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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Regional Training Workshop on Capacity Development for Climate Change
Negotiations for the Arab Countries
Amman, 22-24 October 2013

INFORMATION NOTE

A. BACKGROUND

For the whole Arab region climate change and its impacts have been recognised as a major challenge to national sustainable socio-economic development. The global negotiations on climate change are highly relevant to the people and their future livelihoods in the whole region aiming at meaningful international agreements to (a) limit or reduce the root causes of climate change (mitigation); and (b) develop mechanisms for adapting to unavoidable impacts from climate change (adaptation). Hence the governments of Arab countries have shown a keen interest to actively participate in the preparatory processes at regional and global levels as well as in the actual negotiation processes at the COP 18. While each country in the region has slightly different needs and interests, it has been recognised that many of the challenges in the Arab region are similar and hence the national interests and approaches to the negotiations tend to show significant similarity.

To move the agenda forward towards successful future negotiations, negotiators and those supporting the national negotiation teams require an in depth understanding of the history of the negotiation process on climate change and the recent developments and outcomes from COP 18 including *inter alia* the following issues:

- Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA);
- Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI);
- *Ad hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP);
- *Ad hoc* Working Group on Long term Cooperative Action under the UNFCCC (AWG-LCA), which ended its work in Doha during COP 18;
- *Ad hoc* Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (AWG-ADP);
- Kyoto Protocol and amendments, incl. the Kyoto Protocol's Market Mechanisms, such as the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), Joint Implementation (JI), and International Emissions Trading (IET);
- Global climate change agreement to be finalized in 2015 and endorsed by 2020 (Durban Platform);
- Climate finance and technology and completion of related infrastructure, incl. the Green Climate Fund and the Climate Technology Center (CTC);
- Long-term climate finance;

- Adaptation/increased focus on loss and damage, incl. the Adaptation Fund and the implementation of National Adaptation Plans;
- Support of developing country action;
- Scientific review;
- “Doha Climate Gateway” package.

B. SCOPE

To improve the chances for achieving meaningful results in future negotiations, communications and exchange between the countries in the region can be further enhanced to reach a better understanding of common interests and improve common positions. For future negotiations in the COP 19 and beyond it is also important to expand a common vision and further develop national capacities for climate change related negotiations: this is particularly important for more junior staff from the respective government institutions which will support their negotiation teams and may eventually take over the role of negotiators in the future. In this context the League of Arab States (LAS), based on a demand expressed by the Arab negotiating group, requested assistance from ESCWA to jointly support a capacity development initiative for its member countries and improve national negotiation skills for climate change negotiations through a training workshop for junior staff of government institutions, i.e. potential future members of negotiation teams.¹

The proposed training workshop aims to develop a better understanding of the climate change policy framework, the history of the policy making process towards and within the UNFCCC context and shall consider also the challenges currently faced by climate change negotiators in making progress towards new agreements, taking into account the on-going negotiations.

It also intends to discuss a newly developed draft “Guide on Climate Change Negotiations for Representatives and Negotiators from Arab Countries”, that was prepared as part of ESCWA’s regular work programme activities, to exchange experiences and knowledge between today’s negotiators and the future generation of negotiators from different countries in the region and to develop strategies to prepare for improved common positions from Arab countries for future negotiations related to climate change.

C. OBJECTIVES

The workshop seeks to:

- Develop an understanding of relevant factors contributing to successful negotiations on climate change, including methods to bring in new proposals and amend proposals by others, building partnerships with other parties to achieve common goals;
- Learn about the history of the negotiation process on climate change, the recent developments and outcomes from COP 18 and the implications (opportunities and challenges) for countries in the region;
- Receive guidance for future negotiations based on the draft “Guide on Climate Change Negotiations for Representatives and Negotiators from Arab Countries”, and discuss respective national experiences;
- Build links between the future generation of climate change negotiators from Arab countries to facilitate improved coordination and the development of common positions;

- Develop an improved understanding of potentials for common positions between countries in the region, challenges and limits of such common positions and how to make best use of these in the context of future climate change negotiations;
- Foster on-going dialogue as part of a continuous process between Arab countries.

D. ORGANIZATION AND VENUE OF THE MEETING

The workshop is organized by the League of Arab States and ESCWA to jointly support a capacity development initiative for young potential negotiators and climate change experts from the Arab countries. The meeting will be held in the Royal Science Society, El-Hassan Science City, Al-Jubaila, Amman.

E. PARTICIPANTS

Climate experts from ministries responsible for climate change negotiation in the Arab member states are invited to participate in the workshop.

Government representatives who are nominated by their ministries are kindly requested to send their registration form to ESCWA by 14 October 2013 in order to assure arrangements for the workshop. ESCWA is not arranging for group hotel reservations in Amman and participants can choose their preferred accommodation. ESCWA, however, can assist in booking at a preferential rate if requested by the participants as shown in the attached logistical information note.

F. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence and inquiries concerning the workshop should be addressed to:

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