

# **The Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR)**

## **Technical Secretariat**

### **Report and Decisions of the 4th Session of JCEDAR**

**(The General Secretariat Headquarters: 19-21 October 2003)**

#### **I- THE REPORT**

Implementing the decisions of the 3rd Session of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR) no ( ? ? ? ? ? - ) of October 21st, 2002 and the decisions of the 14<sup>th</sup> session of CAMRE no ( O ? ) of October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2002, and

After the debates of the members of the Joint Secretariat monitoring the implementation of the Decisions and Resolutions of World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and the Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development (CAMRE, UNEP/ROWA and ESCWA) concerning the prerequisites for abiding by the dates assigned for the preparation of the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Council For Sustainable Development,

And Upon the invitation of the Technical Secretariat of the JCEDAR ,

The General Assembly of the JCEDAR held its 4<sup>th</sup> session in the headquarter of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States on 19-21 of October 2003. The Session has been chaired by His Excellency Dr. Mamdouh Riyaad Minister of State for Environmental Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Head of the 4<sup>th</sup> session of CAMRE. The session has, also, been attended by members of the Committee representing Arab states; Arab, regional and international organizations; observers from civic society institutions; main groups and financing institutions. Furthermore, the session has been attended by His Excellency the Ambassador of Norway to Egypt; as Norway presided over the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Council of Sustainable Development (CSD). Moreover, the UN CSD's Secretariat, the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) attended the 4<sup>th</sup> session. (Appendix 1 contains the list of the names of the participants).

- Ms. Fatma El-Malah, Head of the Department of Environment and Sustainable Development in the League of Arab States (LAS) welcomed the participants. She addressed the session on behalf of His Excellency Amr Moussa Secretary General of the LAS.
- Dr. Hosny Khordagui, Representative of ESCWA delivered a speech on the importance of regional partnership in implementing the outcomes of WSSD.
- Dr Mahmoud Youssef, Regional Director of UNEP-ROWA in West Asia addressed a speech to the session
- His Excellency the Ambassador of Norway to Egypt delivered a speech.

- Mr. Kathleen Abdullah, Representative of UN Department For Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) addressed the session
- His Excellency Dr. Mamdouh Riyaad, State Minister of Environmental Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Head of the 14<sup>th</sup> session of CAMRE delivered a speech.

The General Assembly of the JCEDAR adopted the agenda of the 14<sup>th</sup> session as follows:

**Item I:** Monitoring the implementation of the decisions and resolutions of the WSSD and Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development.

**Item II:** Follow up on the crystallization of the Abu Dhabi Declaration on the future of the Arab environmental action and developing it into viable and practical programs and activities.

**Item III:** Proposing 2003-2004 CAMRE's Arab Environmental Action Program.

**Item IV:** Reviewing Arab Environment Status report.

**Item V:** Reviewing the priorities and achievements of the members of the committee whether states or organizations working in the field of environment and sustainable development.

**Item VI:** Encouraging private sector to invest in different environmental aspects.

**Item VII:** Considering the inception of an Arab Environment Authority to finance environmental projects.

**Item VIII:** Selecting a motto for the Arab Environment Day marked on October, 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

**Item IX:** Forming the Executive Branch of the Joint Committee for Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR).

**Item X:** Setting the time and selecting the venue of the 5<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly of JCEDAR and the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Branch.

-The first day of the session was devoted to discuss Arab preparations for the 12<sup>th</sup> session of UN CSD. On the second day, **Item I** and the rest of Items were discussed. On the third day the report and the recommendations were discussed and adopted.

## **II- DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS**

### **Item I: Monitoring The Implementation Of The Decisions And Resolutions Of The WSSD And Arab Initiative For Sustainable Development.**

The General Assembly of the JCEDAR has reviewed the memorandum of the Technical Secretariat of the CAMRE and has listened to the clarifications of the members of the JCEDAR in charge of following up the implementation of the WSSD and the Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development. Both the memorandum and clarification addressed the preparations underway for the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the UN CSD that will discuss reports reviewing the practical steps taken in the topics of water, environmental sanitation and human settlements. In the meantime, at the 13 session of the JCEDAR the measures and implementation policy for the executive programs of the three aforementioned topics are discussed.

Furthermore, all the regions of the world are preparing implementation review reports in accordance to the standards and guidelines laid down by the Secretariat of the UN CSD to be submitted to the UN no later than November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2003, so that the UN Secretary General would be able to integrate those reports in his report addressed to the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the CSD. As for the reports, they can be submitted as final drafts no later than December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2003. Thus, within the framework of coordination and consultations amongst members of the JCEDAR, three Arab top experts have been assigned to prepare the three reports on behalf of the Arab region. Moreover, the current meeting is considered the first of its kind to include regional groups to discuss the reports.

The Arab experts reviewed the reports that included an evaluation to the current status of water, sanitation and human settlements in the Arab region. In the reports, they identified the obstacles and challenges and proposed visions for enhancing the executive programs.

Members of the JCEDAR, observers from the institutions of the civic society, main groups, and financing institutions commented on the three reports. The comments included: the necessity of updating and correcting some of the data and figures presented in the reports, highlighting the achievements and partnership initiatives and identifying the reasons of the environmental degradation in the Palestinian territories.

The experts responded to the queries presented by the participants and promised to take all the comments presented into consideration on preparing the final draft of the report.

On the other hand, the General Assembly of the JCEDAR **reviewing** the Tunisian proposals on the implementation of the executive plan of WSSD,

And **reviewing** the Guideline Study on The Institutional Framework of Sustainable Development Management, prepared by ESCWA, by assignment of CAMRE,

**Following** the clarification presented by the ESCWA representative on the comments put forward by the members of the Committee, and

In light of discussions and after deliberations, the General Assembly of the JCEDAR decides the following:

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides that:

**Firstly:** Assigning the Joint Secretariat, in charge of following the implementations of the decisions of the WSSD and the Arab Initiative for Sustainable Development, to prepare the summary of executive report on the three topics of water, environmental sanitation and human settlements. Such summary **are to be emailed** to the members of the JCEDAR no later than November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The members, on their part, **email** back comments on the aforementioned summary no later than November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2003 to CAMRE's Technical Secretariat email address which is: [envsusdev.dept@las.int](mailto:envsusdev.dept@las.int). A carbon copy of the comments on the summary of the report **are to be emailed**, also, to the ECSWA on the following email address [khordagui@un.org](mailto:khordagui@un.org), then to the Secretariat of the UN CSD.

**Secondly:** Assigning the three experts to prepare the revised draft of the implementation review reports in the light of the comments presented no later than November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The members of the JCEDAR receive a copy of the revised draft to provide their comments within two months as of the date of receiving the draft via email. Moreover, the Technical Secretariat of the CAMRE and the ESCWA **receive** a copy of the same revised draft via email.

**Thirdly:** Benefiting from the Tunisian proposals on the measures of actualization of WSSD decisions on addressing issues of sustainable development.

**Fourthly:** Hailing the efforts exerted by ESCWA to develop the Guideline Study on the Institutional Framework of the Management of Sustainable Development in the Arab region.

Integrating the comments presented in the previous meeting in the study and calling upon Arab states to provide their relevant comments to the Technical Secretariat of the CAMRE no later than 30<sup>th</sup> of November, 2003.

**Fifthly:** Submitting a proposal to the CAMRE to:

1- Expand the objectives and the mandates of the Council to include aspects of sustainable development.

2- Expand the Technical Secretariat of the CAMRE to include the following:

- The Technical Secretariat of CAMRE and UNEP/ROWA.
- The Secretariat of the ECOWAS and ESCWA.

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**Item II: Monitoring and Developing the Abu Dhabi Declaration on The Future of Environmental Arab Action into Applicable Programs and Activities**

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides that:

**Firstly:** Approving to hold meeting for working teams of the program of Integrated Water Resource Management, Program of Desertification Combat and Land Degradation and Program of Integrated Management of Coastal Areas and Marine Resources with the aim of completing the preparations of the projects, identification of implementation priorities and addressing of the potential donor bodies to polarize necessary funding to draft feasible studies.

**Secondly:** Holding the meetings of the working teams immediately after the 5<sup>th</sup> session of the CAMRE.

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### **Item III: The Proposal Of 2003-2004 CAMRE's Arab Environmental Action Program.**

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides:

**Firstly:** Proposing that the 2004/2005 Arab Environmental Action program of the CAMRE include the following activities:

#### **\* A Program of Desertification Combat to increase the arable lands and to enhance the nomadic environment to :**

- Follow up all the actions and the meetings of the UN International Convention for Combating Desertification and the International Convention on Biodiversity.
- Establish an Arab bank for genetic plant species in the Arab region.
- Test the indicators of desertification in a selected number of countries.
- Specify guidelines to regulate trading in genetically engineered products and living organisms in the Arab region.
- Hold a seminar on the complementary activities that integrate the three international environmental agreements (desertification combat, biodiversity and climatic changes)
- Organize a training course on means of preparing projects for the rehabilitation of the degraded land to be presented to the donating organizations.
- Hold a practical seminar on case studies of rehabilitation of degraded lands.
- Call for a meeting of national contact (liaison) offices of the International Convention on Biodiversity to address the actual implementation of strategies and action plans for the aquatic biodiversity in the Arab region.
- Organize awareness-raising seminar on means of facing the depletion of natural resources and wildlife , accompanied with reviewing case studies of some countries e.g. Somalia.
- Hold a seminar on water resource integrated management.

#### **\* A Program on Environment and Industry to deal with**

- **(a) Cleaner Products:** to
  - \* Promote the concept of cleaner production and to establish national centers for cleaner production.
  - \* Hold a seminar on cleaner production hosted by the United Arab Emirates.
- **(b) Environment Management Systems:** to
  - Publish guides for self-monitoring and industrial environmental inspection according to the following timetable:

- **Within 2004**, the General Arab Guide for Self -Monitoring and Environmental Inspection of Industry and the Arab Guide For Automatic-Monitoring and Environmental Inspection of Weaving and Textile Industry are going to be published.
  - **Within 2005**, Guides for self-monitoring and environmental inspection for the hazardous waste management, industrial waste treatment station management and energy generator management are going to be published.
- Hold a training course on environment management system, preparedness and addressing emergencies.
- **(c) Hazardous Material and Hazardous Waste Management:** to
  - Hold a workshop on hazardous waste and hazardous material management to be hosted by Kuwait.
  - Follow up the international agreements and conventions focusing on hazardous wastes and materials.
  - Hold a seminar introducing the objectives of the Rotterdam PIC Agreement dealing with harmful chemicals and pesticides circulated through international trade and commerce and the application of such an agreement in the Arab region.
- **(d) Increasing the competitiveness of Arab Products:** to
  - Hold the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference on Industrial Development that will take honing the competitiveness of Arab products as one of its pivots.
  - Follow up the activities undertaken within the framework of the programs of trade and environment.
- **A Program on Environmental pedagogy, education and media awareness**
- **Environmental Pedagogy:** to
  - Prepare analytical studies on the status of environmental pedagogy in the vocational education curricula.
  - Prepare analytical studies and to hold a seminar on the status of environmental pedagogy in K-12 educational curricula.
  - Prepare simplified guide on environmental pedagogy for individuals with special needs.
- **Environment Media:** to
  - Hold a seminar on employing mass media to serve the issues of the environment and sustainable development.
  - Publish environmental bulletin “Our Arab Environment” bulletin.

- Provide financial support from all members of the committee either states or organization to the activities that will be carried out by the CAMRE.

- **Participation** to

- Holding a seminar on the role played by clerics in raising awareness on sound environmental behaviours and in the achievement of the objectives of sustainable development.
- Holding a seminar on the role played by the municipalities, private sector and NGO in upgrading squatter areas and in addressing the issue of waste.
- Holding a seminar on the role played by the youth in environment conservation and realizing sustainable development.
- Holding a seminar on the role played by women in environment conservation and realizing sustainable development.
- Holding a seminar on the role played by the Arab parliamentarians in environment conservation and realizing sustainable development.

**\* A Program Arab Capacity Building in Environmental Legislations and Enforcement Mechanism:** to

Hold a seminar on environmental legislations.

**\*A Program for Capacity Building in the field of Environment Impact Report:** to

- Hold a seminar on environment evaluation and environment situation reports.
- Cooperate with other ministerial councils to follow up international environmental agreements.
- Complete the establishing of a descriptive and statistical database.

**Secondly:** Calling upon the Arab states; Arab and regional organizations and donors to enhance their participation in implementing the activities of 2004/2005 programs and to consider such activities as part of their joint mandates and priorities in order to adopt the implementation of some of such activities.

**Thirdly:** Calling upon the Technical Secretariat of CAMRE and the ALECSO to consort effort and to cooperate to upgrade the level of the implementation of Arab environment action program and the Islamic action program for sustainable development.

Moreover, requesting CAMRE and Economic and Social Council to cooperate in addressing the issues relevant to trade and environment, especially within the framework of the regional program for the enhancement of Arab capacity building.

Also, calling for the cooperation with the Arab Tourism Ministerial Council in the field of: laying down environmental guides, preparing an environmental guide for desert tourism and organizing training course for officers responsible of environment management in hotels.



In addition to encouraging following up international environmental agreement like the Framework Convention on Climatic Change, the UNCCD, the International Convention on Biodiversity, The Basel Convention On The Control Of Transboundary Movements Of Hazardous Wastes, Stockholm Convention On Persistent Organic Pollutants, The Rotterdam Convention, which makes PIC legally Binding Concerning Dangerous Pesticides Marketed Through International Trades And The Montreal Protocol On Substances That Deplete The Ozone Layer.

Calling upon the Technical Secretariat of CAMRE and the Technical Secretariat of the Permanent Arab Statistics Committee to cooperate to complete establishing a descriptive (qualitative) and statistical database.

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**Item IV: Arab Environment Status Report**

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides:

Completing the preparation of the report on the status of the environment in the Arab region and to send it to the Arab states in good time before being submitted to the CAMRE.

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**Item V: The Priorities and Achievements of The Members of the Committee Whether States or Organizations Working in The Field of Environment and Sustainable Development.**

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides:

**Firstly:** Requesting from the Technical Secretariat of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region to provide the members of the Committee with the reports received from the different states and organization concerning their priorities and achievements in the field of the environment and sustainable development.

**Secondly:** Asking the Arab countries in West Asia to submit to the UNEP/ROWA their comments on the 2003/2005 strategy of the UNEP for Arab countries in Western Asia.

**Thirdly:** Calling upon Arab laborers to join the membership of the Steering Committee of the Program of Industry and Environment affiliated to CAMRE.

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**Item VI: Encouraging Private Sector To Invest In Different Environmental Aspects:**

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides:

Assigning the Joint Secretariat to follow up the implementation of the decisions of WSSD through conducting necessary communications with the General Association of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in the Arab countries to organize, in collaboration with the Lebanese Ministry of Environment, a workshop on the mechanism of encouraging private sector to invest in the different aspects of environment, taking into consideration what was suggested in Lebanon's proposal.

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**Item VII: Considering the inception of an Arab Environment Authority to finance environmental projects.**

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides:

Assigning the Joint Secretariat to follow up the implementation of the WSSD decisions through undertaking necessary contacts to hold a round table discussions on the possibility of setting up an Arab Environment Facility to finance environmental projects. Such a facility would include the membership of elite and prominent Arab experts; key national, Arab, regional and international funding institutions; and donor organisations

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**Item VIII: Selecting A Motto For The Arab Environment Day Marked On October, 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004.**

The General Assembly of JCEDAR decides:

**Firstly:** Proposing that the CAMRE's logo and motto used on Arab Environment Day in 2004 would be "Peace & security are the prerequisites of sustainable development".

**Secondly:** Welcoming the initiative of the Arab Network For Environment and Development and requesting that the members of the Network are approached to provide suggestions concerning the logo design, to be submitted to the 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of the executive bureau of the CAMRE.

**Thirdly:** Suggesting that the motto on the poster and the brochure should be in both English and Arabic languages to be distributed out as of the beginning of next year on the largest possible scale especially in international forums and beyond the Arab region borders.

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**Item IX: Forming the Executive Branch of the Joint Committee for Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR).**

.The General Assembly of the JCEDAR decides

**Firstly:** Including ALESCO to the membership of the Joint Committee.

**Secondly:** Choosing the following organizations to be members in the executive branch of the Committee for 2004 and 2005:

- Arab Center For Studies of Dry Zones and Arid lands.(ACSAD)
- ISESCO
- World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
- ALESCO

- The Regional Organization For The Conservation Of Marine Environment

**Thirdly:** Choosing Arab Network For Environment and Development as a representative of the NGOs. In addition to calling upon the General Secretariat of the Committee to undertake the necessary contacts to include Arab General Association For Trade, Industry and Agriculture as a member representing the private sector and AFESD as a representative of financing institutions.

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**Item X: Setting The Time And Selecting The Venue Of The 5<sup>th</sup> Session Of The General Assembly Of CEDAR And The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting Of The Executive Branch.**

The General Assembly of the JCEDAR decides:

**Firstly:** Setting the date of holding the fourth meeting of the executive branch of the JCEDAR prior the 32 meeting of the Executive Bureau of CAMRE.

**Secondly:** Choosing the date of the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the JCEDAR prior to the 16<sup>th</sup> session of CAMRE.

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