

Advancing Environmental Law Together
Regional Meeting of UN Environment Montevideo Focal Points in West Asia

Amman, Jordan, 9-10 July 2018

Background

West Asia is a region characterized by rapid economic growth and prolonged conflicts, due the natural wealth in oil and mineral resources and its strategic geopolitical location. Both seriously compromise the state of the environment and the health of the people. Having suffered extreme desertification, massive displacements, premature deaths due to air pollution and the risks of climate change, countries increasingly develop policies, plans and programmes, as well as legislation, with a view to promoting sustainable development. The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) aims to provide support to the countries in developing and implementing legislative and institutional capacities to address their challenges.

The Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo Programme) refers to a series of ten-year programmes that constitute a broad strategy for the international law community and UN Environment in formulating activities in the field of environmental law. The current Montevideo programme and fourth such programme (Montevideo Programme IV) runs from 2010 to 2020. At its second universal session in 2016 the United Nations Environment Assembly adopted Resolution 2/19 which requests UN Environment, in close collaboration with the national focal points, to prepare an assessment of Montevideo IV and proposals for the work of UN Environment in the area of environmental law for a specific period beginning in 2020, for consideration by the UNEA in 2019. The findings and recommendations of UN Environment's latest flagship Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) assessment,¹ as well as relevant UN Environmental Assembly resolutions, will serve as a basis to discuss priorities from the region. The consultations in Amman are the third of a series of regional consultations which will take place in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, West Asia and Asia Pacific between the months of June and July 2018.

¹ UNEP 2016. GEO-6 Regional Assessment for West Asia. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya.

Purpose of the meeting

The key purpose of the meeting is to provide a forum for Montevideo Focal Points from West Asia to:

- (a) Share and exchange information on latest developments, trends, and good practices in the development and enforcement of environmental law in their countries, as well as regionally and globally;
- (b) Contribute to UN Environment's preparation of the assessment of the Montevideo Programme IV, including through sharing information on the status of implementation of the Montevideo Programme IV in their countries; and
- (c) Identify priorities from the region and proposals for the work of UN Environment in environmental law for the coming years, including for the next Montevideo Programme period commencing 2020. Priorities already identified by focal points and relevant UN Environment Assembly resolutions include: air pollution, public health, and marine litter. Others will be discussed in the meeting.

The meeting will also serve to create an important platform to increase partnerships and networks in the region for Montevideo Focal Points and other stakeholders working on environmental law issues.

Participants and format

Montevideo IV focal points from West Asia will be invited to participate in the two-day meeting. Environmental law experts will also be invited to participate as resource persons as and where appropriate. Discussions will be conducted in plenary sessions, with a combination of presentations, panels, and group discussions.

Agenda

Time	Topic/Item	Speakers	Format
DAY ONE			
8.30-9.00	Registration		
SESSION ONE: OPENING			
9.00-9.30	Opening session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opening remarks by H.E. Eng. Ahmed Al Qatarneh, Secretary General, Ministry of Environment Jordan	Plenary

Time	Topic/Item	Speakers	Format
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcoming remarks by Mr. Fareed Bushehri, Regional Resource Efficiency Coordinator, West Asia Region, UN Environment Overview remarks by Ms. Lara Ognibene, UN Environment, Law Division 	
SESSION TWO: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE REGIONAL LANDSCAPE			
9.30-11.00	Towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region (state of play in implementing the 2030 Agenda in the region; enhanced implementation through effective policies and laws; the role of the Law Division in supporting countries)	Opening Address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Mohammad Al-Agha, Director of Legal Affairs Office, Ministry of Environment of Jordan (opening address) Presentation and facilitation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Fareed Bushehri, UN Environment, West Asia Office (facilitation) 	Discussion in plenary opened by Jordan and facilitated by UN Environment
11.00-11.30	Group photo and coffee break		
SESSION THREE: NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS TO ADDRESS REGIONAL CHALLENGES			
11.30-12.30	Rapid economic growth/diversification and the environment	Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Hassan Hassan Abdullah, Legal Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain Dr. Nasir Mohamed Abdalla Sultan Ali, Director of Legal Affairs Department, UAE Mr. Raed Dahir Alhusaini, Director of Legal Affairs Department, Environment Public Authority of Kuwait Facilitator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Aphrodite Smagadi, UN Environment, Law Division 	Panel discussion in plenary, facilitated by UN Environment and followed by panel discussion and Q&As
12.30-14.00	Lunch		
14.00-15.00	Displacement, conflict and the environment/building resilient communities	Panellists	Panel discussion in plenary, facilitated by

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Feras Asfour, Senior Expert - Directorate of International Cooperation, Ministry of Local Administration and Environment of the Syrian Arab Republic Mr. Murad Monzir ALMadani, Environmental Quality Authority of Palestine Dr. Abdulqader Mohammed Alkharraz, Chairman and Focal Point, Environment Protection Agency of Yemen Facilitator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Aphrodite Smagadi, UN Environment, Law Division 	UN Environment and followed by panel discussion and Q&As
15.30-16.00	Coffee break		
SESSION FOUR: MONTEVIDEO PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITIES			
16.00-17.00	Introduction to the final assessment of Montevideo IV and proposals for the future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of the structure of Day Two Overview of the structure of the Montevideo IV Programme (the four pillars and the key initiatives) Overview of the 2018 assessment, methodology and timeline 	Presentation by UN Environment	Discussion in plenary facilitated by a Law Division staff member
DAY TWO			
9.00-10.00	Presentation of on the impact of Montevideo IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montevideo IV achievements Montevideo IV shortcomings Group discussion on the impact of Montevideo IV in the West Asian region 	Presentation by UN Environment	Discussion in plenary facilitated by a Law Division staff member
10.00-11.00	Presentation on the findings of the regional consultations for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings from Africa regional consultation 	Presentation by UN Environment	Discussion in plenary facilitated by a Law Division staff member

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings from LAC regional consultation Overarching challenges to be addressed by Montevideo V Group discussion 		
11.00-11.30	Coffee break		
11.30-12.30	Group discussion on environmental law-making challenges and opportunities in the West Asia region (Part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments in domestic environmental law-making Challenges in domestic environmental law-making Country needs for a new UN programme in environmental law 	Presentation by UN Environment	Discussion in plenary facilitated by a Law Division staff member
12.30-14.00	Lunch		
14.00-15.00	Group discussion on environmental law-making challenges and opportunities in the West Asia region (Part 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country needs for a new UN programme on environmental law 	Presentation by UN Environment	Discussion in plenary facilitated by a Law Division staff member
15.00-16.00	Translating country needs into a new programme in environmental law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem-framing Public consultation Legislative drafting Implementation, enforcement and compliance Harmonization, coordination and synergies Monitoring Review and follow-up Public awareness raising 		
16.00-16.30	Conclusions and closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesis of main conclusions from Day 2 Evaluation (feedback) of the meeting and closing 	Presentation by UN Environment	Discussion in plenary facilitated by a Law Division staff member
