



## The Fourth Meeting of the High-Level Joint Water-Agriculture Technical Committee of the League of Arab States

### Concept Note

**Date:** 18 October 2022      **Time:** 9:30 – 16:00 (Cairo Local Time)

**Venue:** Nile Ritz Carlton Hotel - Alf Leila Hall - C (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

**Participation Mode:** Closed in-person Meeting by Invitation

#### Background:

The High-Level Joint Water-Agriculture Technical Committee (HLJTC), which meets annually, was established as the technical arm of the Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Council of the League of Arab States according to the resolution of the Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Council that was held on 4 April 2019. The Third intergovernmental meeting of the HLJTC was held virtually along the 2021 Cairo Water Week on 26 October. The Joint Technical Secretariat, comprised of the Arab Ministerial Water Council Technical Secretariat (AMWCS) and the Arab Organization for Agriculture Development (AOAD), of the Joint Ministerial Council for Water and Agriculture of the League of Arab States, organized the meeting in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (FAO) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The national focal points from the Arab ministries of Agriculture and the Arab ministries of Water Resources participated in the meeting, which was also attended by representatives from regional and international organizations as observers.

The meeting witnessed an update by the Joint Technical Secretariat on the implementation progress of the second HLJTC meeting's recommendations, followed by presentations and discussions on the "Guidelines on Improved allocation of Water Resources for Agriculture," the "Action Plan to operationalize the Cairo Declaration," and the scoping paper on the "Use of Non-Conventional Water Resources for Agriculture."

The HLJTC discussions resulted in several recommendations by the participants. The Joint Technical Secretariat presented the outcomes and associated documents of the meeting during the Second meeting of the Joint Ministerial Council for Water and Agriculture that was held virtually on 27 January 2022. Accordingly, the Joint Ministerial Council made resolutions regarding the proposed course of actions, which are summarized as follows:

- **The resolutions on the Action Plan to operationalize the Cairo Declaration** included: Endorsing the presented Action Plan to operationalize Cairo Declaration and referring it to the Arab Summit; Inviting the Joint Technical Secretariat and its partners to communicate with Arab Funds, Regional Banks, and relevant Organizations and Donors to mobilize resources and support to implement the Action Plan to operationalize the Cairo Declaration.
- **The resolutions on the Guidelines on Improved Water Allocation for Agriculture** included: Endorsing the presented Guidelines on Improved Water Allocation for Agriculture and





referring it to the Arab Summit; Inviting countries willing to voluntarily apply the guidelines on a pilot scale to inform the Joint Technical Secretariat; Inviting FAO and ESCWA to support countries interested in applying the guidelines on improved Water Allocation for Agriculture at the level of pilot areas; Inviting countries which have Guidelines on Water Allocation, to share them with the Joint Technical Secretariat.

- **The resolutions on the Potential Use of Non-Conventional Water Resources in Agriculture included:** Inviting the Joint Technical Secretariat, FAO, and ESCWA to prepare a report on the status, challenges, and future of non-conventional water in the Arab region and the way to expand its use, based on the presented scoping paper.

### Meeting Objectives

As a follow-up on the resolutions adopted in the Second meeting of the Joint Ministerial Council for Water and Agriculture, the fourth High-level Joint Water-Agriculture Technical Committee meeting aims to:

- Review the progress made towards piloting the guidelines on Improved Water Allocation for Agriculture with a focus on countries that voluntarily expressed interest in applying the guidelines.
- Provide and discuss proposals to implement the Joint Ministerial Council resolution regarding the Action Plan to operationalize the Cairo Declaration.
- Review the progress of preparing a report on the status, challenges, and future of non-conventional water in the Arab region and the potential to expand its use.
- Discuss additional Water-Agriculture cross-cutting issues to be addressed in preparation for the 2023 HLJTC meeting.

### Participants:

The meeting will be attended by senior officials from the Water and Agricultural sectors in the Arab in addition to representatives of FAO, ESCWA, other participants from International and Regional organizations, and relevant experts as observers.

### Format and Date of the Meeting:

The fourth meeting of the High-level Joint Technical Committee on Agriculture and Water will be organized along the Fifth Cairo Water Week 2022, held during the period from 16 to 19 October 2022.

The meeting will be held in person on October 18, 2022, over three sessions of an hour and a half each. Simultaneous translation in Arabic, English, and French will be provided.





## Moderators:

**Ambassador Shahira Wahbi**

*The Joint Technical Secretariat, the Arab Ministerial Water Council Technical Secretariat*

**Dr. Kamel Mostafa El-Sayed**

*The Joint Technical Secretariat, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development*

Meeting Agenda			
#	Time	Agenda Item	Moderator/Speaker
Session - I	9:30 - 9:50	<b>Opening Session and Welcoming Remarks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Representative of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, Joint Technical Secretariat.</li> <li>- Representative of the Technical Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Water Council of the League of Arab States, Joint Technical Secretariat.</li> <li>- Representative of the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Current Chair of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD).</li> <li>- Representative of Lebanon, the Current Chair of the Arab Ministerial Water Council.</li> </ul>
	9:50 - 10:00	<b>The guidelines on Improved Water Allocation for Agriculture.</b>	Update on the progress in implementing the Resolutions of the Second Meeting of the Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Council on the guidelines on Improved Water Allocation for Agriculture
	10:00 - 10:20		Outcomes of the Physical Workshop and Virtual Meeting
	10:20 - 11:00		Progress on the development of the action plans of countries piloting the implementation of the guidelines
11:00 – 11:30		<b>Coffee Break</b>	
Session - II	11:30 - 12:00	Discussion and Recommendations of the HLJTC members on the to advance application and piloting of the guidelines on Improved Water Allocation for Agriculture.	
	12:00 - 12:10	<b>Cairo Declaration Action Plan</b>	Update on advancing the Action Plan to Operationalize the Cairo Declaration.
	12:10 - 12:45		Discussion and Recommendations of the HLJTC members on the implementation of the Cairo Declaration Action Plan



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12:45 – 13:45		Lunch Break		
Session - III	13:45 - 13:55	<b>Use of Non-Conventional Water Resources in Agriculture</b>	Update on the progress in implementing the Resolutions of the Second Meeting of the Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Council on the use Non-Conventional Water Resources in agriculture	- Joint Technical Secretariat of the Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Council
	13:55 - 14:05		Policy Brief on "Expanding Water reuse in the Arab world."	- Javier Mateo-Sagasta, Senior Researcher and Project Leader of ReWater MENA, IWMI
	14:05 - 14:15		Draft report (for discussion and feedback from the countries) "Desalination in the Arab region: Status, Challenges, and Prospects."	- Mohamed Al-Abri, FAO Senior Consultant, Expert in Desalination
	14:15 - 14:30		Discussion and Recommendations of the HLJTC members on the Use of Non-Conventional Water Resources in Agriculture	- Member Countries
	14:30 - 14:35	<b>Data and Information for Sustainable Development</b>	Introduction to the issue of Data and Information for Sustainable Development	- Joint Technical Secretariat of the Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Council
	14:35 - 14:50		Prospects and Challenges in the field of geospatial data and its applications to overcome data deficiency for evidence-based decision-making in the water and agriculture sectors.	- Zoltán Vekerdy, Coordinator of the European Space Agency (ESA) Earth Observation AFRICA (EO-Africa) Research and Development Facility
	14:50 - 15:05		Using the spatial (RICCAR) outputs to assess the impact of climate change on water availability and agricultural productivity in the Arab region	- Ziad Khayat, Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCWA
	15:05 - 15:20		Discussion and Recommendations of the HLJTC members on Data and Information for Sustainable Development	- Member Countries
	15:20 - 15:40	<b>Summary of the HLJTC Recommendations</b>		- Joint Technical Secretariat of the Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Council
	15:40 - 16:00	<b>Closing remarks</b>		- Representative of FAO - Representative of ESCWA - Representative of the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Current Chair of the General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD). - Representative of Lebanon, the Current Chair of the Arab Ministerial Water Council.

