

**Regional Workshop on Trade and Environment:
Developing the Environmental Goods and Services Sector in the Arab Region
for Transformation into a Green Economy**

Beirut, 15-16 December 2010

1- Background and justification

The Regional Programme on Trade and Environment Capacity Building in the Arab Region was adopted by resolution of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) of the League of Arab States (LAS) in 2003. Since then, ESCWA has been a major partner in the Programme and has implemented a number of activities within this context, including several national workshops.

The regional programme is an on-going mandate, backed by recent CAMRE resolutions which have reiterated the Arab commitment to this programme and the trade and environment agenda. In 2009, a CAMRE resolution called for holding the 1st meeting of the Arab Group on Trade and Environment. While in 2008, one resolution called specifically for continued ESCWA support to the Arab countries in the establishment and promotion of national trade and environment committees.

The Regional Workshop on Trade and Environment responds to the above resolutions and fulfills the objectives of the Programme. Its theme has been identified in view of growing regional and global interest in developing the environmental goods and services sector as a means of transformation into a green economy.

2- Objective

The objective of the regional workshop is three-fold:

- a- Build the capacity of participants in the assessment, development and measurement of a national environmental goods and services sector as a means of transformation into a green economy;
- b- Develop concepts of green economy and build consensus regarding its component in the Arab region and identify the policy mix capable of developing such an economy in the region;
- c- Provide a regional platform for members of national trade and environment committees to share experiences, knowledge and lessons learned among themselves as well as with representatives of member countries seeking to establish such a committee.

3- Participants

Members of national trade and environment committees in the Arab region are the primary beneficiaries of this workshop. Arab countries not having such a committee will also be invited to nominate one representative, as a means of promoting the concept in these countries. Participants would typically represent ministries of environment, trade, industry or economy.

4- Date and venue

The Workshop will be held at the UN House in Beirut on the 15 and 16 of December 2010. An annotated agenda outline is provided below.

5- Language

Both Arabic and English will be used at the Workshop. Simultaneous translation will be provided.

6- Annotated agenda outline

Day 1: Wednesday 15 December 2010

- Session 1: Opening

This session includes opening statements and a brief 'tour de table' for workshop participants, as well as a presentation of the workshop objectives and organization of work.

- Session 2: Introduction to concepts of green economy/green growth

This session will provide an overview of concepts related to green economy and how the environmental goods and services sector can contribute to building such an economy. In addition, a brief definition and classification of environmental goods and services will be provided, as well as an overview of previous ESCWA and LAS activities on the subject.

- Session 3: Developing the environmental goods and services sector in the Arab region

This session will present case studies of selected environmental goods and services in the Arab region. Based on these case studies, the different policy measures directed towards the development of domestic environmental goods and services sector and a green economy in the Arab countries will be discussed, with focus on associated trade and environment implications.

Day 2: Thursday 16 December 2010

- Session 4: Measuring the environmental goods and services sector in the Arab region

This session will highlight the challenges associated with the measurement of the environmental goods and services sector and green economy in general, and provide a framework for developing related national data collection systems in the member countries, including tools, indicators and benchmarks.

- Session 5: Review of national trade and environment committees in the Arab region

This session will include invited presentations from selected national trade and environment committees to summarize their achievements and work plans, with focus on issues of common interest to the member countries including environmental goods and services and green economy. Challenges encountered and solutions developed by these committees will be discussed and experiences shared among the audience.

- Session 6: Closing and the way forward

This session will conclude the workshop and identify key sectors in the Arab region as prime contributors to a green economy. In addition, this session will recommend institutional, legal and capacity-building needs for ensuring a smooth transition to a green economy, in addition to means for building a networking mechanism on green economy.

7. Contact information

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