Major groups participation guide in the Arab Regional Implementation Meeting for CSD-20 and Rio+20 outcomes

Background

Stakeholder participation in the Rio+20 follow-up processes is based on the major groups structure articulated in Agenda 21.\(^1\) The Rio+20 outcome document, *The Future We Want*, recognized the need to strengthen and enhance the role of major groups and other stakeholders, as well as the importance of harnessing voluntary initiatives and partnerships in achieving sustainable development. In the context of Member State consultations on the working methods of the high-level political forum for sustainable development (HLPF) and its concomitant processes\(^2\), it will be important for stakeholders to be engaged with the development of enhanced modalities for the participation of major groups previously unknown to ECOSOC and GA processes. Therefore, forums such as the Arab Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) affords major groups an important opportunity to interface with Governments and impact on global discussions.

The arrangements for major groups participation in the RIM are based on the working methods and practices of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Major groups are invited to observe all official meetings that are published in the RIM Program. During some sessions, major groups are invited to participate directly through designated representatives chosen by the participants from each major groups sector. In many cases the Chair invites major groups to intervene throughout interactive discussions with governments.

Representatives from major groups were invited to register for the Arab RIM by 26 April 2013. Participants must meet any of the following criteria for successful registration in the RIM:

- **Accreditation** to ECOSOC or other UN system organizations, or through the CSD roster;
- Membership of the UNEP Civil Society Network;
- A demonstrated record of activities in support of Rio+20, or related to specific themes of sustainable development;
- A network of constituents in the Western Asia region.

Organizations that work mainly at the national level are encouraged to contact their national focal points to propose inclusion in their national delegations to the RIM.

Major groups consultation meeting – 28 May

On Tuesday 28 May, ESCWA and UN DESA will convene a caucus meeting for major groups that aims to update participants on important elements of both the global and regional follow-up processes. It will also provide an opportunity for major groups to interface with UN system focal points, and discuss strategies for strengthening regional stakeholder networks, necessary for connecting their work into larger global stakeholder networks. Major groups should also come prepared to discuss

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\(^1\) Since the first UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 - the Earth Summit - it was recognized that sustainable development could not be achieved by governments alone. This notion is reflected emphatically in the landmark outcome document of that Summit, *Agenda 21*. Section 3 underscores the criticality of harnessing expertise and capacity from all sectors of society and all types of people. The nine major groups sectors are: Women, Children and Youth, Indigenous Peoples, Non-governmental Organizations, Local Authorities, Workers and Trade Unions, Business and Industry, Scientific and Technological Community, and Farmers.

\(^2\) For example, (a) the open working group on sustainable development goals, (b) the expert committee on a sustainable development financing strategy, and (c) the process on options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies.
their own processes and strategies, especially with regard to consultation of grassroots organizations. The consultation meeting will be held at

**The Dubai Police Academy particulars are as follows:**
Address: Al Sufouh 2, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
PO BOX 53900
Telephone: +971-4-3482255
Fax: +971-4-3481144
Website: [www.dubaipolice.gov.ae](http://www.dubaipolice.gov.ae)

**Entry points**
Throughout the RIM, opportunities for formal engagement with major groups are as follows:

**Opening ceremony**
- The details of the Opening Ceremony is being developed.

**Sessions 1 – 5: Interactive discussions**
- Sessions 1 through 5 are structured around multi-stakeholder panel discussions.
- Representatives of major groups have been invited in advance to take part in the sessions.
- Major groups sectors that wish to take the floor during interactive discussions with Member States should raise their name plates to be provided the opportunity to intervene.

**Closing session**
- This session is dedicated to presenting and discussing the outcome and recommendations for the Arab RIM.
- Major groups will have the opportunity to comment on the outcome, and perhaps make some brief final remarks, subject to the availability of time.

**The role of facilitators**
Representatives from major groups are encouraged to liaise with others in their sector prior to the RIM to agree on a structure for coordinating participation and interventions in the meeting. A designated facilitator for each sector will help the RIM secretariat organize the major groups presence at the meeting and ensure inclusive and transparent participation with Member States. The secretariat will prepare a list of participants and facilitators from major groups to support coordination efforts. Facilitators may be invited to meet informally with the meeting Chair or another member of the Bureau.

Major groups facilitators responsibilities:
- Consulting in advance with constituency
- Coordinating interventions on behalf of each sector;
- Communicating important information, suggestions and requests to participants;
- Acting as a liaison with the meeting Chair and secretariat.

**Seating arrangements**
All meetings published in the RIM program are open to registered participants unless otherwise specifically noted. During sessions where major groups are invited to participate directly, there will be a place allocated for a representative from each of the nine major groups sectors provided of
Representatives from major groups should never occupy the seats of a Member State during formal sessions.

Other contributions

Submitting and circulating documentation: Organizations wishing to circulate publications and other information can leave documents at a table that will be set up for this purpose outside the plenary hall. Please contact the organizers for more information.

Useful Web links

- Meeting website
- UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform (for follow-up to Rio+20)
- Major groups online workspaces
- Major groups organizing partner contact information
- CSONet: The UN civil society database
- Basic facts about ECOSOC status (for accreditation)

Contact information
For further information on major groups participation in the Arab RIM, please contact:

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