA and LAS organized the Fourth Regional Training Workshop cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Qatar during the period 19-21 May 2015 in Doha.
- The workshop aimed to prepare for preparatory meeting in Bonn during June 2015 and the COP-21 in Paris. France end of 2015 and was attended by 60 participants from 13 Arab countries.
- An Arab-Franco Dialogue was conducted between the Arab Negotiation Team and the French delegation chaired by the Vice-President of the COP-21 following the workshop.
- The Arab team stressed on the importance of transparency and inclusiveness in the negotiation process in Paris and to avoid bilateral/unilateral agreements and late consensus on key issues and to adhere to the principle of the common but differentiated responsibilities in the new legally-binding climate change agreement.
Training Workshops and Other Activities

- ESCWA prepared the Guide on Climate Change Negotiations for Representatives and Negotiators from Arab Countries.
  - The Guide contains important scientific information on: climate change and its repercussions for the Arab region; UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol; the conferences of the parties and their working groups; and the status of negotiations on key issues such as adaptation, implementation, mitigation, financing and technology transfer.
  - It also sets out guidelines on effective negotiation methods, forming negotiating teams, and building alliances with political groups and their impact on negotiations.
- ESCWA also developed training material for workshop participants, www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=3541E
  - Experts from ministries of foreign affairs, the environment, petroleum, electricity, water, agriculture and energy, as well as regional and international organizations participated in the 4 workshops.
- This enabled to promote dialogue and coordination and forge common perspectives and positions among national actors on climate change.

Training Workshops and Other Activities

- The workshops were also aimed to prepare for the preliminary meetings of the Arab Group representing Arab countries in climate change negotiations, led by the League of Arab States.
- Based on the discussions and conclusions of these workshops, the participants contributed to the preparation of an Arab paper summarizing the common Arab position on climate change.
- The paper was presented to the Arab negotiators at the climate change conference and the preparatory meetings of the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies.
Main Subjects and Key issues related to COP-21

- UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol and its thematic working groups;
- Negotiation topics, the formulation of an Arab position on adaptation, mitigation and finance, replenishing the Green Climate Fund, technology transfer, etc.;
- The 2013 Policymakers Summary, issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);
- Building the capacities of Arab countries in the field of mitigating, reducing, measuring, reporting and verifying emissions, and improving access to energy markets, including carbon markets;
- Preliminary results of the discussions on the repercussions of climate change for the Arab region, based on the regional climate modelling projections until 2100, within the framework of implementing RICCAR;
- Measures taken by ESCWA to support climate change mitigation efforts, including increasing capacity for energy efficiency in various sectors and stepping up efforts to develop new and renewable energy sources;
- The status of negotiations on a new climate change protocol and in the discussions of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action;
- Guiding principles for Arab negotiators, and tools for preparing for meetings, making interventions and using key terminology in English which is the official language of the negotiations.
Main Subjects and Key issues related to COP-21

- Mapping the financial needs of the Arab countries within the Green Climate Fund that will assist the countries to build their capacities in adaptation as well as reporting their mitigation actions in terms of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC’s);
- Assessing the impacts of the implementation of response measures to mitigate the climate change by the Arab countries on key socio-economic sectors;
- Linkage of the climate change new agreement with other global UN negotiations such as post-2105 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Third Global Conference on Financing for Development (13-16 July 2015).

Recommendations

- To form competent and unified national negotiating teams in all Arab countries on climate change negotiations and facilitate coordination and collaboration between them;
- To encourage Arab countries to devise and help fund strategic plans for building national capacities for tackling climate change issues and participating in climate change negotiations;
- To organize specialized training workshops on negotiation topics such as finance, technology transfer, the work of IPCC, INDC’s, comparing the results of RICCAR with the IPCC projections, etc;
- Conduct a detailed study on securing funds from the Green Climate Funds for the Arab countries in adaptation and mitigation projects as well as preparing the national reports on INDC’s;
- Assess Arab countries technological needs and linkage to the work programme of the Technology Centre and Network established under the UNFCCC.
Future Activities

• ESCWA will organize jointly with LAS the Fifth Training Workshop in October before the COP-21 that will be held during 30 November to 11 December 2015 and planned to be hosted by Oman.
• ESCWA is planning to organize a side event in the COP-21 for launching of the technical summary of the final report of RICCAR in December and also in the World Water Week in Stockholm in August 2015 in coordination with LAS and UN partners.
• Also ESCWA will contribute to another side event on the regional perspectives on climate change issues in the COP-21 jointly with other UN regional commissions and also with UN-Water in another side event on water and climate change.

THANK YOU