



## United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)

### Expert Group Meeting on Evidence-based Policies and Programmes for Advancing Efficiency of Natural Resources in Mashreq Countries

Virtual Meeting- Thursday, 21 October 2021 (13.00-16.00 - Beirut time)

#### INFORMATION NOTE

##### I. Background

Linear patterns of consumption and production have been dominant in the Mashreq region, these unsustainable linear patterns of natural resource extraction, production, consumption, and disposal have increased pressure on scarce and fragile natural resources. As a result, the Mashreq region faces pressing challenges related to water, land degradation, drought, and biodiversity conservation.

Given the slow advancement towards Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), these unsustainable trends are projected to continue. Natural resources are expected to get more fragile and, therefore, insufficient to fulfil needs of current and future generations in the region. Those linear patterns need to be replaced by circular ones to enhance sustainability and efficiency of natural resources through sustainable consumption and production. In fact, the dedicated SDG 12 on “Responsible Consumption and Production” fosters doing more and better with less.

Since 2008 UN-ESCWA has been overseeing and reviewing progress, as well as exchanging views on the needs and priorities of the Arab region to promote the shift to SCP in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To this end, UN-ESCWA has recently produced a report on “Evidence-based policies and programs for advancing efficiency of natural resources in Mashreq countries”. This report aims at providing a background on trends, challenges, progress, and leading practice on SCP in the 6 Arab Mashreq countries, namely Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria. The report assesses the progress on a broad range of SCP indicators at the regional, sub-regional and national levels, highlights gaps and provides country-specific recommendations.

## **II. Objectives**

The meeting aims at discussing the first draft of the report. For this expert group meeting, UNESCWA will invite national experts from the six targeted countries, as well as international experts, all to provide their professional feedback, which will be integrated to enrich the report and validate the outcomes, and discuss the way forward.

## **IV. Organizational Issues**

### **A. Participants**

In addition to international experts, national experts on sustainable consumption and production and circular economy from the six targeted countries will be invited to provide feedback on the draft report.

### **B. Date and Venue**

The meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, 21 October 2021, from 13.00 - 16.00 (Beirut time). In addition to an introductory session, seven sessions shall cover each country analysed by the report. The meeting link shall be sent to you two days before the meeting.

### **C. Language**

The meeting will be conducted in Arabic language.

### **D. Correspondence**

Correspondence related to the meeting should be directed to the following address:

#### **UN-ESCWA**

Mr. Rami Sabella  
First Economic Affairs Officer  
Food and Environment Policies Section/Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster  
Beirut, Lebanon  
Tel: +961 1 978512  
Fax: +961 1 981510  
Email: [rami.sabella@un.org](mailto:rami.sabella@un.org)