I. BACKGROUND

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) referred to as Rio+20 was convened from 20 to 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The objective of the Conference was to secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development, assess the progress and implementation gaps, and address new and emerging challenges. The Conference focused on two themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

In its resolution A/RES/66/288 of 11 September 2012, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the outcome document from the Rio+20 conference, entitled The Future We Want. The outcome document renewed the international community’s commitment to sustainable development and to ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for the planet and for present and future generations. The main outcomes from Rio+20 include: the establishment of a high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) and strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the launch of a process to develop Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); commitments relating to means of implementation including exploring options for a sustainable development financing strategy and a technology facilitation mechanism; and the adoption of green economy as an important policy tool for governments to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication. There were also a number of other outcomes across key thematic and cross-sectoral issues.

In the lead up to Rio+20, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) led the Arab regional preparations for Rio+20 in partnership with the League of Arab States (LAS) and the UNEP Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA). As part of this process, the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20 was held on 16-17 October 2011 in Cairo. The meeting offered a forum for deliberation and consensus building on the objectives and themes to be addressed at Rio+20, and adopted a set of recommendations that were endorsed by the 13th session of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR) and the 23rd session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) in late 2011. The final report (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/WG.5/8.)
was also submitted to the UNCSD Bureau as the contribution of the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting to the compilation document and global preparations for Rio+20. The preparatory process also led to the adoption of the Arab Ministerial Declaration to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development by CAMRE in April 2012 which was also presented at Rio+20.

Following Rio+20, it was decided that the Twentieth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-20) would convene later in 2013 and focus on the outcomes from Rio+20. In turn, the outcomes from CSD-20 will feed into the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) processes on Rio+20 follow-up (including the HLPF and Open Working Group on SDGs) and the Regional Commissions were requested to organize Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs) in preparation for CSD-20. This year’s CSD-20 will include members from Lebanon and Saudi Arabia representing the Arab region.

In this context and as part of its mandate to lead regional implementation meetings, ESCWA, in partnership with the LAS and UNEP/ROWA, and in collaboration with the UAE Ministry of Environment and Water and the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment in the United Arab Emirates, is organizing the Arab RIM to be held from 29 to 30 May 2013 in Dubai, UAE. A final report will be submitted to CSD-20 later in 2013 as the contribution of the Arab region to global follow-up from Rio+20 and will help to inform ongoing processes including the HLPF and the Open Working Group on SDGs (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, UAE and Saudi Arabia from the Arab region are members of this Group).

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The Arab RIM aims to provide a platform for:

- deliberating on the main outcomes of Rio+20 and their implications for sustainable development agenda in the Arab region;
- identifying and discussing priorities for implementation as per the priorities and needs of sustainable development in the Arab region; and
- preparing an outcome document to serve as the region’s collective input into CSD-20 and the HLPF.

The outcomes, findings and recommendations from the RIM will be reflected in a final meeting report to be submitted to CSD-20 in view of ensuring an Arab regional contribution to Rio+20 follow-up.

III. SCOPE OF THE MEETING

The meeting will explore the implications of the main outcomes from Rio+20 for sustainable development in the Arab region and formulate regional input on Rio+20 follow-up. The meeting will discuss a number of presentations and background papers, covering the following:

- The main outcomes from Rio+20 and implications for the Arab region;
- The Sustainable Development Goals and post-2015 development agenda;
- A regional investment and financing vision for transitioning towards a green economy;
- A preliminary update of the Sustainable Development Initiative in the Arab region and national sustainable development initiatives;
- Institutions for sustainable development;
- The outcome document from Rio+20 entitled The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288); and
- Other relevant reports and background papers prepared to support the Rio+20 preparatory process for the Arab region, including the Report from the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20 (ESCWA/SDPD/2011/WG.5/8).

Documentation will be made available prior to the meeting via the meeting website when available.
IV. ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting is organized as a collaborative effort between ESCWA, LAS and UNEP/ROWA, in cooperation with the UAE Ministry of Environment and Water and Zayed International Foundation for the Environment in the United Arab Emirates, within the framework of the regional implementation meetings for CSD-20. It is one of several implementation meetings being organized by the various United Nations Regional Commissions to support Rio+20 follow-up, as mandated by the United Nations General Assembly. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) will also be invited to attend the meeting and present their perspective on post-Rio+20 follow-up. Representatives from other Regional Commissions and UN organizations will also be invited to participate.

A provisional agenda for the RIM will be prepared by ESCWA, LAS and UNEP/ROWA and circulated to stakeholders. The meeting will be structured to enable a discussion of each of the main outcomes from Rio+20 and to finalize regional input to be discussed at CSD-20, namely:

1. The regional priorities in the implementation of Rio+20 outcome to contribute to the sustainable development of the Arab countries;
3. Transitioning towards the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication in the Arab region; and
4. Institutional framework for sustainable development: identifying the format and organizational aspects of the universal, intergovernmental high-level political forum that will replace the CSD; regional and national institutional frameworks for sustainable development; and strengthening UNEP.

V. REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Government representatives involved in social, economic and environmental development are invited to participate in the meeting. Regional organizations engaged in Rio+20 preparations are welcome to participate and share their experiences. This includes United Nations and League of Arab States specialized agencies, financial institutions, civil society, private sector, academic institutions, in addition to partner organizations responsible for implementing projects and activities related Rio+20. Consistent with the practice of the CSD, representatives from major groups are invited to participate as observers in the meeting.

All participants are requested to register online through the following link http://participant.escwa.org.lb/MeetingsReg.aspx? M=+y0CYscfHjl=&_N=N&_O=N, no later than 26 April 2013, or alternatively by filling the attached registration form.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Date and venue: The two day official meeting will be held in Dubai, UAE from 29 to 30 May 2013. A dedicated consultative session for major groups will be held prior to the official meeting (further details to be communicated).

Language: Both Arabic and English will be used at the meeting and simultaneous translation will be provided.
Travel: Sponsored participants will receive their tickets from the organizers, while non-sponsored participants are responsible for arranging for their own travel to the UAE.

Accommodation: All participants are responsible for arranging for their own hotel accommodation in the UAE. A list of identified hotels close to the meeting venue will be made available on the meeting website.

Internal transportation: Shuttles for airport pick up and drop off and between hotels and the meeting venue will be made available.

Visas: The identified hotels will provide assistance to participants requiring an entry visa to the UAE. All participants requiring a visa should therefore liaise directly with the identified hotels. Requests for visa support must be received at least one month prior to the expected date of arrival (hopefully before 26 April 2013).

VII. Correspondence

Correspondence and inquiries concerning the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting should be addressed to:

ESCWA:

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Webpage of the Arab Regional Implementation Meeting for the Twentieth Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD-20):

For additional information on preparations for CSD-20, please visit:
### Arab Regional Implementation Meeting for the
Twentieth Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD-20)
Follow-up from the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20)
*(Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Wednesday and Thursday 29-30 May 2013)*

#### Registration Form

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Please fill in the form in English and Arabic and send it back alongside a **passport-size photo (JPG format)** and a **clear colored scanned copy of the passport** to Ms. Rita Wehbé, Productive Sectors Section, Sustainable Development and Productivity Division, ESCWA, Beirut, Lebanon, E-mail: wehbe@un.org, Tel: +961-1-978513, by **26/4/2013**.