
Expert Group Meeting on Trade and Environment Priorities in the Arab Region

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View of Civil Society: Engaging Civil Society on Trade and Environment Issues

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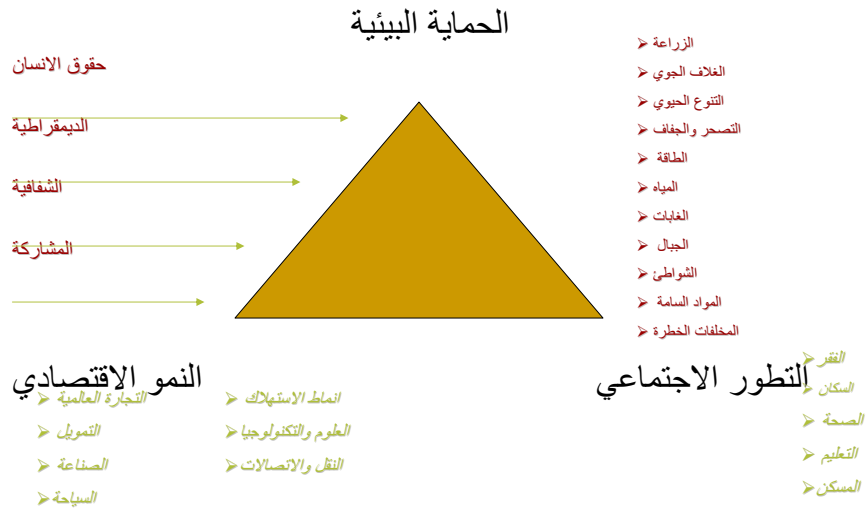
Why Engaging CSOs?

- International recognition for the role they play in environmental protection since Rio 1992 (major groups) all through Joburg 2002 (partnership initiatives II)until today, UN organizations accreditation, CSD, IUCN.
 - Pre-condition (cross cutting) to sustainable development.
 - Indication of democratic societies and evidence of reform.
 - Success stories: MEDIES/E4SD, IPEN, SAICM, FCA(FCTC compliance monitoring), MAD, Coast Day.
 - Allocation of core funds by EU and absence of such support for the Arab CSOs in recognition of their role MIO-ESCDE
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Why engaging CSOs?

- Being close to the layman pulse.
- Elasticity of moving about, not tight up.
- Partners (not competitor with governments) to development, not only negative receptive of benefits (we have something to offer).
- Excellent communicators and therefore excellent educators.

مثلث التنمية المستدامة



Constraints

- Considered intruders, requires image change (due to being not formed by national initiatives), does it have always to be donors driven process (reactionaries rather than initiators)
- Considered agents as they receive foreign funds.
- Political arena is not appropriate, thus
 - Partial democratic systems.
 - Hypocrisy of external powers towards the region (government and CSOs).

What CSOs can do?

- Say what governments cannot say, assist in negotiations, grace periods of foreign legislations (Jordan and phosphate, Morocco and textiles), European Neighborhood Policy.
- Aggregate CSOs international communities support.
- Drag fund (only allocated for CSOs) – Micro GEF.
- Implementers of consultation, awareness raising and educational campaigns (RIO+5, Joburg preparations, Joburg+5)
- Training and community enabling, writing proposals
- Evaluators and monitors in favor of government and not in contradictions
 - FCTC compliance
 - Parliamentary Election
- Assist in improving tolerance, understanding and accepting others through cultural exchange programs. (youth exchange programs- youth for Europe, EVS..etc) . Can bridge difference and establish dialogue – importance for today's situation, food culture in the Mediterranean.
- Encourage national communities participation.
- Restore trust and miss-confidence
- Promote fair trade and GI

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2007 Status Report
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