Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Second Intergovernmental Consultative Meeting on the
Draft Legal Framework for Shared Groundwater Resources
in the Arab Region
Beirut, 13-14 December 2011

MEETING REPORT

Summary

The second intergovernmental consultative meeting was organized in cooperation with the League of Arab States Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security and the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources in Germany (BGR). The meeting took place from 13-14 December 2011 at the United Nations House in Beirut, Lebanon. This meeting was organized in response to the resolution of the Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) which called for a follow-up consultative meeting of the expert representatives of Arab countries to discuss the Council’s decision to prepare a draft legal framework on shared water resources whose coverage would be limited to shared groundwater resources. The resolution also called upon the countries to provide comments on the modified draft legal framework that would reflect the shift of focus and be discussed at this second consultative meeting.

The meeting brought together representatives of Arab Governments and experts from specialized Arab organizations, in addition to the partner organizations. The meeting reviewed the modified draft legal framework for shared groundwater resources in the Arab region, including the comments received from countries, in view of fostering consensus among the participants on a revised draft of the legal framework.

It was agreed that the revised draft would be submitted for consideration by the Executive Bureau of the AMWC during their meeting in January 2012 and subsequently presented to the fourth session of the AMWC. The participants also agreed on a set of recommendations to be raised at the next meeting of the Executive Bureau of the AMWC, which included the proposal that the scope of the legal framework be reconsidered so as to provide an integrated framework for the management of shared surface and groundwater resources in the region.
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**Chapter**

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Introduction

1. In recognition of the challenges that the Arab region faces in managing shared water resources, the Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) at its second session in July 2010 called for the preparation of a legal framework for shared waters in the Arab region, which is articulated in a resolution in which the Council:

“Invites the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in coordination with the Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD) and the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) to prepare a draft legal framework on shared waters within the Arab Region for its discussion during the fourth meeting of the Technical Scientific Advisory Committee of the Ministerial Council in January 2011.”

Arab Ministerial Water Council, Session 2, Resolution 20, Item 3

2. In support of the implementation of this resolution, an expert roundtable meeting was organized by the partners in December 2010 and hosted by ESCWA with support from the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) through the ESCWA-BGR Cooperation project. The outcomes of this roundtable meeting contributed to the preparation of a background document, a preliminary draft legal framework, and the joint decision to convene an intergovernmental consultation meeting to discuss these documents. In April 2011, the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security reported to the Technical Scientific Advisory Committee of the AMWC on progress achieved in implementing the ministerial resolution. Support for the process was subsequently reiterated by the Executive Bureau of the AMWC during its third meeting held on 27-28 April 2011, which adopted the following resolution, in which the Bureau:

“Invites water related authorities in the Arab countries and the specialized Arab organizations to actively participate in the consultative meeting to be organized by the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in cooperation with Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources in Germany (BGR), to be held in during the period 24-26 May 2011 in Beirut , to discuss the draft legal framework for shared water resources in the Arab region.”

Executive Bureau of the Arab Ministerial Water Council, 3rd Meeting, Resolution 20, Item 4

3. In response to the above resolution, the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security and the Water Resources Section of the Sustainable Development and Productivity Department at ESCWA with the support of the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) organized the first Intergovernmental Consultative Meeting from 24 to 26 May 2011 at the United Nations House in Beirut, Lebanon. During the meeting, representative experts of Arab Governments and specialized Arab organizations were invited to discuss, examine and reach consensus on a draft legal framework. The meeting resulted in a draft legal framework in the form of a binding “convention” with a recommendation to present it to the Executive Bureau of the Arab Ministerial Water Council and seek a resolution of the Bureau to allow for another round of consultation through the distribution of the draft Convention to the Arab countries in view of soliciting their official comments. The meeting also recommended ESCWA and the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security to incorporate the comments received from Arab Governments and consequently redraft the Convention. This modified version would then be presented to the Executive Bureau and the Ministerial Council for approval.

4. During the subsequent meeting of the Executive Bureau and the third session of the Arab Ministerial Water Council in June 2011, discussions resulted in agreement among the ministers to redirect the scope of the legal framework to focus only on shared aquifers, thus excluding shared surface water from the scope of the legal framework. Despite efforts to demonstrate the connectivity between surface and groundwater
resources and the value added for their conjunctive use and management, the Ministerial Council modified
the direction of its earlier resolution and decided as follows:

“Commissions the Technical Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Water Council to circulate the
draft legal framework on shard groundwater in the Arab region to the water relevant agencies
in the Arab Countries and to specialized Arab organizations to solicit their views and comments
on it and send their comments to the Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security by 30
October 2011.”

“Commisions the Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security and the Economic and
Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) to organize a consultation meeting comprising
the Arab Countries to discuss the legal framework on shared groundwater in the Arab region”.

Arab Ministerial Water Council, Session 3, Resolution 37, Items 4 and 5

5. In response to this ministerial resolution, ESCWA and the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water
Security modified the draft legal framework so as to limit its scope to encompass shared groundwater
aquifers only and sent the modified draft to the Arab Countries for comments, as per item 4 of the
aforementioned resolution no. 37. The two institutions also organized the second consultation meeting at the
United Nations House in Beirut during the period 13-14 December, 2010 as per item 5 of the Council’s
resolution.

6. Since the basic elements of the legal framework like structure, justification, directions, and format had
been discussed and agreed upon during the first consultation meeting, it was decided that the second
consultation meeting will, as much as possible, be limited to discussing the comments of the countries and
consequently reach consensus among the participants on a modified draft.

7. Besides the opening and closing sessions, this second intergovernmental consultative meeting
consisted of five plenary sessions. The first session informed the participants of the Ministerial Council’s
decision to shift the focus of the legal framework as well as the recent developments that had taken place at
the global level on the draft articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers undertaken at the UN General
Assembly 66th session in December 2011. The subsequent four sessions were devoted to discussing the
comments received from countries on an article by article reading of the modified draft of the legal
framework. The sessions also discussed and agreed on proposals for redrafts of the text. As these changes
were incorporated in the draft during the plenary sessions, the drafting committee did not hold separate
“drafting working sessions.”

I. RECOMMENDATIONS

8. Although the resolution of the Arab Ministerial Water Council did not call for a discussion on the shift
in the scope of the legal framework, the participants agreed early on during the meeting that it was
appropriate to raise their concerns and reservations regarding the Council’s decision to focus on the legal
agreement only on shared groundwater resources. It was furthermore agreed that this view would be
submitted to the Executive Bureau and the Ministerial Council for consideration through the concluding
recommendations of the meeting. Despite this reservation, the meeting participants agreed in tandem to
complete the task that they were mandated to perform according to the Ministerial Council’s most recent
resolution, and thus limited their discussions thereafter to only reviewing comments on the draft legal
framework as it relates to groundwater.

* In addition to the official comments that were received from the countries, the floor was also open for additional comments
from the participants.
9. At the end of the meeting, the participants agreed on the following recommendations, which:

- Agree to change the title of the legal framework from the “Legal Framework for Shared Groundwater in the Arab Region” to the “Convention on Shared Groundwater Resources in the Arab Region.”
- Call upon the Executive Bureau of the Arab Ministerial Water Council in its upcoming fifth session (January 2012) to reconsider amending the legal framework so as to become inclusive of all shared water resources, surface and groundwater in the Arab region.
- Invite the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security to present the draft “Convention on Shared Groundwater Resources in the Arab Region” to the Executive Bureau of the Arab Ministerial Water Council in its upcoming session for deliberations of the proposed amendment.
- Invite the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security to present the draft Convention to the Ministerial Council to solicit its approval.
- Invite the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security to present the draft Convention to the Ministerial Council to solicit its approval.
- Express thanks to the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources in Germany (BGR), for their cooperation and stressing the importance of continued intensive cooperation with the Center towards realizing its mandates.

II. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

10. After the opening session, the meeting started by a short introduction by Mr. Al-Hamdi, First Economic Affairs Officer in the Water Resources Section at ESCWA, providing an overview of the meeting objectives, programme of work and rules of procedure to be followed during the meeting. He then invited the participating representatives of Arab Governments to form a drafting committee that would be in charge of taking note of all comments made on the draft legal framework and presenting the modified draft version of the legal framework to the plenary at the end of the second day of the meeting. Although a drafting committee was formed and approved by the participants, given the shift in the drafting procedures where modifications were discussed and agreed upon during plenary sessions including all participants, the task of the drafting committee was changed so as to allow them to lead the redrafting process in a fully inclusive and collective manner during the meeting’s sessions. As such the special working sessions of the drafting committee were cancelled.

A. SESSION 1: REVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND PROGRESS TO DATE

11. The objective of this session was to inform the participants of the recent developments that had taken place during the time between the first and second consultation meetings (May to December 2011). Moreover, given the shift of scope in the legal framework to shared groundwater and the fact that the draft articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers had been revisited by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 2011, less than a week prior to the meeting date, it was deemed appropriate to make the participants aware of these discussions and the related UN General Assembly resolution.

12. Mr. Klingbeil, Regional Advisor for Environment and Water at ESCWA, delivered a presentation highlighting the status and recent development on the draft articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers. He indicated that the Arab Countries had been active in the deliberations during the period 2008 to 2011. This was evident from the comments submitted by six Arab countries on the draft articles, which ranged from issues related to the format, substance and function of the draft articles. The comment on the overlap of the draft articles and the provisions of the 1997 Watercourse Convention was of special interest and relevance to the participants given the recent decision of the AMWC to refocus the legal framework to only
address shared aquifers. Mr. Klingbeil concluded by reiterating that the recent UN General Assembly resolution (66/104) encouraged countries to develop appropriate bilateral and regional arrangements for the proper management of transboundary aquifers. The resolution also called for the inclusion of the draft articles in the agenda of the 68th session of the General Assembly in 2013 for further discussions in light of the written comments that had been received from various countries and called also for continued examination of the legal format that might be given to the draft articles.

13. As one of the comments received from Saudi Arabia on the draft legal framework had proposed to wait and see what happens at the global level on the draft articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers before moving forward with the regional framework, the presentation noted that the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to postpone further discussion of the draft articles was a sign of possible disagreements at the global level that could further delay their approval. Ongoing deliberations at the global level could thus delay the conclusion of an Arab legal framework if progress on regional discussions were tied to considering the outcomes of deliberations underway at the global level.

14. Ms. Ksia, Director of the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security, reported on progress made since the first consultative meeting in May 2011 and provided a context for understanding the decision of the Executive Bureau to shift the scope of the legal framework to only focus on shared groundwater resources in the Arab region. She explained that the deliberations noted the sensitivity of dealing with shared surface water resources with non-Arab countries and the preference of the participating ministers to follow the existing United Nations modality of pursuing two separate legal instruments: one for shared surface water (namely, the 1997 Watercourse Convention) and another for shared groundwater (namely, the draft articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers). Ms. Ksia also remarked that the more recent ministerial session resolution calling for a second consultative meeting on the draft legal framework should guide the work of the meeting participants, but she also indicated that the recommendations of the meeting could still raise the issue to the Executive Bureau for reconsideration.

15. Mr. Al-Hamdi delivered a presentation on the implications of separately managing groundwater and surface water resources within a shared basin. He highlighted the physical difficulty faced when trying to separate interconnected groundwater and surface water within a common drainage basin. He also noted that the growing water scarcity within the Arab region is expected to drive countries to develop shared water resources unilaterally or bilaterally, which could trigger friction and may lead to conflicts if not pursued in a clear and structured manner. An Arab legal framework that sets the principles upon which cooperation and allocation of shared water resources are based could thus prevent such friction. Mr. Al-Hamdi also detailed the three justifying factors that had been mentioned at the fourth meeting of the Executive Bureau, which led to the exclusion of shared surface water from the scope of the legal framework. In doing so, he highlighted the disadvantages of following this approach as well as the benefits that could be expected from a unified legal instrument that covers all shared waters.

16. In the discussions that followed the presentations of the first session, the participants reaffirmed their position to call upon the Executive Bureau to reconsider their previous decision on the exclusion of shared surface water from the scope of the legal framework.

B. SESSIONS 2, 3, 4 AND 5: REVIEW OF COMMENTS SUBMITTED ON THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

17. These sessions reviewed all the comments that had been received by the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security, as per the Arab Ministerial Water Council’s resolution no. 37, which were forwarded to ESCWA to be incorporated in the revised draft legal framework. ESCWA prepared the revised draft legal framework for discussion in a manner that shows each comment provided under the relevant article of the legal framework with an attribution to the name of the country that made the comment. Besides illustrating the concerns of all the countries on an article by article basis, this method proved to be an effective approach to structure the discussions. In total, ten countries responded to the Council’s resolution. Seven countries provided written comments (Algeria, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and
Tunis), while the remaining three (Jordan, Morocco and Qatar) responded indicating that they did not have any comments on the draft.

18. At the beginning of the second session, Mr. Al-Hamdi presented an overall summary of the comments that had been received and grouped them in categories in accordance to their intent, topic and scope. He reminded the participants that the first consultation meeting had already set the directions of the legal framework and that this meeting should not mistakenly be redirected to discussions that had already taken place, and where the participants had reached consensus. He highlighted, for example, the extensive discussions of the first meeting that lead to adopt the approach of avoiding operational details, like notification arrangements and conflict resolution procedures and leaving them to the more relevant operational bilateral or multilateral agreements. The objective of the presentation was to provide the participants with an overview of the comments and how they relate (support or contradict) to each other.

19. After this overview presentation, a reading of the draft legal framework was done starting with the preamble and then going through each article one at a time. In its respective section, each comment was read and the representative of the country that had made the comment was given the chance to elaborate or make further clarifications on the comment. Discussions on each item of each article lead the participants to propose modifications and changes to the text. Although this approach was time consuming, it proved to be more participatory.

20. Two issues were particularly discussed and are worth highlighting in this report. The first is related to the definition of “groundwater” and the second is related to the concept of prior notification and whether there is a need for explicit strict detailed procedures to be incorporated in the legal framework. As for the first issue on defining groundwater, some participants were of the opinion that the definition needs to be technically and scientifically sound, and as such should not refer to recharging water as part of the constituents of groundwater. The other viewpoint indicated that while, in principle, any definition needs to be as scientifically accurate as possible, the legal framework does not include an article on definitions but rather one on the “use of terms.” As such, the drafted article on terms seeks to explain the use and domain of these terms as they best suit the purpose and objectives of the legal framework, but in doing so should not oppose or completely divert from a universally accepted definition of a specific term. In this regard, it was proposed that the use of the “groundwater” term within the scope of the legal framework needs to encompass the natural recharging water as part of the groundwater resources as this ensures their sustainability.

21. On the second issue related to prior notification, some participants were of the opinion that the specificity of the Arab region, in that it falls mostly at the downstream of some of the major international rivers, makes it essential to stress on the provisions of prior notifications as to make it difficult for the upstream countries to freely plan and construct measures that could affect the downstream riparian countries. Although this issue is more relevant to shared surface water, it was observed that the same principles should apply to the management of shared surface and groundwater resources. In response to this view, some participants noted that although more strict notifications measures could benefit some Arab countries, this legal framework should take a balanced approach. On the one hand, the agreement should avoid entering into operational details and leave those procedures to bilateral and basin level agreements. This was because details of this nature will always face political disagreements among the countries and could jeopardize the approval of a framework agreement. On the other hand, the provisions of the legal framework should not depart from the current and accepted international practices. In this regard while several progressive levels of prior notification measures are sometimes outlined in international agreements, these agreements do not reference the need for prior approval by the potentially affected country before projects are initiated.

22. All the countries that submitted comments on the draft legal framework participated in the meeting, except for Saudi Arabia. It should be noted that Saudi Arabia provided an extensive list of comments, which reflects their interest in the process of developing the legal framework. Since the comments were not automatically incorporated in the text of the legal framework until they were discussed and agreed upon by the meeting participants, many of the comments received from Saudi Arabia - although discussed and
deliberated - were not incorporated in the modified text of the legal framework or in the associated recommendations of the meeting participants. Among those was the proposal of Saudi Arabia to postpone the preparation of the legal framework until the fate of the United Nations draft articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers is clarified. However, the participants did not concur with this recommendation based on the information they had received aforementioned presentation during Session I regarding the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to delay further consultations on the draft articles. Other comments submitted by Saudi Arabia could have also benefited from the participation of a representative to justify their inclusion in the modified text. It is worth mentioning that many comments made by other countries were also not incorporated in the modified text of the legal framework following discussion of the expert participants during the meeting.

23. In addition to the comments from the countries, some comments were also received from the Legal Department of the League of Arab States. Although these comments were made on the original text of the legal framework that was prepared in response to resolution no. 20 of the Arab Ministerial Water Council, which called for the preparation of a legal framework on “all” shared water in the Arab region, it was decided to include these comments in the discussions since the principles upon which cooperation and collaboration on shared water resources are based should not significantly diverge between shared surface water and shared groundwater. The comments of the Legal Department can be grouped in two categories. The first group relates to the operational detailed measures associated with some of the general principles, such as prior notification and conflict resolution and settlement, and their proposal to introduce detailed measures to the legal framework similar to those in the 1997 Watercourse Convention. The second group of issues relates to the approval and ratification procedures of the League of Arab States as agreed to by its Member States. It was clear that the comments of the first category were influenced by the approach taken in the United Nations 1997 Watercourse Convention. However, the participants maintained the course set during previous consultations, namely that the legal framework should set the guiding principles upon which cooperation between riparian countries is later based. Many of the issues raised in the second set of comments were incorporated in the modified text of the legal framework.

24. After discussions of all the comments, a final reading of the modified text of the legal framework was undertaken during the fifth session of the meeting, at which time the participants reached final consensus on the proposed text as modified. It was agreed that the modified text would be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Bureau of the AMWC for discussion and further action. The participants also issued separate meeting recommendations which noted their concerns regarding the exclusion of shared surface water from the scope of the legal framework and stressed their views on the technical and legal difficulties of separating groundwater from surface water resources, particularly due to the strong connectivity between renewable groundwater and surface water resources.

C. CLOSING SESSION

25. The final version of the modified text and recommendations were unanimously adopted by the meeting participants. The meeting ended with closing statements from Ms. Chahra Ksia, Director of the Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, and Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Chief of the Water Resources Section, on behalf of ESCWA.

III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK AND ATTENDANCE

A. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

26. The second Intergovernmental Consultative Meeting was held from 13-14 December 2011 at the United Nations House in Beirut, Lebanon. The meeting was organized in five sessions as highlighted in the meeting agenda in Annex I.
B. OPENING OF THE IGM

27. The meeting was opened by Mr. Messahel Mekki, representative of the Minister of Water Resources of Algeria, which currently serves as chair of the Arab Ministerial Water Council. Statements were also delivered by Mr. Fadi Comair, General Director of Electric and Hydraulic Resources, Ministry of Energy and Water of Lebanon; Mr. Andreas Renck, Coordinator of the ESCWA-BGR Cooperation; Ms. Chahra Ksia, Director of the Center of Water Studies and Arab Water Security; and Mr. Nadim Khouri, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCWA. The speakers emphasized the importance of shared water resources to the water scarce Arab region and the importance of integrated water resources management for achieving sustainable development. They also acknowledged that the initiative of the Arab Ministerial Water Council to prepare the legal framework reflects a strong political commitment for enhanced cooperation and collaboration among the Arab countries on managing shared water resources in accordance with the principles of fairness and equity. Mr. Renck indicated that the support of BGR to the development process of a legal framework on shared water resources in the Arab region falls within the overall objectives of the cooperation between ESCWA and BGR, which aims at enhanced cooperation on shared water resources between countries of the Arab region. Ms. Ksia and Mr. Khouri also highlighted that ESCWA and the Center are jointly organizing the meeting in response to the resolution of the Council requesting both institutions to finalize the draft legal framework on shared groundwater resources in accordance with comments to be received by the Arab countries, as well as the Council’s decision to refocus the legal framework to only encompass shared groundwater aquifers.

C. PARTICIPANTS

28. The meeting was attended by 16 government representatives from 10 Arab Countries (Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Tunisia). Additional experts from international and regional bodies also participated, namely the Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, the Technical Secretariat of the Arab Ministerial Water Council at the League of Arab States, the Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) in addition to experts from the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) and ESCWA (the list of participants is attached as annex II).
Annex I

AGENDA

Tuesday, 13 December 2011

9:00-9:30 Registration at MZ Conference Room, United Nations House, Riad El-Solh

OPENING SESSION

Moderators: - Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Chief, Water Resources Section, Sustainable Development and Productivity Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
- Ms. Chahra Ksia, Director, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, League of Arab States (LAS)

9:30-10:00 Opening Statements

- Mr. Messahel Mekki, Water Resources Expert, Ministry of Water Resources, Algeria, on behalf of the Minister of Water Resources of Algeria, Chair of the third session of the Arab Ministerial Water Council
- Mr. Fadi Comair, General Director of Electric and Hydraulic Resources, Ministry of Energy and Water, Lebanon
- Mr. Andreas Renck, Coordinator, ESCWA-BGR Cooperation
- Ms. Chahra Ksia, Director, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, League of Arab States (LAS)
- Mr. Nadim Khouri, Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCWA

10:00-10:30 Tour de table

10:30-11:00 Review of the Agenda Formation of Drafting Committee Election of the Chair of the Drafting Committee

Mr. Mohamed Al-Hamdi, First Economic Affairs Officer, Water Resources Section, Sustainable Development and Productivity Division, ESCWA

11:00-11:15 Coffee break

SESSION I: REVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND PROGRESS TO DATE

Moderator: Ms. Chahra Ksia, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, LAS

11:15-11:30 United Nations General Assembly Resolution no. 63 / 124 on the "Law of transboundary aquifers": Status and recent developments

Mr. Ralf Klingbeil, Regional Advisor for Water and Environment, ESCWA

11:30-11:40 Review of the mandate and progress made in the preparation of the legal framework on shared groundwater resources in the Arab Region

Ms. Chahra Ksia, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, LAS

11:40-11:50 Implications of the Arab Ministerial Water Council resolution to shift from “shared water resources” to “shared groundwater resources”

Mr. Mohamed Al-Hamdi, Water Resources Section, ESCWA

11:50-13:00 Discussion

13:00-14:00 Lunch hosted by BGR
### SESSION II: REVIEW OF COMMENTS SUBMITTED ON THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK (DRAFT 2)

**Moderator:** *Ms. Chahra Ksia, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, LAS*

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<td>Report on the level response by Arab countries on the Legal Framework (Draft 2)</td>
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<td>14:10-14:20</td>
<td>Analysis and inclusion of comments by Arab countries on the Legal Framework (Draft 2 with comments)</td>
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<td>14:20-15:15</td>
<td>Discussion of comments submitted by Arab countries</td>
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<td>15:15-15:30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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### SESSION III: REVIEW OF PART 1 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK (DRAFT 2 WITH COMMENTS)

**Moderator:** *Chair of the Drafting Committee*

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<tr>
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<td>Reading of the Preamble and Articles 1-4 of the Legal Framework (Draft 2 with comments)</td>
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<td>15:45-17:00</td>
<td>Discussion (Preamble, Articles 1-4)</td>
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<td>17:00</td>
<td>End of Day 1 plenary sessions</td>
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**17:00-18:00 Drafting Committee Working Session I**

*The Drafting Committee will revise the Legal Framework (Draft 2 with comments) based on the comments discussed during Session II and III (Room MZ).*

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<td>20:00-22:00</td>
<td>Dinner hosted by BGR</td>
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### Wednesday, 14 December 2011

### SESSION IV: REVIEW OF PARTS 2, 3 AND 4 OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK (DRAFT 2 WITH COMMENTS)

**Moderator:** *Chair of the Drafting Committee*

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<td>Reading of Articles 5-14 of the Legal Framework (Draft 2 with comments)</td>
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<td>9:20-10:45</td>
<td>Discussion (Articles 5-14)</td>
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<td>10:45-11:00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>11:00-11:15</td>
<td>Reading of Articles 15-20 of the Legal Framework (Draft 2 with comments)</td>
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<td>11:15-12:30</td>
<td>Discussion (Articles 15-20)</td>
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<td>12:30-14:00</td>
<td>Lunch hosted by BGR</td>
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13:30-15:30 Drafting Committee Working Session II

*The Drafting Committee will revise the Legal Framework (Draft 2 with comments) based on the comments discussed during Session IV. (Room 300)*

**SESSION V: ENDORSEMENT OF THE REVISED LEGAL FRAMEWORK (DRAFT 3)**

Moderator: *Chair of the Drafting Committee*

15:30-15:45 Reading and review of the revised Legal Framework prepared by the Drafting Committee based on comments and discussions

*Mr. Mohamed Al-Hamdi, Water Resources Section, ESCWA*

15:45-17:00 Discussion and Endorsement of the Legal Framework (Draft 3)

**CLOSING SESSION**

Moderators: *Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Water Resources Section, ESCWA*

*Ms. Chahra Ksia, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, LAS*

17:00-17:15 Proposed Recommendations and Next Steps

*Ms. Chahra Ksia, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, LAS*

17:15-17:45 Discussion

17:45-18:00 Closing Statements

- *Mr. Messahel Mekki, Water Resources Expert, Ministry of Water Resources, Algeria, on behalf of the Chair of the third session of the Arab Ministerial Water Council*
- *Mr. Andreas Renck, ESCWA-BGR Cooperation*
- *Ms. Chahra Ksia, Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security, LAS*
- *Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Water Resources Section, ESCWA*

18:00 End of meeting
Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. ARAB COUNTRIES

Algeria

Mr. Messahel Mekki
Water Resources Expert
Algerian Ministry of Water Resources
Algiers, Algeria
Fax: +213 25 425078
E-mail: messahelmekki@yahoo.fr

Egypt

Mr. Mohamed Fahmy Al-Hassary
Head of Desert Research Department
Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Tel.:+202-42182117
Fax: 202-42188729
E-mail: melhossary62@yahoo.com

Iraq

Mr. Ghalib A.K. Abdulwahab
Senior Chief Engineer
Ministry of Water Resources
Baghdad, Republic of Iraq
Tel.:+964 1 7740672
Fax: +964 1 7740672
E-mail: alighalib_AL-Hilli@yahoo.com

Mr. Hussain Ilahi Zamil
Head of Environmental Policies
Follow-up and Planning Directorate
Ministry of Water Resources
Baghdad, Republic of Iraq
Tel.:+964 1 7720240
Fax: +964 1 7720240
E-mail: dr.hussein1974@yahoo.com

Mr. Yaser Nazar Merza
Observer
Ministry of Water Resources
Baghdad, Republic of Iraq
Tel.: +964 1 7720240
Fax: +964 1 7740672
E-mail: yaser8305@yahoo.com

Mr. Saib Khidir Naif
Legal Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Baghdad, Republic of Iraq
E-mail: saib1982@yahoo.com

Mr. Qais Abdulla Sulaiman
3rd Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Baghdad, Republic of Iraq
E-mail: Alrahmaqais@yahoo.com

Jordan

Ms. Janseit Mutasem Haobsh
Legal Advisor
Ministry of Water and Irrigation
Amman, Hachemite Kingdom of Jordan
Tel.: +962 6 5665499
E-mail: janseitm@yahoo.com

Kuwait

Ms. Maha Abdul Mohsen Al Mansour
Manager of Ground Water Department
Ministry of Electricity and Water
Kuwait, State of Kuwait
Tel.: +965 25 37 1543
Fax: +965 25 38 31496
E-mail: ingeniera_maha@yahoo.com

Lebanon

Mr. Fadi Comair
General Director of Electric and Hydraulic Resources
Ministry of Energy and Water
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel.: +961 1 565 013
Fax: +961 1 576 666
E-mail: gdher@terra.net.lb
comairfadi@hotmail.com

Ms. Mona Fakih
Director of Water
Ministry of Energy and Water
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: +961 1 565 097
Fax: +961 1 576 666
E-mail: monafakih@hotmail.com
Morocco

Mr. Hachimi Sidi Mohamed
Chief of Water Legislation Division
State Secretary of Water Environment
Rabat, Morocco
Fax: +212 537 776 081
E-mail: elhachimi@water.gov.ma
besamira@yahoo.fr

Palestine

Mr. Ahmad Beshtawi
Legal Advisor
Palestinian Water Authority
Nablus, Palestine
Tel.: +970 2 242 9022
Fax: +970 2 242 9341
E-mail: ahmedbishtawi@gmail.com

Syrian Arab Republic

Mr. Rateb Saegh
Head, Water Resources and Information Department
General Commission for Water Resources
Ministry of Irrigation
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Tel.: +963 11 562 4036
Fax: +963 11 531 8264
E-mail: ratebaegh1@yahoo.com

Tunisia

Mr. Hedi Mekni
Public Services Counselor – Legal Director
Ministry of Agriculture and Environment
Tunis, Tunisia
Tel.: +216 98 214 217
Fax: +216 71 390 200
E-mail: mekni_hedi@yahoo.fr

Mr. Mohamed Lotfi Nacef
Director of Inventory and Hydraulic Resources
Ministry of Agriculture and Environment
Tunis, Tunisia
Tel.: +216 71 493 196
Fax: +216 71 390 200
E-mail: nacefml1@yahoo.fr

B. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Cedare

Mr. Khaled Mahmoud Abou Zeid
Director
Regional Water Program
Center for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Tel.: +20 2 24513921/2/3/4/ ext. 665
Fax: +20 2 24513918
E-mail: kabuzeid@cedare.int

League of Arab States

Ms. Chahra Ksia
Director
Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security
League of Arab States
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Tel.: +963 11 331 7874
Fax: +961 11 333 5252
E-mail: cksia.cofws@hotmail.com

Ms. Yasmin Teima
Environment, Housing, and Sustainable Development Department
League of Arab States
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt
Tel.: +20 2 25 75 0511, ext. 3667
Fax: +20 2 25 74 3023
E-mail: yasmin_teima@hotmail.com

Ms. Nuha Al Hermassi
Administrative Assistant
Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security
League of Arab States
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Tel.: +963 11 331 7874
Fax: +961 11 333 5252
E-mail: h.nuha@hotmail.com

Mr. Tarek Jalbout
Center for Water Studies and Arab Water Security
League of Arab States
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Tel.: +963 11 331 7874
Fax: +961 11 333 5252
E-mail: cksia.cofws@hotmail.com
Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe (BGR)
Federal Institute For Geosciences and Natural Resources

Mr. Andreas Renck
Project Coordinator
ESCWA-BGR Water Project
Beirut, Republic of Lebanon
Tel.: +961 1 978 557
Fax: +961 1 981 510
E-mail: andreas.renck@bgr.de

Ms. Eileen Maternowski
Junior Professional
ESCWA-BGR Water Project
Beirut, Republic of Lebanon
Tel.:+961 1 978 560
Fax: +961 1 981 510
E-mail: maternowski@un.org

Ms. Nanor Momjian
Research Assistant
ESCWA-BGR Water Project
Beirut, Republic of Lebanon
Tel.:+961 1 978 566
Fax: +961 1 981 510
E-mail: momjian@un.org

Ms. Joelle Comair
Research Assistant
ESCWA-BGR Water Project
Beirut, Republic of Lebanon
Tel.: +961 1 978 514
Fax: +961 1 981 510
E-mail: comair@un.org

Mr. John Redwine
Communications Officer
ESCWA-BGR Water Project
Beirut, Republic of Lebanon
E-mail: redwine@un.org

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

United Nations House
Riad El-Solh Square
P.O. Box 11-8575
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel.: +961 1 981 301
Fax: +961 1 981 510

Mr. Nadim Khouri
Deputy Executive Secretary
ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 805
E-mail: khouri@un.org

Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane
Chief
Water Resources Section (WRS)
Sustainable Development and Productivity Division (SDPD), ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 518
E-mail: chouchanicherfane@un.org

Mr. Mohamed I. Al-Hamdi
First Economic Affairs Officer
WRS/SDPD/ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 524
E-mail: al-hamdi@un.org

Mr. Ralf Klingbeil
Regional Advisor on Water and Environment
SDPD/ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 508
E-mail: klingbeil@un.org

Mr. Sung Eun Kim
Associate Economic Affairs Officer
WRS/SDPD/ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 522
E-mail: kim54@un.org

Ms. Julie Abouarab
Researcher
WRS/SDPD/ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 561
E-mail: abouarab@un.org

Ms. Hanan Atallah
AWARENET Coordinator
Researcher
WRS/SDPD/ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 511
E-mail: atallahh@un.org

Mr. El-Hadi Radwan
Research Assistant
WRS/SDPD/ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 569
E-mail: radwan@un.org

Mr. Adnan Kaddoura
Staff Assistant
WRS/SDPD/ESCWA
Tel.: +961 1 978 504
E-mail: kaddouraa@un.org