MEDSTAT II Environment Sector / UNESCWA / UNSD
Joint Sub-regional Training Session on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water (SEEAW)

Amman, March 10-13, 2008

(Venue to be confirmed)

Information note

MEDSTAT II Environment sector is organizing a sub-regional training session on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Water (SEEAW), jointly with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) which will be held in Amman, Jordan, during the period 10-13 March 2008.

I- Background

Water scarcity is a major challenge facing of the Mashreq Mediterranean countries and the Arabian Peninsula. Countries of the region face major challenges in developing reliable, high quality, timely and comparable statistics on water and environment to strengthen water management and decision–making processes. In that context, the economic analysis of water use is very important for sustainable management of water resources. Water accounting provides a robust framework for producing and integrating hydrological and economic information on water for managers and decision-makers. The importance of integrated economic environment approach and in particular the development of water accounting has been confirmed by the MEDSTAT II Environment Task Force in June 2007 and by ESCWA Statistical Committee recommendation in 2004 and the adoption of the System of Environmental and Economic Accounting for Water Resources (SEEAW) as an international statistical standard by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2007.

ESCWA through the recently funded project "*Strengthening National Capacities in Environment Statistics, Indicators and Accounts in support of progress toward achieving the internationally agreed development goals in the ESCWA and ECLAC*[1] *Regions*", will assist to enhance the national capacities of Member States in environment statistics, indicator and accounts in order to integrate environmental concerns into economic development, thus supporting progress towards achieving environmental sustainability and related international agreed development goals member countries and therefore is implementing the activity "Sub regional workshop on environment statistics, indicators and accounts for ESCWA".

The United Nations Statistics Division, having developed the SEEAW are currently developing addition materials to assist countries implementing the new international standard and are providing expertise to assist in the training. The SEEAW is available from the UNSD website (see http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/SEEAWDraftManual.pdf) and participants should print and read this prior to the training.

The cooperation between MEDSTAT II, ESCWA and UNSD enhances inter-regional synergies, maximizes cost effectiveness, and contributes to sub-regional, regional and interregional networking.

II- Purpose of the training course

This training course aims at providing a sound knowledge on the compilation and practical and operational use of the SEEAW. It will draw on experiences from around the world. Countries should bring data to the training so that work on real water accounts, conforming to the SEEAW, can be undertaken at the workshop.

[1] the Economic Commission For Latin America and The Caribbean (ECLAC)

This may enable pilot water accounts for some countries to be produced as well as strengthening national statistical capacities and enhancing sub-regional networking.

III- Tentative agenda of the meeting

The course will be organised around plenary sessions and practical sessions (work group) and will focus on the SEEAW standards tables: physical water supply and use tables, emission accounts, hybrid supply and use tables, asset accounts.

Specifically, the course will address the following topics:

1. Compilation and use of the System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting for Water Resources (SEEAW) for integrated water resources management (IWRM);
2. Functions and limitations of water accounting ;
3. Practical and operational process of SEEAW;
4. Institutional framework that affects/supports the application of SEEAW;
5. Examples that apply SEEAW.

Participants are kindly asked to bring their national data so they can be used during the training course and countries can make a start on describing the stocks and flows and beginning populating the SEEAW. A list of the data that countries should bring will be send later to the participants. A provisional Agenda is attached.

IV- Participation and registration

The meeting will bring together experts (water statisticians, water managers and/or accountant) from National Statistical Offices, from Ministries of Environment and Water Authorities of the Mediterranean Partners countries and ESCWA member countries.

Lectures will be given by experts from the UN Statistics Division, UN-ESCWA and the Austrian Federal Environment Agency.

Nomination form to be filled by participants is attached.

V- Date and venue

The meeting will be held on 10-13 March 2008 in Amman, Jordan.

More information on the venue of the meeting will be given later to the participants.

VI- Documentation, methods of work and official languages

The working language is English and Arabic. Interpretation will be available for both languages.

Participants are kindly asked to prepare a short paper presenting their country situation in terms of water management, water statistics (data sources, availability) and water accounting (if relevant) and bring national data to the training session so that the group sessions can work with real data sets and problems, rather than data that are fictitious or from countries that already completed water accounts.

Data may be drawn from information published by National Statistics Offices, Water Departments, and Environment Departments, Agricultural Departments or other government sources. If possible data should be in the form of spreadsheets (e.g. Excel) and supplied in advance of the meeting. An Excel sheet sample will be send by email later.

Supporting paper or country paper not exceeding 8 pages in length should be submit in MS Word format (via e-mail) to Ms Cécile Roddier-Quefelec (email: cecile.roddier-quefelec@medstat2.fr) and Ms Wafa Aboul Hosn (email: aboulhosn@un.org) by **February 6, 2008**.

PowerPoint and PDF presentations will be available for download at the CIRCA MEDSTAT II domain (http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/dsis/Home/main) and ESCWA/Statistics Division website (http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/main.asp?division=sd) and the project website (http://web.escwa.un.org/esiap/index.asp).

Delegates are encouraged to download the papers from the website and bring their copies to the meeting.

VII- Accommodation and travel arrangements

The meeting will take place in Amman, Jordan.

Lot 1 of the project **MEDSTAT II** will take care of the travelling and living expenses of the two representatives from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestinian Authority according to procedures of the European Commission.

Nominated participants are requested to fill nomination form and send copies of their passport in order to finalize the administrative arrangements concerning their travel to :

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ESCWA will cover the participation of two representatives from the statistical offices of Iraq, Yemen, Oman and Bahrain, tickets and DSA.

Nominated participants are requested to fill nomination form and send copies of their passport in order to finalize the administrative arrangements concerning their travel to

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