



**Regional workshop on innovative technologies for waste management in the Arab Region
– Paving the way for the transition to a green economy**

Morocco, Casablanca, 29-30 September 2015

Information Note

1. Background and justification

Generation of solid waste in the Arab region has been growing due to, amongst other reasons, population and economic growth, urbanization, industrialization, rising standards of living, changing consumption patterns and the lack of public awareness.¹ The amount of municipal solid waste generated in Arab countries in 2020 will likely exceed 200 million tons per year.² These rising quantities of waste are posing increasing problems for countries in the Arab region with adverse effects on the environment, the quality of drinking water, and human health.

Solid waste may be classified by content as non-hazardous, hazardous or by source as municipal, industrial and agricultural, with varying definitions of what falls under the latter categories. Solid waste management is used to describe all activities related to the collection, sorting, processing, and disposing of solid waste.

The process of greening a sector aims to configure businesses and infrastructure to deliver better returns on natural, human and economic investments, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, using fewer natural resources, and creating less waste.³ Environmental improvements typically translate into social returns, including improved health and well-being, green job opportunities and enhanced social justice. Rather than perceiving waste as a liability, it should be considered a resource because a large part of our waste can be reused. Green solid waste management aims to manage waste in a manner that meets public health and environmental concerns, while conserving resources through reuse and recycling of the waste materials.

Several countries in the Arab region have taken steps to design and improve waste management policies, adopt innovative methodologies and technologies. However, there is currently no formal, structured exchange of experiences on waste management technologies and practices in the region. Progress on innovation also remains limited, with inefficient coordination of efforts, insufficient funding and lack of collaboration between universities and businesses.

Within this context and in pursuance of their joint mandate, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is partnering with Economic Commission for Africa's Sub-regional Office for North Africa (ECA/SRO-NA) and the Moroccan Cleaner Production Center (CMPP) in organizing a workshop on "Innovative technologies for waste management in the Arab Region – paving the way for the transition to a green economy" in September 2015 in Casablanca.

¹ AFED (2011) Waste Management, Chapter 7,
<http://afedonline.org/Report2011/PDF/En/chapter%207%20Waste.pdf>

² UNEP (2010) Environmental Outlook for the Arab Region, Environment for Development and Human Well-being

³ AFED (2011)



ESCWA is leading the efforts to strengthen national capacities in the Arab region on developing green production sectors. Since 2012 ESCWA established a network of Green Help Desks to increase awareness on the beneficial role of green technologies in six countries of its member countries: Lebanon, Jordan, Oman, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco. These Helpdesks aim at supporting SMEs interested in acquiring and/or utilizing green processes.

ECA/SRO-NA drives the discussion on green economy in the region, contributing to knowledge sharing. The ECA/SRO-NA launched a consultation on “the industrial sector and green economy in North Africa: challenges, experiences and prospects” which assesses companies’ commitment to consider environmental concerns and principles of sustainable development. It is also meant to promote a better understanding of the strategic positioning, the challenges and opportunities of a green economy for private businesses.

CMPP is hosting the Green Help Desk since January 2015. The CMPP, a non-profit association since 1999, aims to reduce environmental pollution caused by industry, and supports small and medium enterprises in adopting more resource efficient and cleaner production techniques.

2. Objectives and Focus Areas

The workshop aims to create a space where research, businesses, investors and policy-makers working on the issue of waste management exchange information and make the necessary connections for the application and adaptation of innovative technologies. In particular, the objectives and focus areas of this workshop are the following:

- Take account of the knowledge and expertise that exists in the region, in terms of application of innovative technologies, methodologies and policies concerning waste.
- Present and exchange best practices, including technologies adapted to the region.
- Build the capacity of the representatives from Green Help Desks, to multiply spaces for business opportunities and technology innovation in waste management in other countries in the region.
- Discuss key questions on waste management with experts and policy makers from the region and identify potential areas of cooperation.
- Discuss the significance of technologies for waste management for the protection of health, the environment and opportunities for job creation.

Discussions at the workshop will be informed by a background study containing an overview of innovative technologies in the region with a special focus on Morocco. The paper will be shared with participants before the workshop.

3. Participants

Participants in this workshop include responsible staff of the existing Green Help Desks and Cleaner Production Centers and representatives of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), research institutions and academia, public institutions, international partners as well as technical experts in the field of solid waste management.

4. Cooperating partners

The Workshop is co-organized by ESCWA and ECA/SRO-NA and in cooperation with CMPP.



5. Venue and duration

The meeting will be held in Morocco, Casablanca. It will commence on Tuesday, 29 September 2015 at 09:30 and close on Wednesday 30 September at 17:00. The logistical note, including information on venue, will be provided to the participants in due time.

6. Visa requirements

Participants travelling to Morocco are reminded to secure their own visa from the Moroccan embassy or consulate in their country. Participants departing from a country where no embassy or consulate exists will be issued with a visa upon arrival to Morocco. They need to send a copy of their national passport and the ticket in addition to the invitation letter to the ECA Sub-regional Office for North Africa at least three weeks before the travel date in order to coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the timely issuance of the necessary entry visa.

7. Language

English and French will be the official languages used during the meeting. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

8. Draft Agenda

DAY 1: Tuesday, 29 September 2015	
08:30 – 09:30	Registration
09:30 – 10:00	Opening Remarks (ESCWA, ECA, CMPP)
10:00 – 11:30	Session 1: Waste management in the Arab Region – overview of problems, opportunities and regional perspectives
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 – 14:00	Session 2: Experiences with implementing innovative technologies
14:00 – 15:00	Lunch
15:00 – 17:00	Session 3: Facilitated group work on opportunities for innovation in waste management in the Arab Region
DAY 2: Wednesday 30 September 2015	
09:00 – 10:00	Presentation of group work from Day 1
10:00 – 11:30	Session 4: Creating an enabling environment for innovation and green growth (policy and business frameworks)
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee break
12:00 – 14:00	Session 5: Facilitated group work on creating business opportunities: matching research and business to create solution and accelerate innovation
14:00 – 15:00	Lunch
15:00 – 16:30	Presentation of group work from Session 5 (30') and General discussion (1h)
16:30 – 17:00	Closing remarks and evaluation

9. Contact information

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