

The Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Countries (JCEDAR) held its 12th session at the League of Arab States headquarters in Cairo, Egypt from 16-19 October 2010.

The agenda of this session included several topics of priority to the region, such as the regional preparatory activities for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio + 20) that will be held in Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil from 4-6 June 2012. Since 2010, ESCWA has been leading regional preparatory activities for Rio + 20 in cooperation with two major partners, the League of Arab States (LAS) and the United Nations Environment Programme/Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA), that, together form the Joint Technical Secretariat of JCEDAR that advises the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment (CAMRE).

In this context, it was agreed to and outlined in the JCEDAR recommendations to the 22nd session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE), for consideration and adoption, the preparations of three regional reports by the Joint Secretariat of JCEDAR (LAS, UNEP/ROWA and ESCWA). Additionally, and in accordance with resolutions adopted by CAMRE at its 22nd session, held in December 2010 in Cairo, on the Arab preparations for Rio+20, ESCWA will be preparing two reports covering the two main themes of Rio+20 namely:

- (a) A regional review of the institutional framework for sustainable development, based on the report on sustainable development governance prepared by ESCWA in collaboration with the Joint Secretariat in 2003.
- (b) A regional report on green economy in the Arab region in the context of poverty eradication, which will set the stage for preparation of an Arab Ministerial Green Economy Initiative that, would be relayed to Rio+20.

The agenda also included items relating to follow up on the recommendations made by the JCEDAR at its 11th session on the implementation of Sustainable Development initiative in the Arab World and the progress made in the period between the 11th and the 12th session of JCEDAR.

A series of inter-related activities, which address the concepts, policy implications and awareness raising campaigns on range of issues under consideration for Rio+20, are planned for 2011 and 2012, by ESCWA and partner organizations. The outcomes will be reported and discussed at the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting which will be held from 16-17 October 2011 back to back with the 23rd session of JCEDAR (18-20 October 2011) at LAS headquarters in Cairo. This preparatory meeting will be convened

by ESCWA in collaboration with LAS and UNEP/ROWA and will aim at formulating an Arab Ministerial Green Economy Initiative for consideration and adoption by the 23rd session of CAMRE to be held from 21-22 December 2011 in Cairo. The Arab Ministerial Green Economy initiative will provide a unified framework for action and will support the position of the Arab countries in the upcoming Rio+20 in 2012.