



**Statement of the West Asia Regional Major Groups and Stakeholders
to the OECPR-2 in preparation for UNEA 2
(19 Feb. 2016)**

We, the Major Groups (MGs) and Stakeholders of the West Asia region, in preparation for the for the UNEA2 and the sixteenth Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-16) welcome the resolutions considered by OECPR-2 and have the following points to presents:

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development & Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

We Stress the importance of balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development (environmental, social and economic) in order to integrate the principles of justice, participation, transparency, accountability, democracy, respect for human rights, gender equality and empowerment of women and disadvantaged groups, in addition to the Rio principles, namely "common but differentiated responsibilities" (CBDR) and the sovereignty of nations and people to their natural resources.

Welcome the recognition that the SDGs need to take into consideration the specificities, priorities, and capacities of nations and regions with a particular focus on freedom, peace, security, prevention of war and conflict, poverty eradication. We request MS to take mitigation measures to respond to the environmental impacts the conflicts.

Recognize that humans carry the burden and responsibility of preserving the planet, requiring them to realize the extent and scale of their roles and responsibilities towards the planet and the cosmic system, and to believe that the natural resources and wealth did not exist to be depleted and destroyed, but to be protected, preserved and harnessed for the reconstruction of Earth, and the achievement of human development.

Emphasize the need to ensure the basic components or enablers to realize SDGs in East Asian countries, especially funding, good governance, strengthening of the institutional framework for sustainable development at national and regional levels, technology transfer, capacity

development and building global partnerships for the West Asian countries along with harnessing the West Asian ingenious knowledge. In addition, engagement of Major Groups and stakeholders in realizing SDGs.

Call upon the Establishment of a Council for Sustainable Development at the regional level that is directly linked to the Economic, Environment and Social Council of the League of Arab States, with mechanisms to ensure the engagement of civil society, MGs and stakeholders at all levels. In Addition, the establishment of a Council for Sustainable Development at national level

The right to information access

We urge States to activate Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration to make it a fundamental principle of engagement and partnership among civil society, major groups and stakeholders, through:

The adoption of the Bali Guidelines prepared by UNEP at the regional and national levels and the development of legislation, policies and appropriate mechanisms to ensure the right of access to information concerning the environment and sustainable development.

Introduce the environmental law principles and the integration of sustainable development concepts within the education curriculum (schools and universities) and extra-curricular awareness programs.

In line of Montevideo IV Program on Environmental Law, we call upon the member states to effectively enforce and implement international law concerning natural resources use, particularly in respect of freshwater.

To development and establish of a sustainable development information and data network to support the decision-making and planning processes and initiatives at the government and civil society levels.

Build upon and enhance citizen science engagement in the assessment, monitoring and development of policy, embracing the opportunities of building the capacity of grass roots organizations in support of sustainable development.

Sustainable production and consumption (SCP)

SCP is crucial to achieve the SDGs within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and footprints principles for the West Asian countries. i.e adopting a full life-cycle approach to design, production, use and disposal of products, chemicals...etc. as well as looking for more environment friendly alternatives. We ask for more financial support for the West Asia countries to implement SCP and the 10YFP.

We urge the governments of the region to implement the adopted Arab strategy and execute the policies that have been adopted through the 10YFP.

We urge civil society to play a more active role in all stages of programming including planning, discussions, providing input and ideas, advocacy and raising awareness to rationalize consumption and production patterns. This includes a call for commitment to support and facilitation from all actors in order to allow civil society to take on this active role, both in terms of information sharing and in funding.

Stakeholder Engagement Policy (SEP)

We recall the commitment of MS in the Rio+20 Outcome Document para 88 (h) to upgrade and improve UNEP on the basis of effective engagement with civil society. Thus, we affirm the need to agree and finalize UNEP's Stakeholder Engagement Policy by UNEA-2 with much positive SEP on the basis of no regression and the only way for good governance is a clear criteria for accreditation of MGs. In addition, the need to adopt the principles related to participation, transparency, accountability and democracy within the UNEP Stakeholder Engagement Policy.

The Stakeholder Engagement Policy is an issue of key importance to UNEP as an inter-governmental forum. The UNEA 2 must take heed from the positive developments and good practices in other UN system like forum and not lag behind.

Replicating the proposed institutional framework at the UNEP headquarters in the region, through the establishment of MGS regional committees at the regional level, composed of the various major groups and stakeholders, self-organized and managed on a rotational basis, and ensures effective follow-up and coordination among them regionally and globally through the regional representation.

Strengthening the role of civil society and stakeholders in influencing national, regional and international policies related to the environment through the development of coordination and follow-up mechanisms with all major groups in West Asia, capacity building and establishing an information resource network for knowledge and experience sharing in the region.

Strengthening the role of the Regional Office for West Asia by enabling it to function more effectively by providing all the necessary financial resources to do so.

We urge to have advance training for MGS Coordination for each region as well as to have platform for MGs that will enable to each regional representative to put the regional activities and issues and to ease the communication between all Regional Representatives to benefit from each other for the goodness of each region.

Other priorities of West Asia

We recognize the west Asia region have a huge energy potential especially in relation to solar power as the engine for West Asia future sustainable development. We therefore call upon West Asia countries to promote the energy mix and invest in renewable energy for sustainable development. This will help realizing SDG 7 on energy, SDG 13 on climate change as well as create green jobs, wealth and improve well-being for West Asian countries.

Given the political situation, state of war, occupation, conflict and insecurity conditions along with the over exploitation of natural resources that some countries in West Asia are experiencing, which reflect negatively not only on natural resources but on the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as on the local communities, youth, children and women. Climate change and its impact enter the new facts on the concepts of stability, safety and taunting to the highest level of security risks for the region.

The Middle East and North Africa is the region's most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The relationship between the effects of climate security concerns change, be through a series of responses and interactions which can reduce them through risk management and the application of innovative, flexible and scalable solutions, Expectations that demand for water in the Middle East will increase five-fold in 2050 and exceed supply by 50%, countries, particularly those suffering from mismanagement grow where water scarcity and suffer from the pressures of urgency for change, which began to create tensions led to instability and violence.

Proposed mitigation measures to respond to the environmental impacts of the conflicts in the region such as Syria (According to the report Lebanon Environmental Assessment of the Syrian Conflict & Priority Interventions September 2014 done by the Lebanese Ministry of Environment. Same impacts for the rest of countries having conflicts.

Affirm Prevent the encroachment of vulnerable communities and Informal Tented Settlements on agricultural areas and Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

Deployment of low-carbon energy on a large scale in the cities of the world achieves significant economic benefits and opportunities, sustainable Cities is becoming increasingly important with the increasing urbanization and the growing levels of demand on clean and economically viable sources of energy.

Strengthening the efforts to achieve fulfillment of human rights, justice, peace and security in the region and respond to the challenges of countries that suffer from political tensions, occupation, conflicts and insecurity

Encouraging a balanced growth in development activities to ensure environmental sustainability and conservation, benefiting from the knowledge sharing and transfer of successful experiences in the region.

Ensure national and regional strategies for Sustainable use and management of natural resource at both national and regional levels.

Strengthening of regional cooperation in the areas of development whilst encouraging technology transfer in the region through planning and determining the needs to ensure appropriate transfer and nationalization of technology with an emphasis on capacity building and training to ensure the promotion of sustainable development.

Encouraging investment in research and development (R&D).

Promoting the principles of good governance and anti-corruption in its various forms locally, nationally, regionally and internationally, in addition to ensuring the participation of civil society and stakeholders whilst ensuring transparency and accountability to strengthen their role hence enabling them to perform their role and function as fully capable partners in the development of national plans and policies.

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