Natural resources management for sustainable development

The post-2015 development agenda from the perspective
of the Arab region

Summary

States across the world consider 2015 as a benchmark for sustainable development. Various extensive international and regional consultations are being organized to determine the development path until 2030, notably the intergovernmental negotiations on a post-2015 development agenda aimed at formulating global sustainable development goals to supersede the Millennium Development Goals. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and its regional partners have played a central role in developing a clear Arab perspective on these internationally discussed issues.

Given the importance of follow up on, and participation in, this international process, the present paper sets out information on the progress made in preparing a post-2015 development agenda in the Arab region.
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Introduction

1. States across the world consider 2015 as a benchmark for sustainable development. Various extensive international and regional consultations are being organized to determine the development path until 2030, notably the intergovernmental negotiations on a post-2015 development agenda aimed at formulating global sustainable development goals to supersede the Millennium Development Goals. Arab countries are currently facing several challenges hampering their sustainable development. It is therefore vital that they contribute to this international process to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda will meet their needs and reflect their ambitions. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and its regional partners have played a central role in developing a clear Arab perspective on these internationally discussed issues.

2. Pursuant to ESCWA resolution 305 (XXVII) that requests the secretariat to assist member States in building their capacities to address the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), with special focus on the energy, water and environmental sectors, ESCWA has launched a broad programme of work, set out in the annex to the present paper. ESCWA ensured the participation of representatives from all ministries concerned with sustainable development, and relevant Arab organizations, experts and civil society organizations at consultative meetings held under its programme of work.

3. The present document contains information on the progress made in preparing a post-2015 development agenda. The first section reviews key achievements and future steps at the regional and international levels. The second section sets out the issues that Arab States should focus on during upcoming negotiations on a post-2015 development agenda, on the basis of the situation in Arab countries and their priorities. The third section presents a critical analysis from an Arab perspective on water resource issues in relation to the sustainable development goals.

I. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL APPROACHES

A. INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

4. The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 66/288 on the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference entitled “The future we want”. On 19 July 2014, following international consultations, the Open Working Group presented a proposal for sustainable development goals,\(^1\) setting out 17 goals and 169 targets (table below). The Arab region played a key role in preparing the proposal. The Working Group included representatives of six Arab States who took part in the extensive consultations, characterized by openness and transparency. As a result, the proposed goals and targets are inclusive, comprehensive and reflect the priorities of the Arab region, especially with regard to poverty; inequality; institutional weakness; gender inequality; water, energy and food security policies; and climate change.

5. The synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, entitled “The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet”,\(^2\) affirmed that the report of the Open Working Group would form the basis of negotiations on sustainable development goals and a post-2015 development agenda. The synthesis report also highlighted the link between the post-2015 development agenda and two other equally important international processes, namely financing for development and combating climate change. The post-2015 development agenda process would therefore be affected by the outcomes and preparations for two key events, namely the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Addis Ababa in July 2015, and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December 2015.

\(^1\) Available from http://undocs.org/A/68/970.

TABLE. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AS SET OUT IN THE PROPOSAL OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>End poverty in all its forms everywhere</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Reduce inequality within and among countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development</td>
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* Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

6. The synthesis report of the Secretary-General also stressed the importance of an inclusive consultative process for formulating the sustainable development goals, adding that all 17 goals set out in the proposal should be maintained but could be rearranged if necessary. Six essential elements were suggested to assist in formulating a post-2015 development agenda: dignity (to end poverty and fight inequalities); people (to ensure healthy lives, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children); prosperity (to grow a strong, inclusive and transformative economy); planet (to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children); justice (to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions); and partnership (to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development). The report also underscored the vital role that regional commissions were playing in this process, including ESCWA.

7. Negotiations on a post-2015 development agenda began at the start of 2015 and will continue until its adoption at a United Nations summit on the post-2015 development agenda, to be held in New York, from 25 to 27 September 2015. A provisional schedule for the summit preparations has been prepared, which includes eight negotiation sessions between 19 January 2015 and the end of July 2015. The summit is expected to result in an outcome document containing the following four components: a declaration on the post-2015 development agenda; a final list of sustainable development goals and targets; means of implementation; and an accountability framework.
B. REGIONAL APPROACHES

8. ESCWA has assisted Arab countries in following international activities and developing an Arab vision for the sustainable development goals, on the basis of regional development priorities and specificities. The first meeting of the Arab High-level Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Amman in April 2014, was a key event at which sustainable development goals were discussed from an Arab perspective. Consultations on the issue had been instigated at a prior meeting, organized by ESCWA in Tunis in 2013, and attended by member States and prominent experts and civil society representatives.

9. ESCWA presented the report of the first meeting of the Arab High-level Forum on Sustainable Development at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. It also reviewed its main messages at a side event, held in New York in July 2014, on the theme “Arab integration… A transformative change for sustainable development”, which was attended by representatives of the League of Arab States and Arab permanent delegations to the United Nations. The side event played a major part in casting light on Arab issues. Moreover, the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals has received significant attention, leading to the formation of a working group under the auspices of the Regional Coordination Mechanism, headed by ESCWA and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which, during the transition phase, will exchange information and assist in preparing documents and reports on regional preparations for the post-2015 development agenda.

10. Following a request by the Secretary-General, ESCWA, in collaboration with UNEP, the League of Arab States and other partners, organized the Arab Consultative Meeting on an Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, held in Tunis on 15 and 16 September 2014. Participants stressed the importance of an accountability framework, especially given that countries in the Arab region faced the same problems and could make greater progress if they tackled them collectively. Participants agreed that it was vital to develop an effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanism for the post-2015 development agenda, benefiting from best international and regional experiences, and focusing on building capacities and devising solutions on the basis of evaluations of the Millennium Development Goals in Arab countries. ESCWA submitted a summary of the Meeting’s proceedings, setting out key views and proposals, to the Secretary-General as a contribution to his synthesis report and as background information for the intergovernmental negotiations.

11. Preparations for a post-2015 development agenda are also being carried out at the regional level by various Arab ministerial councils under the League of Arab States, especially the Council of Arab Social Affairs Ministers responsible for coordinating this issue. The Council organized the Arab Conference on the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, held in Cairo on 2 and 3 December 2012, which resulted in recommendations on required action from Arab countries for the post-2015 period. These recommendations were adopted at the third Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Riyadh in January 2013. Pursuant to Summit resolutions, the Council of Arab Social Affairs Ministers held a ministerial conference in Amman, on 10 and 11 May 2014, which resulted in a declaration on the post-2015 inclusive and sustainable development priorities of the Arab region, containing 15 development priorities. The Council also organized a ministerial conference in Sharm al-Sheikh, from 27 to 30 October 2014; participants identified targets for each development priority and included them in a matrix, which the Council adopted at its thirty-fourth session held in Sharm al-Sheikh from 20 to 22 December 2014.

12. The Arab region has clearly expressed its priorities for a post-2015 development agenda in several declarations and government documents, including the Cairo Declaration adopted in June 2013 at the Regional Conference on Population and Development in the Arab States Beyond 2014; the Cairo Declaration on The Post-2015 Development Agenda for Women of February 2014; and the Arab Strategic Framework for Sustainable Development adopted at the special session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment, held in Hurghada, Egypt, on 14 and 15 June 2014.

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3 See ESCWA, Sustainable development goals… An Arab regional perspective (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2014/WG.1/1/Rev).
13. ESCWA will continue to follow international activities on the post-2015 development agenda. It will organize, in collaboration with UNEP and the League of Arab States, the second meeting of the Arab High-level Forum on Sustainable Development, to be held in Bahrain from 5 to 7 May 2015, to support regional preparations for the third session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and develop an unified Arab position on the issue for the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Addis Ababa in July 2015.

14. ESCWA and UNEP are currently working with the League of Arab States to prepare the first Arab report on sustainable development, which will be the Arab equivalent to the Global Sustainable Development Report. The report draws upon a broad range of studies on key sustainable development issues for the Arab region, including governance, planning systems, sustainable development institutions, funding, technology, statistics and gender. It also builds upon national sustainable development reports that are currently being prepared in several Arab countries that have volunteered to participate in this pilot project. UNEP and various United Nations entities and specialized agencies have contributed to sectoral studies on the sustainable development goals that concern Arab countries the most.

15. Other major activities planned for 2015 and 2016 on the post-2015 development agenda include the following:

(a) Preparing a study and holding a regional high-level meeting on progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 20 years after their adoption (Beijing+20) in Cairo, on 2 and 3 February 2015;

(b) Convening a regional preparatory meeting for the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III);

(c) Launching the regional project on statistics for a post-2015 development agenda and presenting a proposal for a standardized Arab census to enhance the statistical capacities of Arab countries to apply various suggested indicators;

(d) Issuing a study on multidimensional poverty and its measurement in Arab countries in preparation for the first Arab poverty report to be completed in 2016;

(e) Publishing a report on Arab development prospects containing a long-term analysis of issues related to the sustainable development goals until 2030.

II. KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY ARAB STATES AT NEGOTIATIONS ON A POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

16. Following the Open Working Group’s proposal for sustainable development goals, ESCWA prepared a note highlighting key issues that had not been included in the proposal, although they reflected the priorities of the Arab region as expressed by participants at regional consultations. ESCWA presented the note at the thirty-fourth session of the Council of Arab Social Affairs Ministers, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, from 20 to 22 December 2014. The Council approved the note, in addition to the Sharm el-Sheikh Declaration and the matrix of targets it had adopted in June 2014.

17. The principle issues set out in the note, which Arab States should focus on at upcoming intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, to start in 2015, include the following:

(a) Ending foreign occupation: although the right to self-determination is mentioned in the proposal’s introduction, goal 16 does not set out a clear target to eliminate all forms of colonialism and foreign occupation (Arab countries had identified this target as a priority during consultations);

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4 The following are countries that have voluntarily taken part in the process: Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen.
(b) **Internally displaced persons and refugees**: given that the numbers of internally displaced persons and refugees are increasing in the Arab region, as is their suffering, the issue of displacement must be clearly and comprehensively included in the document; goal 16 does not include a target on this issue;

(c) **Combating terrorism**: goal 16 sets out a target on capacity-building to combat terrorism, but does not tackle its causes and roots, and the role of women in conflict resolution was overlooked;

(d) **Rule of law**: the proposal mentions “promoting” the rule of law rather than requiring that it be respected;

(e) **Regional partnerships**: the proposal does not cover regional integration and the importance of building regional partnerships to drive sustainable development;

(f) **Means of implementation**: the proposal does not set out strong targets on implementation means. With regard to funding, technology transfer and trade issues in goal 17, unspecific language is used (“enhance”, for example, is a loose term that does not identify a specific target). Given that implementation means are a necessary prerequisite for achieving sustainable development in Arab countries with different needs, targets must be clearly identified and should focus on the following: ensuring that civil society plays a leading role in the development process, in line with the various outcomes of Arab meetings and the provisions of declarations; reforming the global governance system and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the management of global affairs; establishing a global trade system that contributes to development in developing countries; formulating specific targets to produce and publish detailed data, monitor progress, ensure accountability and transparency and formulate evidence-based policies.

18. It should be noted that the synthesis report of the Secretary-General focuses on eight points for achieving the new development agenda, which present a serious challenge for Arab regions that are still suffering under foreign occupation and for countries that are affected by instability, not to mention the increasing threat of terrorism. These points include tackling inequality in all areas, respecting human rights in accordance with international standards and conducting analyses based on verified evidence and data.

19. The synthesis report also indicates that combating racial discrimination and colonialism are among the key achievements of the past seven decades, but it does not mention the Israeli occupation of Palestine or the religious and racial discrimination practised by Israel.

### III. SUGGESTED GOALS AND TARGETS IN THE FIELD OF WATER RESOURCES FROM AN ARAB PERSPECTIVE

20. The proposal for sustainable development goals includes a specific goal on water and sanitation (goal 6). Given the importance of this issue to the Arab region, which is facing serious challenges in managing its natural resources, especially water, it is necessary to analyse goal 6 and the related targets from an Arab perspective.

21. Goal 6, “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”, sets out the following targets:

   (a) **Target 6.1.** By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all;

   (b) **Target 6.2.** By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations;
(c) Target 6.3. By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and increasing recycling and safe reuse by [x] per cent globally;

(d) Target 6.4. By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reducing the number of people suffering from water scarcity by 2030;

(e) Target 6.5. By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate;

(f) Target 6.6. By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes;

(g) Target 6.a. By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies;

(h) Target 6.b. Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

22. There are several similarities between the water supply indicators of the MDG+ Initiative and goal 6 targets on water, including substantially reducing the number of people suffering from water scarcity; ensuring sustainable supply of freshwater; achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all; water consumption; reducing distances between water sources and consumers; improving water quality by reducing pollution; and water quality measurement. Goal 6 has also added new dimensions such as substantially increasing water-use efficiency across all sectors; and supporting and strengthening the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.

23. There are also similarities between the sanitation indicators of the MDG+ Initiative and goal 6 sanitation targets, including achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all; and halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and increasing recycling and safe reuse. These similarities highlight the likeness of the two approaches and the consistency between water indicators and sanitations indicators.

24. It should be noted that other goals and targets in the proposal are related to water, including the following:

   (a) Goal 1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere

   Target 1.5. By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters;

   (b) Goal 2 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

   Target 2.4. By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality;
(c) Goal 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

i. Target 3.3. By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical
diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases;

ii. Target 3.9. By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous
chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination;

(d) Goal 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Target 11.5. By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people
affected and decrease by [x] per cent the economic losses relative to gross domestic product
caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and
people in vulnerable situations;

(e) Goal 12 – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Target 12.4. By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all
wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and
significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts
on human health and the environment;

(f) Goal 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably
manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

i. Target 15.1. By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial
and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands,
mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements;

ii. Target 15.8. By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly
reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or
eradicate the priority species.

25. The Committee on Water Resources is requested to take note of the developments in the preparations
for the post-2015 development agenda and of regional efforts for developing a unified Arab position that
reflects the region’s concerns. It should be also be noted that goal 6 sets out key water targets that were not
covered in the Millennium Development Goals, including substantially reducing the number of people
suffering from water scarcity; substantially increasing water-use efficiency across all sectors; implementing
integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as
appropriate; expanding international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in
water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes including water harvesting, desalination, water
efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies; protecting and restoring water-related
ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes. Arab States must take these
targets into account during negotiations conducted in the first half of 2015, given their importance to the
management of scarce water resources in the Arab region.
Annex

**ESCWA ACTIVITIES TO FOLLOW UP ON AND IMPLEMENT THE OUTCOMES OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Since the summer of 2012, ESCWA has been following up on the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) that concern the Arab region, and has continued to coordinate and cooperate with Arab Governments, United Nations entities and the League of Arab States and its specialized committees to take the necessary measures to achieve sustainable development, especially in terms of supporting the energy, water and environment sectors with regard to climate change issues and operationalizing regional institutional frameworks on sustainable development. In this context, the following documents and reports have been prepared:

(a) A report entitled “Follow-up to the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)”, presented at the seventh meeting of the Technical Committee, held in Amman on 18 and 19 March 2013;

(b) A background paper on the Rio+20 outcomes and implications for the Arab region, presented at the Arab Regional Implementation Meeting for the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, on 29 and 30 May 2013. At the closing session, participants adopted the Dubai document for the Arab regional implementation of Rio+20, containing a set of recommendations and specific priorities for the Arab region;

(c) A background paper entitled “Key issues for consideration on the sustainable development goals and post-2015 agenda” from an Arab perspective, presented at the Arab Regional Implementation Meeting for the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development;

(d) The Guide on Climate Change Negotiations for Representatives and Negotiators from Arab Countries, which was presented at a regional training workshop on capacity development for climate change negotiations for Arab countries, organized by the ESCWA secretariat and the League of Arab States and held in Amman from 22 to 24 October 2013;

(e) A study entitled “Mapping Green Economy in the ESCWA Region”, which assesses policies aimed at developing green production sectors and determines their development requirements, and identifies the opportunities presented by implementing pioneering projects in this field;

(f) A study entitled “Monitoring the transition to a green economy in the Arab region: the SME perspective”, focusing on small and medium enterprises;

(g) A publication entitled “The Role of Renewable Energy in Mitigating Climate Change in the ESCWA Region”;

(h) A paper entitled “Sustainable development Goals… An Arab regional perspective” setting out a series of sustainable development goals that meet the region’s needs, which was presented as a regional contribution to the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goal in April 2014 to assist its members from Arab States.

ESCWA offered support to its member States by undertaking the following:

(a) Organizing the Intergovernmental Consultative Meeting on the Water and Energy Nexus in the ESCWA Region for members of the Committee on Water Resources and the Committee on Energy (Beirut, 27-28 June 2012);
(b) Holding a regional workshop on lessons and challenges for the implementation of international sustainable development guidelines in conflict afflicted countries (Beirut, 11-12 June 2012);

(c) Organizing a regional training workshop on promoting energy efficiency investments for climate change mitigation and sustainable development (Tunis, 24-26 September 2012);

(d) Presenting a report at the fourteenth session of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Countries (Cairo, 30 September 2012);

(e) Participating in the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (Doha, 26 November-7 December 2012);

(f) Organizing a regional expert group meeting on small and medium enterprises and their role in sustainable development in the Arab region (Kuwait, 6-7 November 2012), in collaboration with the Kuwaiti Arab Planning Institute;

(g) Participating in the twenty-fourth session of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) to discuss post-Rio+20 issues (Baghdad, 24-25 December 2012);

(h) Organizing the Arab Regional Implementation Meeting for the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development – follow-up to Rio+20 (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 29-30 May 2013);

(i) Organizing a meeting on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014 (Cairo, 24-27 June 2013);

(j) Organizing a regional training workshop on capacity development for climate change negotiations for Arab countries (Amman, 22-24 October 2013), in collaboration with the League of Arab States;

(k) Organizing the Arab Consultative Meeting on the Sustainable Development Goals (Tunis, 18-119 November 2013);

(l) Developing a regional green economy investment vision and road map; CAMRE adopted the proposed approach for developing the road map at its 2013 session;

(m) Organizing the Regional Conference on Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development in Rural Areas of the ESCWA Region (Rabat, 26-28 November 2013) under the project entitled “Capacity-building on climate change mitigation for poverty alleviation in Western Asia”;

(n) Organizing a meeting on the post-2015 development agenda for women (Cairo, 23 February 2014);

(o) Organizing the first meeting of the Arab High-level Forum on Sustainable Development (Amman, 2-4 April 2014);

(p) Updating the Sustainable Development Initiative in the Arab Region, in collaboration with the League of Arab States and the United Nations Environment Programme, and presenting it at the CAMRE special session, held in May 2014, at which the Initiative was redesignated as the Arab Strategic Framework for Sustainable Development;
(q) Participating in the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in New York in September 2013, and the 1st and 2nd meetings of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, held in New York in September 2013 and July 2014, respectively;

(r) Organizing a side event at the 2nd meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development on the theme “Arab integration ... A transformative change for sustainable development” (New York, 1 July 2014);

(s) Organizing the Arab Consultative Meeting on an Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda (Tunis, 15-16 September 2014);

(t) Holding a panel discussion on social justice and natural resource management at the twenty-eighth ESCWA session (Tunis, 18 September 2014);

(u) Participating in the twenty-sixth CAMRE session (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, November 2014);

(v) Discussing sustainable development goals at meetings of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (December 2012, November 2013 and December 2014);

(w) Participating in meetings of the Council of Arab Social Affairs Ministers on post-2015 sustainable development goals for the Arab region (Amman, April 2014; Sharm el-Sheikh, October 2014; Sharm el-Sheikh, December 2014);

(x) Implementing the Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region;

(y) Implementing the project of the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) entitled “Adaptation to climate change in the water sector in the MENA region”;

(z) Implementing the project on developing the capacities of Arab countries for climate change adaptation by applying integrated water resource management tools;

(a*) Implementing the project on strengthening national capacities to manage water scarcity and drought in West Asia and North Africa;

(b*) Implementing the project on the energy-water-food nexus.

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