



ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان  
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights

**Observatory in the Arab Region 13 SDG  
seventeen Issue**

# Desertification

**Environmental catastrophe besetting  
countries of the Arab world**

May 2023

13 CLIMATE  
ACTION



## Background:

Water scarcity, sharp rise in temperatures, frequent droughts and dust storms are a set of basic factors that contribute to one of the most dangerous phenomena threatening the Arab world; which is "Desertification". Indeed, due to this phenomenon, many internal Arab environments that have been previously thriving on their agricultural activities are now struggling to survive given the fact that the majority of agricultural lands of the Middle East and North Africa are located within the borders of arid areas at a time when desertification affects about 70% of the lands of the Arab region. Additionally, about 48% of the land area is in the Levant, 28% in Wadi Nile and the Horn of Africa, 16% in North Africa, and 9% in the Arabian Peninsula are at risk due to desertification. Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE, among other countries of the Middle East and North Africa, are the worst affected and most vulnerable to the repercussions of this phenomenon.

Within the framework of its endeavors to protect human rights and promote sustainable societies in a way that preserves human life, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights releases its 17<sup>th</sup> issue of the **SDG 13 Observatory in the Arab Region** under the title,

**"Desertification ... Environmental catastrophe besetting countries of the Arab world"** in order to track the good practices as well as the challenges that Arab countries face in achieving SDG13 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The **Observatory** focuses on the actions and measures undertaken by the Arab countries to address climate change and its repercussions, noting that it focuses on the targets specific to SDG 13, including; i) Strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries; ii) Integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning; iii) Improving education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning.

The Observatory is divided into two axes; the first discusses the country-focus of this issue and reviews its achievements and failures in the climate change issue in light of the SDG 13 targets, whereas the second axis monitors the most prominent practices and challenges faced by the rest of the Arab countries in this regard.

## Monitoring Methodology:

The SDG 13 Observatory in the Arab Region adopts a methodology of direct monitoring of previous publications in the Arab, Western and African media about government efforts to promote climate action. The Observatory focused on a number of secondary research sources, open sources such as the Internet, and reliable news sites deeply interested in Arab countries and development paths in general.

The Observatory also relies on information and data published by the Arab environment ministries on their official websites, and what was reported by electronic newspapers and written media about the efforts of the governments of Arab countries in achieving SDG 13 as well as the challenges they faced in order to highlight them.

## Targets of the SDG 13 Observatory in the Arab Region

The targets and indicators of the SDG 13 Observatory varied according to the scientific agenda, but given the monthly nature of the observatory, it selectively addresses them. Therefore, the **Observatory** highlights the key targets of SDG 13, which included; First: Integrating measures related to climate change into policies, strategies, and planning at the national level, second: enhancing resilience and resilience in the face of climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries, and enhancing resilience to those hazards, third: education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacities to mitigate Climate change, adaptation, mitigation and early warning.

It is noteworthy that the Observatory included monitoring the extent of the success of the Arab countries in achieving these goals in particular, in order to focus on the indicators that can be measured in the short term, and then measure the extent of the success of the countries in achieving them. Given the observatory's one-month time scope, the measure of some indicators of achieving the objectives of SDG 13 requires a relatively long-time span, one year or more.

## Legal Frameworks of SDG 13: Climate Action

The SDG 13 Observatory depends on an international legal reference, which is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of 1993 (UNFCCC), and the extent of the commitment of Arab countries to this agreement in addition to the Arab strategies developed by the governments that come in light of this agreement, and finally, the

national initiatives and programs carried out by the national organizations concerned with climate change issues.

### **Axis I: The Country Focus of this Issue**

#### **First: Subject of this Issue: " Desertification ... Environmental catastrophe besetting countries of the Arab world"**

The Arab countries, by virtue of their geographical location, are among the most arid regions with fragile ecosystems that are hugely affected by climate. However, the negative repercussions of this phenomenon are increasing at an accelerated rate due to the high temperature resulting from global warming. Desertification is ravaging Arab lands at a time when demands for agricultural and animal production are on the rise to meet population needs and people's high living standards. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) also estimates the annual production loss in developing countries due to desertification at \$16 billion.

The **Arab region is one of the most fragile regions of the world in terms of its ecosystem**, with up to 90% of its areas classified as arid and very dry, at least about 43% are deserts, and about 72% of the areas of Arab countries receive an average annual rainfall of less than 100mm. Only 10% of the Arab areas receive an annual rainfall of more than 300 mm, although climate change has cut rainfall amounts by between 10% and 18%, with a clear increase in the levels of fluctuation of the amounts of these rains.

**An estimated 1.32 billion hectares of arable lands are directly affected by desertification in the Mediterranean basin**, and an estimated 110 million hectares of land are affected by wind erosion in the Asian part of the Arab world due to the conversion of pastoral lands and the movement of sand and sand dunes and their encroachment on the neighboring pastoral lands.

An estimated 92.4 million hectares are affected by water erosion mainly due to deforestation and poor management and regulation of plowing slope fields and the formation of efficient terraces. Available data on some Arab countries indicate that the area already decertified exceeds 50% of the total area in seven Arab countries, while desertification threatens an area of approximately 30% of the total area of five Arab countries, which indicates the sheer expansion of phenomenon and its profound repercussions on the Arab world.

Desertification in the Arab world indicates that the majority of its lands are decertified or threatened with desertification due to various factors, topped by overgrazing and the

increase in pastoral load, which works to disturb the natural balance of growth and reproduction of natural plants, leading to the deterioration of about 26% of the lands of the Arab world. Nearly 21% of Arab lands are turning into deserts, mainly due to cutting down forest trees and pastoral shrubs, in addition to salinity which contributes to the degradation of 2% and urbanization of 1% of lands.

#### **a. Efforts to Combat Desertification in the Arab Region:**

Many countries and international organizations worldwide have begun to take serious steps to combat desertification and land degradation through the adoption of effective policies to reduce this phenomenon and mitigate its negative repercussions on the economic and social levels. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is one of the most important international efforts that can be highlighted. The majority of Arab countries have ratified this Convention and formulated their national development agenda, and many of them have established digital databases to be able to take appropriate decisions and procedures for land management through coordination and cooperation between Arab organizations and concerned national institutions.

Given the seriousness and gravity of the desertification phenomenon, Arab countries have made many commendable efforts to combat it and reduce its negative effects. These efforts have multiplied to include some efforts at the national level, in addition to other efforts made at the level of joint Arab cooperation.

Arab countries have been aware of the negative repercussion of desertification and land degradation on the environment since so long. Accordingly, key actions have been made to mitigate these phenomena, including raising awareness of environmental issues, especially land desertification, in local communities; establishing more environment-concerned institutions; prioritizing the implementation of environmental policies, and intensifying political commitment, as many countries approved legislation covering a wide range of environmental aspects, such as:

1. Kuwait: Camping in pastoral areas was regulated, agriculture was protected, quarry investment was regulated, and gravel quarries were prohibited.
2. Saudi Arabia: A set of laws on forests, pastures, land investment, and water resources conservation have been established.
3. Jordan: Environmental Law was issued.
4. Tunisia: In addition to the legal code for forests and pastures, a law protecting water and land was issued
5. Syria: A law was issued banning the plowing of desert lands.

6. Lebanon: a set of laws were issued on the protection of cultural and natural assets, the protection against pollution as well as the protection of reserves.

On the other hand, the Arab countries adopted several policies to combat desertification and land degradation, which were represented in protecting the agricultural environment from land degradation by planting trees in Jordan. **Syria** combated the encroachment of sand on arable land through the Al-Kasra, Haribshah and Kabajib projects, and it afforested many areas and implemented other projects that contribute to reducing the problem of land degradation. In **Egypt**, the productivity of newly reclaimed soils was improved, as analyses between 1998 and 2000 showed a significant decrease in waterlogging areas as a result of improving agricultural drainage and rehabilitation in those areas.

In the **UAE**, the activities implemented in this regard included the establishment of natural reserves, the completion of agricultural investment maps in many regions, as well as adoption of the approach of the optimal use of natural resources. On the other hand, **Bahrain** developed irrigation methods to conserve water and replaced water-intensive crops with less consuming ones, as well as the use of treated water for irrigation. **Saudi Arabia** also carried out activities related to reducing land degradation, including protecting forests in 29 sites, protecting pasture lands in 37 sites, protecting wild sites in 15 sites, establishing earthen embankments and stabilizing sand, as in the Al-Ahsa Canton project, planting 11 million trees, and reclaiming degraded local lands. In addition to the above, the Kingdom implemented, in cooperation with the Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD), a project to rehabilitate pasture lands in the Al-Amariya region in Al-Jawf, an area of 500 hectares.

Councils and institutions that combat desertification and land degradation and protect the environment have been established in cooperation with various ministries. For example, the **Saudi** government commissioned the Ministry of Agriculture to be the national coordinator responsible for the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and follow-up on it at all local, regional and international levels. The Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs in Syria was assigned to be the official body responsible for the implementation of the UNCCD Convention. The General Department of Forestry and Combating Desertification was assigned to be the national focal point for this agreement.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://bitly.ws/lzpr> صندوق النقد العربي، التعاون العربي في مجال مكافحة التصحر، ديسمبر ٢٠٢١،

## **b. Arab Efforts Made during May to Combat Environmental Desertification:**

Over the past month, many Arab countries have made commendable efforts to combat environmental desertification, including:

**The regional project in Mauritania**, which is a leading project funded by the World Bank and coordinated by the Permanent Committee to combat drought in the Sahel resulting from climate change, with the aim of combating desertification, which is one of the direct effects resulting from the harsh climatic changes that struck a number of Sahel countries, led by Mauritania.

In **Bahrain**, the Environment Department in North Al Batinah Governorate organized, within the framework of the voluntary environment ambassadors' team, the “**Green Belt**” Movement of the Department of Environment in the governorate. This campaign aims to cultivate the wide areas of mosques in the various locations of the governorate, which started to grow 150 seedlings of ornamental trees and shade trees at the Al -Rayyan Mosque, Sohar. This Campaign reflects the Environment Department keenness to protect and preserve the vegetation cover and combat desertification and land degradation, which is expected to be greatly reflected in increasing the resilience of the state in the face of climate hazards, and as part of the initiative to plant one million trees. The importance of such Initiatives is to support land productivity by improving the condition of ecosystems affected by climate change, and will also support the reduction of their fragility and low quality due to climate and associated drought.

As to the efforts of the Arab League, it organized a meeting of the Arab team to follow up on the international environmental conventions concerned with desertification and biological diversity. Meeting No. 21 was held by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Meteorology and the Technical Secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs, during the period 14-17 May 2023 at the headquarters of the university's General Secretariat. This meeting comes in implementation of the decision issued by the Council of Arab Ministers responsible for environmental affairs, under the guidance of Ambassador Dr. Ali bin Ibrahim Al-Maliki, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Economic Affairs Sector. The meeting has discussed many items, the most important of which is the follow-up on the conferences of the parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and Combating Desertification, which was held in 2022, and preparation for the next conferences, especially since the Kingdom will host the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, scheduled to be held during the period 2-12/13/2024. On the sidelines of the meeting, a series of workshops were held, topped by

a training workshop for negotiators of the desertification and biological diversity conventions, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme.

The bottom line is it is remarkable to note the absence of Arab cooperation in the issue of desertification in particular, as it is a vital issue dominating a number of Arab countries such as Iraq, Mauritania, Yemen and Libya. However, the environmental sectors in the four countries have not yet come up with a collective project aimed at joint work to discuss ways of cooperation and strengthening work on this issue.

Although Libya is one of the most prominent Arab countries suffering from desertification crises and agricultural land deterioration that intersect with water and food insecurity, with all being directly linked to the negative repercussions of climate change, the Libyan efforts are very slow-paced and disproportionate with the gravity of the crisis.

## **Second: The country of the Issue “Libyan Arab Republic”**

### **a. Background on the effects of the climate crisis in the State of Libya:**

Libya is considered one of the most Arab countries badly affected by the negative repercussion of climate change, which is reflected in different and varied forms of risks that vary between desertification, water scarcity, annual heat waves, and the severity of natural phenomena such as dust storms. 2022 witnessed the most severe dust storm that hit the country, covering a number of Libyan cities with dust for several days, in what was described as one of the direct results of climate changes.<sup>2</sup>

The danger lies in the severe climatic changes incurred by the country, as it expands to include obstructing a group of economic activities that have begun to be affected by the unstable climate in the country, which is directly reflected not only on the environmental and social contexts but also on the economic contexts and development indicators. The waves of successive dust storms that hit the country hindered oil activities in light of the lack of visibility and the difficulty of traffic in a number of cases in which the Libyan oil fields and companies are located.<sup>3</sup>

Libya is one of the Arab countries that is highly sensitive to climate change; nevertheless, the sharp and urgent pace of exacerbation of the negative effects of climate change prompted the country to experience huge risks, topped by scarcity of rain water and decline of water resources in recent years, which warns of severe droughts that could

<sup>2</sup> FES.ed، ليبيا في مهبّ العواصف الترابية وتغير المناخ، <http://bitly.ws/l8PU>

<sup>3</sup> المرجع السابق



affect the country in light of the failure to take the necessary measures to combat and slow down the pace of climate changes locally, regionally and globally.<sup>4</sup>

Libya used to receive up to 2 billion cubic meters of water annually, but it is suffering now from a decline of more than 75% of this percentage, with only 400 million cubic meters of water are monitored inside the Libyan dams. Taking into account the expected rise in temperatures, the country lives amidst threats of running out of water resources and drowning Libyan coastal communities, in addition to the lack of radical solutions to these problems that made farmers - one of the largest groups affected by climate crises - more inclined to leave their lands, which caused a direct decrease in the Libyan vegetation cover necessary to reduce carbon emissions that cause climate changes, which turned 95% of the Libyan lands into desert, and threatens water and food security in the country, while warning of the occurrence of one of the major human disasters.<sup>5</sup>

## **b. Government policies related to combating climate crisis**

Despite the years-long lack of political and security stability in Libyan Republic, as well as the successive climate crises that Libya is witnessing, the efforts of the government and the environmental sector to combat climate change and raise the country's capabilities to face the crisis before reaching the point of no return are very slow and ineffective compared to the efforts of the other countries in the Arab region. Libya has not formulated an effective policy nor declared national projects, initiatives or plans to address the crisis. Instead, the Libyan government is satisfied with directing a group of institutional efforts through the Libyan Ministry of Environment or through cooperation at the local regional and global levels without revealing a declared strategy, where:

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) stated that Libya is one of the few countries that **has not yet announced its clear climate strategy as part of the provisions of the Paris Agreement, despite being one of the countries most affected by climate change.**<sup>6</sup>

In addition, although Libya signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015 and ratified the Paris Climate Agreement in 2021, the Libyan government **did not submit the required reports and plans**, nor did it disclose its policies in dealing with the climate crisis. In addition, since 2015, Libya has failed to submit its national contribution plan to combat climate change, although it is obligated to submit its update

<sup>4</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>5</sup> <http://bitly.ws/l8UC> التغيرات المناخية تهدد ليبيا.. والنهر الصناعي الأكثر تضررا، سكاى نيوز عربية،

<sup>6</sup> <http://bitly.ws/l9tN> ليبيا الدولة الوحيدة التي ليس لديها استراتيجية مناخية، ليبيا المستقبل،

since 2020. It also did not disclose government adaptation plans or its national contacts with partners to cooperate in resolving the Libyan climate crisis, showing that the climate issue is not a priority for the state.<sup>7</sup>

Instead of announcing its comprehensive national policy, the Libyan government was satisfied with taking various steps in dealing with the climate issue, such as the formation of the **Climate Change Sub-Committee**. The Libyan government issued Resolution No. 336 of 2021 to restructure the Sub-Committee on Climate Change headed by the Libyan Minister of Environment. The membership of the Committee consists of representatives of the Cabinet Office, and Ministers of Planning and Transportation, Gas, Industry and Minerals, Foreign Affairs, Water Resources, Higher Education and Scientific Research, in addition to the General Electricity Company of Libya, experts and consultants in atmospheric sciences and climate change<sup>8</sup>.

The Committee's key role is to focus on the development and tracking of national plans for climate change adaptation programs to adapt to the effects of climate change and integration with national policies and programs and development plan requirements, in addition to preparing reports within the framework of the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, preparing special recommendations and proposals and submitting them to the Council of Ministers. The Committee assumes the responsibility of proposing the necessary national programs and projects to reduce harmful emissions and assist in building the training needs and necessary capacities in the environmental field in general and the climate in particular<sup>9</sup>.

### **c. Libya's efforts to achieve the targets of the Goal 13 and to promote climate action**

During May, Libya made commendable efforts to ensure its contribution to protecting the environment and its resources. The climate is an essential part of the environment, so the government has taken several measures aimed at reducing climate change which will naturally impact reducing air, water, and soil pollution. In that section, the focus will be on the efforts of Arab governments to achieve the targets of SDG 13 during May, as follows:

<b>Target 1</b>	<b>Integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning</b>
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<sup>8</sup> Middle Gate, Al-Dabaiba reconfigures the National Committee for Climate Change and defines its tasks, <http://bitly.ws/l9RW>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

The Libyan government has directed its efforts to integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning through various efforts:

On May 8, the Department of Climate Change and Sustainable Development at the Ministry of Environment participated in a workshop held at the UNICEF headquarters to discuss the challenges, problems, and effects posed by climate change on children's access to safe drinking water, to start work on a national plan to deal with the crisis. The workshop was held with the participation of the Ministry of Environment Water Resources, the General Company for Water Desalination, the Great Man-Made River Authority (GMRA), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, solar energy, and the Ministry of Local Government (partners)<sup>10</sup>.

The Ministry of Environment held a panel discussion under the title Youth and Climate Change, sponsored and organized by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Libya Office and in coordination with the International Cooperation Office of the Ministry of Environment, where the Ministry of Water Resources and a number of those interested in climate change and civil society activists participated. During the panel discussion, various topics related to climate change and pollution in Libya were discussed, including the major accomplishments of the Libyan Ministry of the Environment and the ongoing projects being implemented as part of the country's broader strategic national plan that is directed towards modern response mechanisms, including drip irrigation, and increasing the Libyan vegetation cover<sup>11</sup>.

<b>Target 2</b>	<b>Strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disaster in all countries</b>
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Within the framework of Libyan efforts aimed at enhancing resilience in the face of climate-related hazards, the Ministry of Environment has taken several steps, including:

Until now; the Libyan campaign for afforestation continues in a number of Libyan cities, which aims to plant a billion trees in various parts of the country. The overnight registration campaign was launched from Tripoli, heading towards the city of Khums, as part of a year-long campaign aimed at increasing vegetation cover in Libya. This is one of the important steps to increase Libya's capacity to address the extreme Libyan changes

<sup>10</sup> A workshop to discuss the challenges of climate change on providing water for children, the Libyan Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HTKb>

<sup>11</sup> Panel discussion..... Youth and climate change, Ministry of Environment - Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/larp>

and extreme warming that the country is going through, with a range of civil, security, and community-based institutions have been involved in the afforestation process<sup>12</sup>.

Earlier, a sanitary landfill was opened for the disposal of waste and medical waste in a healthy and safe manner, far from burning, which is considered one of the notable steps that will positively affect climate. The Minister of Environment inaugurated the garbage landfill of the Marseille Company in the municipality of Sidi Sayeh and the landfill adheres to local and international environmental standards in its handling mechanisms<sup>13</sup>.

In addition, the Ministry of Environment organized a meeting in mid-March at the headquarters of the Ministry's office to discuss the project for implementing a solar energy plant that generates clean electricity in Libya, which is one of the most important first projects in the path of transition towards clean sustainable energies that is expected to be positively reflected in strengthening Libya's ability to combat Climate change and addressing its negative impacts. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Environment, Dr. Ibrahim Al-Arabi Munir; the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Environment, Dr. Ehnin Al-Maawi; the Director of the Climate Change Department, Dr. Omar Abu Kharawatah; the Director of the Projects Department, Eng. Muhammad Eddah, the Director of the Follow-up Office, Dr. Ahmed Al-Maqouri; and the Ministry's Advisor, Muhammad Al-Amin; and representatives of the (AG ENERGY) company implementing the solar power plant project generating electricity in the city of Ghadames<sup>14</sup>.

<b>Target 3</b>	<b>Improving education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change</b>
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Over the past months, the Libyan Ministry of Environment has made a number of important efforts to develop institutional and individual capacities and raise awareness, the most prominent of which are:

The International Cooperation Office of the Ministry of Environment, in cooperation with the Sahel and Desert Observatory, and with the support of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) through the fund's national focal point, organized a workshop for the "Climate Preparedness Project for Libya" in its second edition. The workshop focused on

<sup>12</sup> The Libyan campaign for afforestation continues to target about one billion trees, Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/lamM>

<sup>13</sup> Opening of the sanitary landfill for the disposal of waste and medical waste, Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/lacX>

<sup>14</sup> The project of the solar power plant generating electricity in the city of Ghadames, Libyan Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/lagR>

increasing the institutional, human, and technical capacities of the Libyan system to finance climate change projects in the period 9-10 May 2023, it took place in Tripoli with representatives from relevant ministries, institutions, and research centers participating<sup>15</sup>.

The Ministry of Environment has provided support for enhancing the skills of its employees, through the supervision of the National Ozone Unit at the Ministry of Environment and in coordination with the Customs Authority, on the activities of the training course implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on Wednesday, May 20. Training programs have been implemented to equip customs administration employees with the skills needed to detect and prevent the illegal trade of substances and products that deplete the ozone layer, which in turn will be reflected in supporting the fight against climate change, in accordance with the Montreal Protocol on the Protection of the Ozone Layer, which Libya ratified in 1990<sup>16</sup>.

Over 50 trainees from Libyan Customs and Ministry of Environment, technicians in charge of monitoring imports of substances that deplete the ozone layer took part in a two-week course. The course was divided into two parts, with the first part taking place in Tripoli and the second in Benghazi. This training course was included as part of the activities in the first segment of the second edition of the project to manage the disposal of hydro fluorocarbons in Libya, which will last for two years 2023-2025<sup>17</sup>.

As part of the Libyan Ministry of Environment's efforts to enhance its staff's skills and improve their work performance, On May 24, the Minister of Environment, Dr. Ibrahim Elaraby Mounir, Director of the International Cooperation Office, received international experts for the "Musnada" project of the European Union Delegation to Libya. The meeting included a discussion on the importance of continuing the field of future cooperation for the second phase of the "Musnada" project, which aims to assess the institutional needs of the Ministry and identify support priorities. The Minister emphasized the importance of increasing the technical skills of staff in various areas, such as environmental impact assessment, expectation, and preparation, and submitting the first national communication on climate change. Additionally, he highlighted the need for ongoing communication to identify the training needs of the Ministry's personnel<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Climate System Project for Libya, Libyan Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HTBv>

<sup>16</sup> Launching the activities of the training course to combat the import of substances that deplete the ozone layer, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HTFH>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Receiving the Director of the Support Project at the Libyan Ministry of Environment, Libyan Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HTLM>

The National Ozone Unit of the Ministry of Environment, in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Customs Authority, has started the second training course on preventing illegal trade of substances that damage the ozone layer. The objective of the course is to provide training to the employees of the customs authority and technicians of the Ministry of Environment in the Eastern Province, working at different ports on how to deal with chemicals that deplete the ozone layer, which negatively affect the climate directly and how to minimize illegal trades of these substances<sup>19</sup>.

## **Axis II: Achieving SDG 13 in the Arab Region**

This axis reviews the reality of SDG 13 in the Arab countries, by identifying the most prominent governmental efforts made to enhance climate action during the month through the classification of these efforts according to the targets followed by the Observatory as follows:

<b>Target 1</b>	<b>Integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning</b>
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### **A. South Africa:**

#### **1. Egypt**

During May, the Arab Republic of Egypt made key efforts aimed at integrating measures to deal with climate change within the framework of national policy, strategy and plans. The most prominent of these efforts are:

Within the framework of integrating national efforts to combat climate change in national strategies and plans, Dr. Yasmine Fouad, Minister of Environment, confirmed that net zero carbon emissions is an important and vital issue related to efforts to confront the effects of climate change, and that Egypt is concerned with this issue at the strategic level, which requires the need to search for the most appropriate and best ways to reach, especially since the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) showed that even with maintaining the Earth's temperature at 1.5 degrees Celsius, the world's population will continue to suffer from the effects of warming, both on food, water and shelter, as well as on the ecosystem and the protection of coastal areas, such as

<sup>19</sup> Regularity of the course on combating illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances, Libyan Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HTMj>

the loss of many coral reefs over the past years, which are home to many marine creatures.<sup>20</sup>

Fouad highlighted the huge importance of launching the Loss and Damage Fund, which is one of the important gains of the COP 27 climate conference, as the fund helps to continue the momentum around preserving the earth's temperature by 1.5 degrees Celsius, supporting the inclusion of the business sector and development institutions in climate action, and changing the view of global development banks due to the importance of supporting different countries, and the need to provide financial support to countries to enhance their coping capabilities. Fouad revealed that the national strategy aims to achieve a balance between mitigation and adaptation by examining the most important ways to reduce greenhouse emissions in various sectors, including the field of construction and the trend towards green buildings, and not forgetting to take immediate steps to adapt to the effects of climate change.<sup>21</sup>

In the context of supporting the Egyptian transition to a green economy, the head of the Environmental Affairs Agency participated in the Global Green Growth Forum in Korea, in the presence of the Korean Prime Minister. During his speech the head of the agency, Dr. Ali Abu Sunna, stated that the transition to the "green economy" is one of the important pillars in the comprehensive sustainable development plans that take place at the national level, which is reflected in the implementation of many projects that are commensurate with the economic and environmental priorities of the state. He also stressed that Egypt seeks to increase the volume of green financing available for green projects. A larger share of the national budget is allocated for the transition towards a green economy, and this is within the framework of integrating the environmental dimension into the national strategy for sustainable development, "Egypt's Vision 2030".<sup>22</sup>

Fouad also participated in the preparatory meeting to prepare for the launch of the environmental and climate investment conference and platform, which is considered a real opportunity to complete Egypt's success in the climate file after the Climate Conference 27, in cooperation with the Swiss side and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in the presence of Mr. Mohamed Motamed, Assistant Minister of Environment for Planning and Investment, and Mr. Ahmed Rizk, representative of UNIDO, the conference aims to create a language of dialogue that

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<sup>20</sup> Zero Carbon Emissions: An Egyptian Strategic Point, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HSCn>.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Supporting the transition to a green economy, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HSCN>

contributes to overcoming all obstacles to environmental and climate investment in Egypt.<sup>23</sup>

During the meeting, the minister reviewed the steps for launching the electronic platform, which is scheduled to be launched during the conference, to present environmental investments and opportunities in Egypt. The conference will contribute to reviewing all investment visions and opportunities that contribute to overcoming the difficulties and obstacles facing environmental and climate investments in Egypt, in addition to uniting all forces, groups and partners, whether from governmental, private or financing agencies, in an integrated work that achieves success for all parties.<sup>24</sup>

The conference witnessed the Minister discussing the proposals of the participating parties, whether governmental ministries, stakeholders, investors of private sector companies, civil society institutions, startups, entrepreneurs, international financing agencies, development partners and other stakeholders, to ensure the achievement of integration and inclusion, which contributes to creating a language of dialogue and communication between them to overcome all aspects of environmental and climate investment obstacles, in addition to discussing the conference agenda.<sup>25</sup>

In light of Egypt's intention to expand the scope of environmental work, Fouad directed the activation of the national dialogue on climate change under the title "The Road to Climate Conference 28" in all governorates of the Republic, to enhance the participation of all segments of society and its members in climate action efforts of all ages and specializations. Under the Minister's directives, the regional branch of the Ministry of Environment in Sohag, in cooperation with the State Information Service, the Sohag Youth Union, the Environment Eye Association, and the Green Farm Company, organized the National Environmental Dialogue Conference (the way to the Climate Conference COP 28) in the Sohag Media Center Hall, with the participation of youth and civil community institutions in Sohag.<sup>26</sup>

Fouad stressed that the National Dialogue on Climate Change, in its current form, represents a continuation of the message that Egypt focused on conveying to the world during the 27<sup>th</sup> Climate Conference. The conference focuses on involving all segments of society in the discussion about reducing the negative effects of climate change, and

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<sup>23</sup> Preparing to launch the environmental and climate investment conference and platform, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HSD3>

<sup>24</sup> Ibid

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup> Activating the National Dialogue on Climate Change, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HSDk>



collecting the results and recommendations of the national dialogue in the various governorates and studying them for benefit.<sup>27</sup>

The conference aimed to listen to the ideas and proposals of young people to come up with specific ideas for procedures related to the severity of climate change, in addition to the participation of civil society to ensure accelerating the pace of addressing the effects of climate change. The conference also discussed all topics of interest to civil society, led by the "**National Initiative for Smart Green Projects**", as well as presenting success stories, projects, innovations and environmental products, with the aim of addressing the effects of climate change and confronting them, achieving sustainable development goals and consolidating the principles of community participation. The conference also tackled defining environmental problems within Sohag, to raise the environmental awareness of Sohag community about the most important conservation issues, how to work to confront them, and the role of the individual and society.<sup>28</sup>

While the Egyptian government aims to increase the context of green companies and investments in Egypt, Fouad met the President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) Gelsomina Vigliotti via video conference, to discuss the latest developments in preparing for the implementation of the sustainable green industry program, in the presence of Dr. Ali Abu Sunna, the head of the Environmental Affairs Agency, representatives of the bank, and a number of leaders of the Ministry of Environment.<sup>29</sup>

The Minister praised the extended relations and efforts made by the World Bank in supporting environmental work in Egypt, especially those made during Egypt's hosting of the 27<sup>th</sup> Climate Conference, she also expressed her aspiration to complete the constructive partnership with more future cooperation to benefit from the technical support and expertise of the bank in strengthening Egypt's efforts to involve the private sector in environmental and climate investment, which is currently one of the most important areas of focus, and supporting and strengthening Egypt's march towards green transformation. On the other hand, the Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB) congratulated the Egyptian Minister of Environment on the success of the 27<sup>th</sup> Climate Conference. She also praised Egypt's efforts in strengthening the path towards the upcoming 28<sup>th</sup> Climate Conference, and affirmed her support for cooperation with Egypt through the "Novi" platform for green projects and the Association of energy, food and water, and consolidating cooperation with Egypt during the coming period in

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> Environment Minister meets with the President of the European Investment Bank, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HSDG>

implementing the sustainable green industry program (GSI). She also revealed its aspiration to accelerate the preparation for the project and reach a final agreement in preparation for starting its implementation before the end of the year, with the bank's willingness to provide larger financing packages, especially in the field of technical support.<sup>30</sup>

In light of the launch of the second phase of the national initiative for smart green projects, the Minister of Environment met with Ambassador Hisham Badr, the national coordinator of the national initiative, to discuss the latest developments and implementation mechanisms at the headquarters of the Ministry of Environment in the Administrative Capital, to discuss the latest developments of the national initiative after the launch of the second session and its implementation mechanism. This is within the framework of efforts to achieve sustainable development in the context of implementing Egypt's Vision 2030 by preserving the environment to improve the quality of life and taking into account the rights of future generations, and implementing the National Climate Change Strategy 2050.<sup>31</sup>

Fouad confirmed that the political leadership pays great attention to the issue of climate change and protection from its risks, and stresses the importance of green projects in preserving natural resources for the future of coming generations. The minister indicated that the continuation of the initiative and the launch of its second edition this year reflect Egypt's vision to consolidate the new reality, in which development is linked to digital transformation and the optimal exploitation of information technology and the developments of the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution, taking into account environmental considerations and the transition towards a green economy, and highlighted the cooperation of all relevant ministries and institutions, which led to the great success of the first version of the initiative and the presentation of its results at the Climate Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh<sup>32</sup>.

The Minister of Environment added that after the launch of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the initiative, the Ministry of Environment and the coordinating committee of the initiative take the responsibility of spreading awareness of the importance of smart green projects within the governorates, so that investors can apply for the competition.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Launching the second phase of the National Initiative for Smart Green Projects, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HSEa>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

The Egyptian Minister of Environment met with the Greek-Egyptian Contributors Alliance to discuss the environmental part of the project for ship waste management services in the Suez Canal, at the ministry's new headquarters in the New Administrative Capital. The minister explained that the project provides investments of about \$150 million to the Suez Canal Authority as one of the environmental and climate investment models towards the green transition.<sup>34</sup>

Fouad emphasized the importance of the project in promoting efforts to localize environmentally friendly industries and activities and contributing to access to the "Green Suez Canal", as part of the Ministry of Environment's endeavor to advance the green transformation path by highlighting environmental and climate investment opportunities.<sup>35</sup>

In addition, one of the most important measures taken by the Egyptian government on May 22<sup>nd</sup> is the participation of the Ministry of Environment, led by Minister Yasmine Fouad, in the session "Mobilizing Blended Finance to Facilitate Green Transformation in Emerging Economies", which was held on the sidelines of the 58<sup>th</sup> session of the annual meetings of the African Development Bank Group, hosted by Egypt in Sharm El-Sheikh from May 22-26, 2023.<sup>36</sup>

In the same context, the Ministry has made great efforts to prepare for the launch of the "Environmental and Climate Investment Conference and Platform" on May 25<sup>th</sup>, where the Minister of Environment, Dr. Yasmine Fouad, held a preparatory meeting regarding preparation for the environmental and climate investment conference scheduled to be held next July, in cooperation with the Swiss side and the United Nations. The Minister affirmed that the convening conference will be a comprehensive conference aimed at highlighting all parties of the system, and providing a real opportunity to complete the success achieved from the climate conference.<sup>37</sup>

Fouad participated in the International Conference on Net Zero Carbon Emissions (Act to Zero), organized by the American University in Cairo, under the auspices of Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, in cooperation with the Green Building Council in Egypt, the World Green Council building, and a number of educational institutions and representatives of governments, the private sector, financial institutions and civil society.

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<sup>34</sup> The Minister of Environment meets with the Greek-Egyptian Consortium of Shareholders, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HSEy>

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Egyptian Ministry of Environment, Facebook, May 22, <http://bitly.ws/HIRo>

<sup>37</sup> Launch of the Environmental and Climate Investment Conference and Platform, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, May 25, <http://bitly.ws/HIRo>

The conference discussed the opportunities and challenges facing achieving zero carbon emissions, in addition to exchanging knowledge and experiences to help move to zero emissions in the future.<sup>38</sup>

At the end of May, Fouad met with the Italian Ambassador, Michele Quaroni, in Cairo to discuss future cooperation opportunities in promoting environmental and climate investment. The Minister of Environment emphasized that the Egyptian government is seeking to build Egyptian-Italian partnerships with the Italian private sector through participation in the International Environmental Investment Forum. Within the framework of directing the political leadership to highlight promising investment opportunities in the field of environment and climate, the Ministry of Environment has taken active steps to create a climate supportive of environmental investment, especially after the indicators of the National Climate and Development Report indicate the possibility of achieving 28 billion opportunities for private sector investment in the field of climate in Egypt until 2030.<sup>39</sup>

During the meeting, the minister highlighted the most important steps to create a climate supportive of environmental and climate investment in Egypt, which included the establishment of a new unit for environmental and climate investment in the Ministry of Environment with the support of many development partners to search for promising investment opportunities in the field of environment and climate, mechanisms for facing challenges, and opportunities for linking the private sector, emerging companies and the banking sector, in addition to the establishment of the first international forum for environmental and climate investment in July under the auspices of the President of the Republic and in the presence of the Prime Minister, in addition to launching the first electronic platform for environmental and climate investment in Egypt, which aims to present success stories, numbers and indicators of each sector, to facilitate the private sector in identifying the available opportunities in the environmental and climate field.<sup>40</sup>

## 2. Tunisia

Tunisia has taken many important steps within the framework of integrating measures to deal with the climate issue in national strategies and plans. The most prominent of these efforts are:

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<sup>38</sup> Environment Minister participates in Zero Carbon Conference, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, May 27, <http://bitly.ws/HIRO>

<sup>39</sup> Ministry of the Environment, Facebook, May 30, <http://bitly.ws/HIMi>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid

**The Tunisian National Gene Bank signed** a partnership agreement with the Tunisian Association of Ecological Agriculture within the framework of the program for the preservation of forage genetic resources. This agreement mainly aims to establish a fodder bank, starting from the events of growing trees and forage shrubs, to centralizing units of the "green fodder bank" in different regions of the Tunisian country and adopting them as a model for fodder production throughout the year. This project is considered one of the most prominent projects aimed at establishing a model for sustainable agricultural development, based on the genetic heritage adapted to the climate and the ecological and environmental balances to ensure adaptation to climate changes.<sup>41</sup>

In addition, Mrs. Leila Chikhaoui-Mahdaoui, Tunisian Minister of Environment, supervised on May 16<sup>th</sup> on a **workshop on the framework of the enhanced transparency plan in the field of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions** under the Paris Agreement on climate. The conference was organized by the National Coordinating Unit in the field of climate change in the Ministry of Environment and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), with the participation of the concerned parties from ministries and national institutions, in addition to members of the National Technical Coordinating Committee in the field of emissions reduction and a group of experts in the field.<sup>42</sup>

This workshop aims to recall the requirements of the enhanced transparency framework and plan under the Paris Agreement and the climate, and to present and discuss the components of the national digital platform for the enhanced transparency framework in the field of emissions mitigation, which the Ministry has begun to implement since October 2022. This platform aims to collect and process data related to electronic reporting on progress in implementing national pledges included in the nationally determined contributions, as well as online reporting tables on the national inventory of greenhouse gas emissions and information on climate finance.<sup>43</sup>

The Ministry of the Environment, under the supervision of the Minister, Mrs. Leila Chekhaoui-Mahdaoui, organized the International Investment Conference for the Implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions in Tunisia, on May 25-26, 2023, in cooperation with the International Coalition for the Implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC Partnership), the United Nations Development Program

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<sup>41</sup> The National Gene Bank signed an agreement to establish a green forage bank, Ministry of Water, Environment and Energy, <http://bitly.ws/l2kj>

<sup>42</sup> Environment Minister Leads Workshop on Enhanced Transparency Framework, Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/l2mn>

<sup>43</sup> Ibid

(PNUD) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). This conference aims to **accelerate the pace of implementation of national priorities to confront climate change** and reduce its growing repercussions, according to Tunisia's international commitments and national priorities in the field of economic and social development.<sup>44</sup>

This conference was organized in the presence of more than 300 participants representing ministries, national structures, the private sector, local and regional structures, and international community organizations. and protection of Greater Tunisia (Beja Province) from floods, and the start of concentrating organic and energy valuation units for household waste in Bizerte and Gabes, in addition to supporting the exploitation of energy-saving lighting and the adoption of renewable energies in 5 Tunisian municipalities.<sup>45</sup>

During her inauguration of the conference, Ms. Leila Chekhaoui-Mehdaoui pointed out the importance of the active contribution of all national structures and the mobilization of the necessary funds to invest collectively in major projects with a climate impact, which contribute to confronting the repercussions of climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and establishing a clean and sustainable development that respects the environment and reduces the growing effects of climate change.<sup>46</sup>

### 3. Algeria

During May, the Algerian government made a series of efforts aimed at integrating the measures taken to deal with climate change within the framework of national policies and strategies, the most prominent of which were:

Participation in the "Clean Energy" project directed by the European Union to support the renewable energy sector and energy efficiency in Algeria on Tuesday, May 2, and during the closing symposium of this program, which took place at the International Conference Center, in the presence of more than two hundred participants from the main actors in the fields of renewable energies and energy efficiency, The Minister of Energy and Mines, Mohamed Arkab, revealed the importance of this project completed during the last four years and the gains achieved within its framework, which would contribute to the promotion of the two fields. The minister explained that the program concludes with a more than satisfactory outcome and major achievements in the field of sustainability,

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<sup>44</sup> Environment Minister Organizes International Investment Conference to Implement Nationally Determined Contributions, Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/l2mS>

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

adding that among the areas of cooperation that must be deepened is the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in energy industries and greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>47</sup>

Algeria's full commitment to continue active participation at the international level in the field of environmental protection and combating the harmful effects of climate change within the framework of sustainable development, through the development of decentralized systems for the production of electricity and heat from renewable sources, especially geothermal energy and energy recovery from waste, and the support of the European Union in the field of Renewable energies in terms of technical assistance and support are essential for success in its strategy to develop renewable energies in the medium and long term.<sup>48</sup>

In addition, the Secretary General of the Ministry, the Director General of Environment and Sustainable Development and the Chief of Staff, at the Ministry's headquarters two parliamentary delegates from the German state of Bavaria, headed by the President of the Christian-Social Union in Bavaria, received Mr. Thomas Kreuzer, and in the presence of Her Excellency the German Ambassador to Algeria and the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the National People's Assembly, in what appears to be an Algerian-German cooperation in the field of environment and renewable energies<sup>49</sup>

During the meeting, Algerian-German cooperation files in the field of environment and renewable energies were discussed, especially through partnership projects and programs with the German Cooperation Agency GIZ. The German parliamentary delegation also expressed interest in the Algerian experience in various environmental fields, considering that the concerns are common between our two countries with different priorities. In the same meeting, the Algerian side reviewed many axes and challenges facing Algeria in the field of environment and renewable energies, similar to Algeria's efforts and achievements in the institutional aspect and the establishment of 7 bodies under the commandments to enhance Algeria's capabilities in the implementation of various strategies, especially those related to the green and circular economy and integrated management for waste.

In addition to its efforts and plans in the climate file and the completion of the National Climate Plan, the Third National Communication and the Fourth National Communication Programming, and Algeria's recent benefit from financing the National

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<sup>47</sup> Conclusion of the European Union support program for the renewable energy sector in Algeria, Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HU8i>

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

<sup>49</sup> Algerian-German cooperation in the field of renewable energies and climate, Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, Algeria, May 7, <http://bitly.ws/HUbl>

Adaptation Plan, the Green Dam project was reviewed during the meeting, which is considered one of the important projects that Algeria has completed in the framework of combating desertification and reduce the effects of greenhouse gas emissions.

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, the Minister of the Environment received the Ambassador of the Republic of South Korea to Algeria, Mr. Kim Chun, in a meeting that tackled several topics targeting the environment sector, renewable energies, and ways to develop cooperation between the two countries. They also discussed, in particular, the issue of combating climate change, where the Minister presented Algeria's efforts at the local and international levels to combat this phenomenon through the national climate plan and local adaptation plans. She also reviewed the efforts and contributions made by Algeria at the level of the international community, such as the approval Funding of the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change by the Green Climate Funds of the Framework Convention on Climate Change.<sup>50</sup>

While the ambassador expressed his country's readiness to support Algeria by setting up an air monitoring network in Algiers as a model project, in addition to cooperation between the two countries in the field of renewable energies, especially photovoltaic energy and green hydrogen production. He also clarified that the cooperation will include capacity building and the transfer of necessary expertise and technology in the field, and that Korean institutions are ready to come to Algeria and work with their Algerian counterparts.

#### **4. Morocco**

The efforts of the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development in Morocco, within the framework of integrating climate-related measures into national policies and strategies, are represented in expanding international cooperation, which are represented in:

The participation of the Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, Leila Benali, in the works of the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the high-level meeting Morocco - Portugal under the slogan "Morocco and Portugal: Together to Build Prosperous Economies and Common Growth", which kicked off on May 12 in the Portuguese capital, Lisbon. The two countries sought to enhance their joint cooperation in In various fields, Minister Leila Benali also stressed the importance of intensifying dialogue between the two countries to

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<sup>50</sup> Minister of Environment and Renewable Energies Meets with the South Korean Ambassador to Algeria, Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energies, <http://bitly.ws/HUdY>



ensure a comprehensive and flexible energy transition that responds to the aspired goals in the field of sustainable development and climate change.<sup>51</sup>

Then the participation of the Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development again in London at the International Technology Conference (Innovation Zero), under the slogan "Innovation and Leadership in Low Carbon Transformation" held on May 23, in the presence of more than 7,000 participants, as well as more than 200 innovators in the Low-carbon solutions, and 300 speakers. This annual meeting is an opportunity for international leaders to deliberate and discuss innovative and sustainable solutions and exchange knowledge and experiences. The meeting also represents an opportunity to discuss the latest ways to ensure the flexibility of electricity systems and technologies to increase green hydrogen production and storage, and also an occasion to highlight the importance of digitizing energy services and to study opportunities to raise the competitiveness of the sector in line with the Kingdom's goals to achieve energy transition and sustainable development, which will be integrated within the framework of national plans and generalized strategies.<sup>52</sup>

## 5. Mauritania

The most prominent Mauritanian efforts made during May to integrate climate-related measures within the framework of national strategies and plans are represented by the Mauritanian delegation chairing a meeting of the African member states of the regional project on the first of May. The meeting enabled all participants to get a unified vision on the importance of implementing the regional project, and coordinating the activities implemented in the future by different countries, which will have a great impact at the regional level.<sup>53</sup>

The regional project is considered one of the most prominent projects funded by the World Bank and coordination by the Permanent Committee to combat drought in the Sahel resulting from climate changes, with the aim of combating desertification, which is one of the direct effects resulting from the harsh climatic changes that struck a number of Sahel countries, led by Mauritania.<sup>54</sup>

## B. Arab Gulf:

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<sup>51</sup> Launch of the 14th session of the high-level meeting, Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, Morocco, <http://bitly.ws/l3yv>

<sup>52</sup> Moroccan Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development participates in the International Technology Conference, Morocco, Twitter, <http://bitly.ws/l3yP>

<sup>53</sup> Meetings of the Parties on the Basel Convention, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, May 1, <http://bitly.ws/HVUd>

<sup>54</sup> Climate Change Reality: Supporting Pastoralists in the Sahel to Build a Resilient Future, World Bank, <http://bitly.ws/DLgt>

## 1. Bahrain

Bahrain's most prominent efforts in integrating climate change-related measures into policies, strategies and planning at the national level were represented by the Bahrain Minister of Environment and Oil hosting an international workshop on the transition towards implementing national plans and strategies for adaptation, on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. During his speech, the Minister of Environment and Oil stressed the importance of sharing the responsibility for achieving climate security and keeping pace with global efforts to reduce emissions, calling on everyone to redouble international and national efforts to adapt to climate changes and build on what has already been achieved to secure a better global environmental future.<sup>55</sup>

The international workshop, hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain under the slogan "**Transformation towards the Implementation of National Adaptation Plans**", which was held from May 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>, aims to exchange knowledge, experiences and lessons gained from policy makers and workers in the field of national adaptation plans, in addition to reviewing previous successes in projects of adaptation and discussion of best practices in different regions of the world towards transformation, to generalize the application of adaptation plans and strategies and the possibility of establishing partnerships between countries.<sup>56</sup>

## 2. UAE

The UAE is one of the most active countries in the region in the framework of climate action, and it is fair to say that the UAE has undertaken a variety of efforts aimed at integrating climate change-related measures into policies, strategies and planning at the national level during May, the most prominent of which were efforts in:

The UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, in cooperation with COP 28 and (GICCA), hosted a workshop on May 8, during which the workshop discussed ways to remove carbon from cement and concrete within the construction sector, with the aim of activating the contribution of various partners in reducing the carbon footprint of the UAE in light of the formation of emissions resulting from manufacturing, transporting and building materials account for 10% of the total carbon emissions in the country. This workshop is part of the Ministry's efforts to contribute to achieving the goals of climate

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<sup>55</sup> Minister of Oil and Environment Hosts Workshop on Adaptation, Bahrain Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/HYwf>

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

neutrality for the UAE by 2050, and within the country's preparations for the Conference of the Parties hosted by the UAE.<sup>57</sup>

Her Excellency Mariam Bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, announced during a session of climate ministers at the “Agricultural Innovation for Climate” summit in Washington that the UAE has joined the “Agricultural Development Initiative” led by the United Kingdom, which seeks to make sustainable, climate-resistant agriculture the most reliable option for farmers on the global level by 2030. On the second day of the summit, the Minister reviewed the progress made by the UAE in the agricultural sector since the 26<sup>th</sup> Climate Conference of the Parties, during a ministerial meeting on the "Agricultural Development" initiative.<sup>58</sup>

In addition, in the framework of supporting the involvement of women in climate issues, the Assistant Undersecretary for the Food Diversity Sector at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, His Excellency Muhammad Musa Al-Amiri, participated in a session entitled "Breaking Barriers: Inspiring Visions of Pioneering Women in the Field of Science", stressing the importance of the leadership role of women accelerating the pace of climate action.<sup>59</sup>

At the conclusion of the “Agricultural Innovation for Climate” summit on May 11, organized by the US Department of Agriculture in Washington in cooperation with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, in the presence of Her Excellency Maryam Bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, the launch of the “Innovation for Climate Change, Food Security and Agriculture” mission was announced in a special session in the presence of Her Excellency, with the aim of mobilizing more investments and support to promote agricultural and climate innovations globally.<sup>60</sup>

US President Joe Biden thanked the UAE, in a recorded speech to the audience, for joint work with the United States for the success of the initiative aimed at doubling investment in climate-smart agriculture, innovation and global support for food systems.<sup>61</sup>

During May, the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment was interested to devote and circulate the national project for the measurement, reporting and verification system

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<sup>57</sup> Ministry of Climate Change and Environment hosts a workshop on ways to remove carbon from cement, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/13Yz>

<sup>58</sup> AE joining the Agricultural Development Initiative, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/13Z9>

<sup>59</sup> Ibid

<sup>60</sup> At the conclusion of the Agricultural Innovation for Climate Summit, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/13ZT>

<sup>61</sup> Ibid

in line with the enhanced transparency framework under Paris Agreement. The system prioritizes transparency by providing inventories of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and climate change mitigation data to ensure that the temperature rise remains below 1.5°C. The ministry is based on a systematic method for collecting greenhouse gas data and aggregating emissions, preparing reports that include all seven emirates, national stakeholders, and key sectors such as energy, transportation, industry, land use, land use change and forestry, agriculture, and waste. The system also tracks progress against high-level results such as the Nationally Determined Contribution, Net Zero Emissions and the National Agenda.<sup>62</sup>

Within the framework of the UAE's tendency to adopt a unified national system for the classification of air quality monitoring stations, for evaluation and comparison between stations, and for the application of the highest environmental and climatic standards, the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, on May 24, reclassified 64 air quality monitoring stations to facilitate evaluation and comparison between stations. This decision is within a general framework for sustainability and the country's preparations to host the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>63</sup>.

One of the most important steps taken by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment is the Ministry's launch of the second annual conference of the UAE Network for Climate Change Research at New York University Abu Dhabi on May 27, in the presence of Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, CEO of the UAE Independent Climate Change Accelerators (UICCA), and Mariet Westermann, Vice Chancellor of New York University Abu Dhabi.<sup>64</sup>

Mariam Bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, commented on the launch of the project, pointing to the role played by the conference in creating a collaborative environment. The conference includes two new sections, one of which is the youth section and the other is the advisory committee section, both of which aim to enhance the scope of climate research and improve the policy-making process.<sup>65</sup>

In addition, Her Excellency Mariam Bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, witnessed the launch of the "10<sup>th</sup> National Dialogue for Climate Ambition" organized by the Ministry of Climate Change and

<sup>62</sup> Dedication to the National Measurement and Reporting System Project, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, <http://bitly.ws/15GB>

<sup>63</sup> The UAE classifies 64 new air monitoring stations, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/1426>

<sup>64</sup> Launch of the Second Annual Climate Change Research Conference, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/142q>

<sup>65</sup> Ibid

Environment under the slogan "Accelerating the pace of transition to low-carbon green industry", in cooperation With Emirates Steel Company – Arkan.<sup>66</sup>

Almheiri explained that the industrial sector is responsible for a large proportion of carbon emissions in the UAE and the world, and work should be done to find practical solutions to reduce these emissions, and indicated that the UAE is keen to fulfill its global climate commitments and achieve the goals of climate neutrality by 2050.<sup>67</sup>

During the event, 28 companies operating in the industrial sector in the UAE revealed their plan to reduce carbon emissions and adopt more sustainable ways to manage their operations. In this context, Almheiri affirmed that the companies signing this pledge is a step towards establishing a national industrial sector that is environmentally friendly and capable of facing #climate change, and supports sustainable economic growth in the UAE.<sup>68</sup>

### **3. Sultanate of Oman**

The most prominent efforts, made by the Sultanate of Oman in the field of integrating the measures taken to deal with climate change within the framework of national strategies and policies, were represented in the implementation by the Environment Agency of a workshop on the project "National Low Carbon Emissions Strategy for the Land Public Transport Sector in the Sultanate of Oman" in coordination and cooperation with the Ministry of Transport and Communications and Technology Information, Sultan Qaboos University, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, and the Green Climate Fund of the United Nations conventions. The workshop discussed reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the efficiency of public transport, in addition to the shift to using the largest public transport system that is friendly to environmental and climate systems and has a high energy efficiency in Sultanate of Oman. This project is considered one of the most prominent projects in the transformation of the national strategy of the Sultanate towards achieving better dealing with climate change.<sup>69</sup>

## **C. Levant countries**

### **1. Jordan**

The most prominent efforts made by the government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan within the framework of integrating measures related to climate change in policies,

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<sup>66</sup> Launch of the 10th National Climate Ambition Dialogue, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/l42z>

<sup>67</sup> Ibid

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

<sup>69</sup> Launching a workshop on the national strategy for reducing emissions, Environment Agency - Sultanate of Oman, <http://bitly.ws/l2un>

strategies and planning at the national level is the holding of a special meeting of the National Committee for Climate Change, which was chaired by the Minister of Environment, Dr. Muawieh Radaideh, Chairman of the National Committee for Climate Change, on Sunday, May 21. The meeting discussed the planned outputs and activities of the project to enhance readiness for the current Green Climate Fund, and a proposal for the committee's work plan for 2023 was developed, in addition to presenting an update on the progress and national plans for the climate change file.<sup>70</sup>

The conference was held within the framework of developing national measures to deal with the phenomenon of climate change, in line with the national needs of Jordan. The meeting, which was attended by a number of general secretaries in the relevant ministries, and the director of the Climate Change Directorate in the ministry, Engineer Bilal Shaqarin and the directorate staff, discussing the work plan of the National Committee for Climate Change, and the possibility of developing in line with national and global developments, and a proposed challenge for capacity-building needs in the field of climate financing, to enhance the performance of the members' role in implementing the nationally determined contributions and the national adaptation plan, in addition to a presentation from the International Institute for Green Growth, presented by Engineer Hala Al-Hamwi, on the project "Supporting the participation of the empowered national authority with partners and the Direct Access Authority, and promoting the preparation of concept papers in Jordan." Al-Hamwi also reviewed the most important achievements of the Institute in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and future plans, and the involvement of the concerned private sector.<sup>71</sup>

On Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Environment signed a memorandum of understanding with the Global Green Growth Institute, with the aim of embodying partnership and cooperation in the field of green growth, by providing a framework for sharing and facilitating cooperation between the two sides, to support the Jordanian government in implementing a comprehensive green growth agenda, in order to Supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Paris Agreement. The Jordanian Minister of Environment stressed the importance of this memorandum in promoting planning, financing and building institutional frameworks for national and regional green growth, by supporting the implementation of the National Green Growth Action Plan in cooperation with all relevant national stakeholders, including government, private sector, NGOs and donors, building capacity of key government stakeholders, and

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<sup>70</sup> Minister of Environment... chairs the meeting of the National Committee for Climate Change, Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/HXLw>

<sup>71</sup> Ibid

supporting initiatives to enable access to green jobs and investment plans into actionable actions, particularly in the six key sectors of green growth.

In addition to enhancing Jordan's willingness to receive and manage climate financing from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), developing a set of climate-related projects that can be financed for submission to the GCF, strengthening partnership between the public and private sectors in Jordan on the issue of green investment and strengthening the role of the Ministry of Environment in this field.<sup>72</sup>

While the Deputy General Representative of the McCloud Institute praised the Jordanian role in the field of green growth and its executive procedures in this field, and its high response to the implementation of plans and programs that took place between the two sides, which support direct access to the GCF and the technical support, and revealed the interest of the institute and its intention to activate partnership and cooperation with the Jordanian government represented by the Ministry of Environment, development partners and the private sector through current and future projects.<sup>73</sup>

## 2. Lebanon

Within the framework of integrating measures to deal with climate in national plans and strategies, the Lebanese Ministry of Environment launched the updated national strategy to reduce the dangers of forest fires in Lebanon within the framework of a conference held on May 17 at the National Library in Sanayeh City. The conference was held at the invitation of the Ministry of Environment in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, the General Directorate of Civil Defense, the National Council for Scientific Research, the Disaster Risk Management Unit at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, and the Forest Wealth and Development Association.<sup>74</sup>

The conference included a presentation of the updated version of the National Fire Risk Reduction Strategy 2022-2023, which focused on reducing the risk of frequent outbreaks of forest fires and their severity in conjunction with activating fire systems with economic, social and environmental sustainability. The strategy also discussed in part the principle of preventing fires before they occur through implementation of local plans and procedures, in addition to the principle of awareness of citizens, partnership and

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<sup>72</sup> The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan represented by the Ministry of Environment and the Global Green Growth Institute... sign a Memorandum of Understanding, Ministry of Environment, <http://bitly.ws/HXPz>

<sup>73</sup> Ibid

<sup>74</sup> Launching the Lebanese National Forest Fire Reduction Strategy, Ministry of Environment - Lebanon, <http://bitly.ws/l2s5>

cooperation between various local, official and security agencies, the private sector and the academic sector.<sup>75</sup>

### **3. Palestine**

The Palestinian Environment Quality Authority is considered one of the most effective environmental bodies in the Arab world. Despite the obstacles it faces from the occupation authorities, it continues to make efforts in the climate file, as part of its efforts to integrate climate measures into the framework of State policies, strategies, and plans. The head of the Environmental Quality Authority, Dr. Nisreen Al-Tamimi, participated in a special conference on climate change held in Palestine organized by the international humanitarian relief organization "Oxfam", the Federation of Farmers' Associations, Agricultural Relief, and the Economic & Social Development Center of Palestine (ESDC), sponsored by the Environmental Quality Authority, with the participation of the Ministry of Agriculture, researchers and academics specialized in climate adaptation issues<sup>76</sup>.

Al-Tamimi confirmed that the Council of Ministers has directed government institutions to integrate environmental and climate change concerns into development sector plans and strategies and to prioritize the implementation of projects outlined in the nationally defined contribution document. Despite the state being one of the regions severely impacted by climate change, it was hampered by the movements of the occupation in taking measures to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The conference included three sessions: the first focused on the effects of climate change at the national level, the second on "Government's Efforts to Deal with the Phenomenon of Climate Change," and the third on the participation of civil society and research institutions in climate change.

### **D. East of Africa**

#### **1. Comoros**

As part of the integration of climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi met on May 23 in Sharm el-Sheikh with President Osman Ghazali the President of the Republic of Comoros and the current Chairman of the African Union. The meeting witnessed a discussion between them on ways to strengthen relations between the two countries at various levels. President El-Sisi

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid

<sup>76</sup> Dr. Al-Tamimi participates in a conference on climate change in Palestine, Environmental Quality Authority Palestine, <http://bitly.ws/HYPb>



confirmed Egypt's readiness to share its experience of the Presidency of the African Union with Comoros and effectuate cooperation frameworks in various fields, particularly in light of Egypt's historical ties with Comoros at the Arab and African levels<sup>77</sup>.

Comoros' President has underlined his country's eagerness to benefit from Egypt's efforts, expertise, and vision to strengthen united African action and lead the African Union. Especially in light of his country's current Union presidency, which necessitates increased cooperation and coordination with Egypt based on its prestigious status in the region and the continent as a whole in terms of maintaining peace and security and supporting African peoples' aspirations.

<b>Target 2</b>	<b>Strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries</b>
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**a) North Africa:**

**1. Egypt**

As part of Egypt's approach to enhancing resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards, the plan is to transform Sharm El-Sheikh into a green city. Dr. Yasmine Fouad, and Major General Khaled Fouda, Governor of South Sinai paid an inspection visit to Sharm el-Sheikh Central Park, as part of Dr. Yasmien's visit to the city to participate in a variety of events highlighting achievements of the post-Climate Conference 27. The Minister commended the development work of Central Park under the Cooperation Protocol signed with the South Sinai Governorate as part of the plan to transform Sharm into a sustainable green city, in coordination with stakeholders and in support of national efforts to protect the environment and natural resources and reduce the impacts of climate change to achieve sustainable development goals<sup>78</sup>.

On the sidelines of the 58th session of the annual meetings of the African Development Bank Group in Sharm El-Sheikh, Yasmine Fouad, Minister of Environment, participated in the session "Mobilizing Mixed or (Blended) Finance to Facilitate Green Transformation in Emerging Economies" within the framework of the state's efforts to address climate change, which reflects its ambitious contribution and commitment to achieving the goals. The session was held on the sidelines of the 58th session of the annual meetings of the African Development Bank Group hosted by Egypt, in Sharm El-Sheikh

<sup>77</sup> President El-Sisi exchanges visions with the President of the Comoros on African issues, youm7, <http://bitly.ws/lzpr>.

<sup>78</sup> Environment Minister visits Sharm El-Sheikh, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HT9R>

from May 22-26, 2023. Dr. Yasmine explained that the efforts that were made to address included targeted efforts to mitigate climate change in the lead of these efforts was the re-formation of the National Council for Climate Change<sup>79</sup>.

Within the framework of cooperation between the Ministry of Environment and the National Authority for Remote Sensing, a forum was organized entitled "The Role of Remote Sensing in Monitoring the Protection of Environmental Systems and Supporting Environmental and Development Decision Making". The forum included shedding light on the use of remote sensing techniques in monitoring and protecting coastal ecosystems and the risks of climate change and land-level rise, in addition to the role of remote sensing applications and techniques in monitoring the deterioration of the urban environment of cities, and tracking soil pollution using these techniques, as well as clarifying the role of remote sensing in monitoring, following up and confronting natural hazards in light of the development of human activities using modern sensors and technologies and geospatial in monitoring air pollution and giving an overview of the climate station and the most prominent effects of climate change<sup>80</sup>.

Dr. Mustafa Murad, head of the environmental quality sector at the Ministry of Environment, stressed the importance of the forum in defining remote sensing applications, particularly in terms of using available data and adopting a framework of monitoring, control, follow-up, and appropriate environmental management practices consistent with the Ministry's guidelines and resources. He also explained that the forum will be the beginning of joint cooperation between the Ministry and the Authority at the level of awareness, training and information transfer<sup>81</sup>.

In the context of discussing ways of bilateral cooperation in the field of environment and capacity-building with African countries, the Egyptian Minister of Environment, Mrs. Yasmine Fouad, and the Somali Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Dr. Khadija Al-Makhzoumi, met to discuss ways of future cooperation between the two countries and the signing of a joint executive program, and cooperation enhance environmental capacity-building for the Somali side. Mrs. Yasmine expressed her happiness in cooperating with the Somali side in promoting the national file for the environment and building the capacities required to support environmental work in

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<sup>79</sup> The Minister of Environment participates in the session on mobilizing blended financing to achieve the most dangerous transformation, Minister of Environment, Facebook <http://bitly.ws/HTgj>

<sup>80</sup> Cooperation between the Ministry of Environment and the National Authority for Remote Sensing, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HTnd>

<sup>81</sup> Ibid

Somalia, which comes within the framework of Egypt's keenness to enhance efforts to preserve the environment and climate and preserve natural resources.

The two parties exchanged views on the recent progress of the executive program 2023-2025 of the memorandum of Understanding, which was signed between the two nations in 2015, for cooperation in a number of fields, including environmental monitoring, environmental assessment of projects, integrated management of coastal zones, climate change, training and capacity building<sup>82</sup>.

Within the framework of the President's initiative to plant 100 million trees, the Minister of Environment reviewed a report on the ministry's efforts to implement the presidential initiative and afforestation activities at the level of the governorates of the Republic during the year 2022, and the implementation of this initiative will continue over 7 years, which will have a great impact on dealing with the climate change. Where the person's share of green space will be doubled, in addition to absorbing pollutants, sequestering fumes and dust, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The first year of the initiative involved the planting of approximately 1.3 million trees throughout the Republic as part of an initiative (Haya Karima) A number of public schools, universities, institutes, mosques, churches, neighborhoods, and civil associations nationwide, as well as the most polluted areas in Helwan, Al-Tebbin, Tora and Al-Masara, with a number of not less than 550 thousand trees, in addition to planting the main roads (the ring road - Wadi Al-Alamein Wadi Al-Natrun road with a length of 20 km) and others in coordination With the Public Authority for Roads and Bridges, with 100,000 trees and seedlings, and participating with civil society organizations in planting about 150,000 trees in the governorates of the Republic.

The minister made it clear that these efforts come within the framework of the state's keenness to deal with the climate file sustainably, as coordination is taking place with civil society organizations in various governorates of the Republic to implement the annual reforestation program for schools, universities, private institutes, neighborhoods, and around mosques, churches, and youth centers.

## 2. Algeria

The main efforts of the Algerian environmental sector in the context of strengthening resilience to climate-related hazards are:

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<sup>82</sup> The Egyptian Minister of Environment meets her Somali counterpart to discuss cooperation, Ministry of Environment, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/HTpb>

Participation of Algeria's Minister of Environment and Renewable Energies Fazia Dahlab - in the opening of the 25th International Exhibition of Building, Building Materials, and Public Works (Batimatec 2023), which takes place on 7 May within a ministerial delegation and foreign ambassadors- at the invitation of The Minister of Housing and Urbanism, Mohamed Tarek Belaribi. The Minister's participation comes as an expression of her support for the work of the edition, which is increasingly concerned with the environment, where this type of edition takes into account the sustainable and environmentally responsible use of materials, such as the use of insulation materials that reduce energy consumption to significantly enhance the response to climate challenges and avoid their negative effects.<sup>83</sup>

## **b) Arab Gulf States:**

### **1. Bahrain**

Within the framework of the efforts taken by Bahrain in the field of combating and addressing the dangers of climate change, Bahrain is looking to leverage the experience of the UAE in the field of climate. The Minister of Oil and Environment, Dr. Mohammed Bin Mubarak, attended the UAE Climate Tech forum in Abu Dhabi on the thirteenth of May. During the event, he discussed the supportive role that the neighboring UAE plays in promoting modern technology for carbon removal methods and building the economy and green industries, through the various environmental and climate programs and initiatives launched by Abu Dhabi in the Year of Sustainability.<sup>84</sup>

The minister also praised the level of professionalism to which the UAE is accustomed in organizing major conferences and events, especially programs and initiatives concerned with preserving the environment, confronting climate change, shifting to clean energy and investing in renewable energy. He emphasized the importance of the Kingdom of Bahrain continues to strengthen environmental and climate cooperation efforts to benefit both countries of the region and the world while achieving sustainable development objectives.<sup>85</sup>

### **3. Sultanate of Oman**

Oman's latest efforts in improving its resilience towards climate hazards in May included a workshop organized by the Environment Authority on the "Green Alliance to Achieve

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<sup>83</sup> Participation of the Minister of Environment and Renewable Energies in the opening of a new edition, Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energies, May 7, <http://bitly.ws/HUcQ>

<sup>84</sup> Bahrain's Minister of Oil and Environment attends the Climate Technology Forum, Ministry of Environment and Oil, <http://bitly.ws/HYsq>

<sup>85</sup> Ibid

Carbon Neutrality by 2050." The workshop was conducted in partnership with OQ Company and the Oman Energy Association (OPAL) and was attended by experts from public and private institutions and companies<sup>86</sup>.

The workshop reviewed the latest advancements regarding innovative solutions aimed at bringing Oman closer to the Carbon Neutrality Line and benefiting from the positive effects of this on the climate file. The initiative covers both regional and global best practices, outlining ways to implement strategies to achieve desired goals. It also includes discussions on the scope of work, Governance, and implementation mechanisms, as well as the roadmap for future initiatives<sup>87</sup>.

In the framework of increasing its ability to withstand the dangers of climate, the Environment Department in North Al Batinah Governorate, within the work program of the voluntary environment ambassadors' team, organized the "Spreading the Green Belt" initiative of the Environment Department in the governorate, which is a campaign to cultivate large areas in mosques in various locations in the governorate. Which began with planting 150 saplings of ornamental trees and shade trees at Al Rayyan Mosque in the Wilayat of Sohar. This campaign is a response to the Environment Agency's desire to safeguard and sustain vegetation and protect against desertification and land degradation, all of which are anticipated to bolster the country's resilience against climate hazards and as a part of the initiative to plant one million trees. The initiatives to support agriculture are crucial for protecting it against the impact of climate change and enabling it to thrive despite drought and other challenges<sup>88</sup>.

#### 4. UAE

The efforts of the Ministry of Climate Change and Energy in the UAE during May strongly supported the path of enhancing resilience in the face of climate-related risks, most notably:

The participation of Her Excellency Maryam bint Muhammad Al Muhairi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment - during her recent visit to the American capital to attend the "Agricultural Innovation for Climate", which lasted for three days - in a series of meetings, bilateral meetings and discussion sessions that were organized in cooperation between the Ministry of Climate Change and the Environment and the UAE Embassy in Washington, in the presence of His Excellency Youssef Al Otaiba, the UAE Ambassador.

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<sup>86</sup> Launching a workshop on the Green Living Initiative, Environment Agency, Sultanate of Oman, <http://bitly.ws/l2DP>

<sup>87</sup> Ibid

<sup>88</sup> A new campaign to plant mosques, Environment Agency - Sultanate of Oman, <http://bitly.ws/l2F7>

The meetings highlighted the importance of strengthening UAE-American relations and expanding ways of cooperation in investment and the field of food security and agricultural innovation. They also discussed the most prominent solutions and paths to enhance the ability to address climate change, and other vital cooperation files between the two countries<sup>89</sup>.

As part of the country's efforts to enhance its flexibility and ability to address the risks resulting from climate change, a study conducted by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment in the power generation sector, the results which were revealed on May 24, indicated a significant drop of 20 % in power generation's nitrogen oxide emissions in the UAE. These outcomes highlight the UAE's dedication to reducing harmful emissions, demonstrating its preparation for hosting the Conference of the Parties (COP28). This study comes within the objectives of the National Air Quality Agenda 2031 and the objectives of the UAE Climate Neutrality Strategy 2050<sup>90</sup>.

In reviewing the Ministry's efforts to enhance its resilience and capacity to address the risks of climate change the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, in collaboration with the World Green Growth Institute and Zayed University, organized an introductory workshop on the climate change adaptation plan in the UAE on May 24. Which lasted for two days, it discussed key gaps and challenges in the plan development process and gender equality considerations, as well as the stakeholders were also involved in climate change adoption planning. Its objective was to promote the UAE's pioneering work in climate change adoption to the world during COP28<sup>91</sup>.

## 5. Yemen

The state of Yemen is currently facing political and security distress. Despite this, it is trying to pay attention to the climatic conditions as it affects Yemeni society significantly. The state's approach to combating climate change dangers involves significant efforts that are most prominent: -

The meeting of the Minister of Water and Environment, Eng. Tawfiq Al-Sharjabi, on the 15th of May, in the interim capital, Aden, with the coordinating officer of the Yemen International Partners Group, Marcella Mazuerk, in the presence of representatives of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture

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<sup>89</sup> UAE Minister of Climate Attending Agricultural Climate Innovation Summit, Facebook, <http://bitly.ws/l5Bs>

<sup>90</sup> A study reveals a decrease in nitrogen oxide emissions in the UAE, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, <http://bitly.ws/l5lY>

<sup>91</sup> An introductory workshop for the climate change adaptation plan, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, <http://bitly.ws/l5SX>

Organization of the United Nations (FAO), to discuss interventions Donors in the water and environmental sanitation sector and the climatic challenges facing Yemen, in order to better direct efforts to combat and address climate change. Al-Sharjabi stressed the importance of joint coordination between the government and donors to identify urgent needs and the need to move from the emergency to the construction and development stage. The Coordinating Officer of Yemen's International Partners Group emphasized the role of the Ministry of Water and Environment in the joint coordination process. She indicated that a series of projects were being worked on with the Ministry's sectors<sup>92</sup>.

Additionally, the meeting of the Minister of Water and Environment Al-Sharjabi, on May 30, with the Director of the Office of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Aden “FAO” Dr. Walid Saleh, and both of them discussed ways of cooperation and coordination between the ministry and the organization in the context of addressing climate changes and taking the necessary measures to ensure flexibility and resilience to face risks<sup>93</sup>. The meeting included a discussion of a number of topics related to the implementation of water and environmental projects, and the procedures and steps involved in implementing the Livelihoods Project on Natural Reserves, which covers three natural reserves, namely Socotra, Hawf, and Atma, amounting to \$9 million, funded by the Global Environment Facility<sup>94</sup>.

The Minister of Water and Environment also affirmed the Ministry's keenness to ensure that international interventions include long-term projects of a sustainable development nature that serves society, noting the need to increase the level of coordination between the Ministry and the Organization and to act in accordance with the priority plan of needs required when implementing various projects, both environmental and climatic<sup>95</sup>.

## 6. Sultanate of Oman

Within the framework of the measures taken by the Sultanate to enhance its resilience and the country's ability to deal with the risks resulting from climate change, the Environment Department in the Governorate of South Al Batinah completed on May 3 the process of cultivating Maswara plant propagation in the Al-Iraqi area in the Wilayah

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<sup>92</sup> Minister Al-Sharjabi discusses with the Yemen Partners Group donor interventions in the water sector, Ministry of Water and Environment, <https://mwe-ye.org/?p=1019>

<sup>93</sup> Ibid

<sup>94</sup> Minister Al-Sharjabi discusses cooperation and coordination between the Ministry and the organization with the Director of the FAO Office in Aden, Ministry of Water and Environment, <https://mwe-ye.org/?p=1051>

<sup>95</sup> Ibid

of Rustaq, where 500 seedlings of Omani trees were planted. Previously, 2,000 seedlings were planted, as part of the national initiative to plant 10 million trees<sup>96</sup>.

On May 6, the Environment Department in the Al Sharqiyah South Governorate - Al Sulayyil Natural Park - organized a campaign to plant 1,700 seedlings and seeds on the banks of water ponds and streams of valleys that were formed and flowed after the recent rains in the governorate. The campaign comes within the national initiative to plant 10 million trees, which is considered one of the most important and prominent initiatives that will help increase the green cover on Omani lands and will positively affect lowering temperatures and combating the climate crisis in the country<sup>97</sup>.

### c) Levant Countries:

#### 1. Iraq

Iraq is one of the countries most affected by the negative repercussions of climate change which is clearly reflected in deteriorating environmental conditions. However, the state's invitation to attend COP28, which will be held at the Expo City, Dubai, motivates the country to work to enhance its ability to confront climate hazards. Iraqi Minister of Environment, Nizar Amidi, announced that the country has taken a set of measures aimed at enhancing resilience in the face of climate-related threats. These measures confirm the country's commitment to the provisions of the Paris Agreement and the government's intention to create a stable environment conducive for internal and external investment<sup>98</sup>.

Amidi stated that the government has started taking quick actions to address climate challenges and complete projects that confirm Iraq's commitment to Paris Agreement and its nationally determined contributions. In addition, the Iraqi Minister of Environment received the Emirati ambassador in Baghdad, Salem Issa, and his accompanying delegation in a meeting in which they discussed the environmental challenges that the country faces due to the climate crisis. They also discussed ways of cooperation and strengthening partnerships in various fields between the two countries. The Emirati ambassador revealed his country's full support for Iraqi climate projects. He also referred to coordinating technical and negotiating visits to exchange experiences before the climate conference, in which Iraq will participate<sup>99</sup>.

<sup>96</sup> Continuing efforts to cultivate Maswara plant propagation, Environment Agency, Sultanate of Oman <http://bitly.ws/l2zF>

<sup>97</sup> Campaign to plant 1,700 trees, Environment Agency, Sultanate of Oman.

<sup>98</sup> معالجة سريعة لمواجهة التحديات المناخية، اخبار البيئة، العراق <http://bitly.ws/HYzh>

<sup>99</sup> المرجع السابق



## 2. Jordan

Within the framework of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's orientation to take a set of measures aimed at improving the ability to respond and confront the dangers of climate change, these efforts were represented in the:

The Jordan Environment Fund (JEF) and the Public Security Directorate (Directorate of Civil Defense) signed a cooperation agreement on May 3rd. The partnership aimed to combat forest fires and weeds that negatively affect the exacerbation of the climate change crisis at the national and global levels and to provide the devices and equipment necessary for achieving this purpose. The Minister of Environment, Dr. Muawiyah Al-Radaydah, stressed that this agreement is a continuation of the efforts made by the two sides to preserve the forest wealth and vegetation cover in the Kingdom.<sup>100</sup>

Under this Agreement, the JEF will allocate an amount of funds to procure pieces of equipment and mechanisms necessary for civil defense cadres, to help them reach hardly-accessible areas by traditional means and mechanisms, and control fire-affected areas quickly. The firefighting and response plan is based on two interrelated tracks; the first track is the rapid response, which requires meeting the needs of civil defense when a fire occurs to extinguish it as soon as possible; whereas the other track is a long-term one, which depends on rehabilitating forest-neighboring areas to defend them, because they constitute a sustainable source of development and employment of the local community.<sup>101</sup>

In addition, Jordan strengthened partnerships with active partners in facing the challenges resulting from climate change. The Jordanian Minister of Environment, Dr. Muawiya Al-Radaida, met with the Emirati Ambassador to the Kingdom, His Excellency Sheikh Khalifa bin Mohammed bin Khaled Al Nahyan. During the meeting, they discussed the bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries and means of enhancing joint cooperation, specifically with regard to environment-related issues.<sup>102</sup>

During the meeting, Minister Al-Radaida reviewed the most important achievements made by the Jordanian state, the challenges it faces in the field of environmental protection, and the necessary measures to confront climate challenges, which have become a real threat to the global system. Moreover, he highlighted Jordan's active

<sup>100</sup> <https://shorturl.at/uA016> ووزارة البيئة ومديرية الأمن العام/ مديرية الدفاع المدني...يوقعان اتفاقية تعاون مشترك، وزارة البيئة الاردنية،

<sup>101</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>102</sup> <http://bitly.ws/HX16> ووزير البيئة...يلتقي السفير الإماراتي لدى المملكة، وزارة البيئة الاردنية،

participation in international conferences on climate change, including the Sharm El-Sheikh conference, in addition to the Climate/Refugee Nexus Initiative.<sup>103</sup>

Sheikh Khalifa Al Nahyan stressed the depth of the relations between the two brotherly countries, explaining the importance of enhancing cooperation and coordination at all levels, specifically in environmental protection and joint action to confront climate challenges. He also praised the Jordanian role in this field and the measures it took and its commitment to its international commitments towards all environmental issues, which requires support for those steps at the COP-28 summit, while stressing the importance of the Jordanian participation in the upcoming climate conference and Jordan's continued support for all steps taken by the United Arab Emirates to make the activities of this summit a success.<sup>104</sup>

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan cooperated at the Arab level and expanded cooperation to include the global scale. Jordanian Minister of Environment Muawiya Al-Radaydah met with the Ambassador of the People's China to the Kingdom, Mr. Chen Zhaondong, on the fifth of May, and both two sides discussed bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to enhance cooperation, specifically concerning environmental issues and ways to confront climate challenges. Minister Radaydah presented to the Chinese ambassador the most important achievements of the Jordanian state, the challenges it faces in environmental protection, and the necessary measures to face climate challenges, which have become a real threat to the global environmental system<sup>105</sup>.

## **E. East of Africa**

### **1. Somalia**

Somalia is considered one of the countries most affected by climate change, as the country has extreme climatic phenomena. After a long period of drought that forced the population to live in famine, Somalia was exposed during the last period to severe rains that caused floods and prompted more than 400,000 citizens to flee to preserve their lives. The Somali government has cooperated with the United Nations to take measures aimed at combat climate change effects.<sup>106</sup>

The United Nations, in cooperation with the government, conducted a rapid needs assessment in addition to implementing a national flood response plan. The flood

<sup>103</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>104</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>105</sup> <http://bitly.ws/HYqg> وزير البيئة... يلتقي سفير الصين الشعبية لدى المملكة، وزارة البيئة الاردنية،

<sup>106</sup> <http://bitly.ws/l34V> الفيضانات تؤثر على ٤٦٠ ألف شخص في الصومال، اخبار الامم المتحدة،

preparedness and response plan included providing funding of \$2.6 billion, of which only 25% has been reached so far.<sup>107</sup>

One of the UN agencies' most important efforts to respond to the threat was the FAO and WFP sending 5,000 early warning text messages to farmers across the state. FAO and its partners also provided sandbags, shovels, and other supplies to help clean up the drains and mitigate the effects of the floods. It is scheduled that a group of boats will be sent to the people in the flooded areas by the World Food Program.<sup>108</sup>

<b>Target 3</b>	<b>Improving education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change</b>
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**A. North Africa:**

**1. Egypt**

Within the framework of the national plan to reduce carbon emissions to achieve Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the Ministry of Environment, in cooperation with the Egyptian-German Committee for Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Environmental Protection (JCEE), held a workshop entitled (Carbon Markets and Mechanisms of Article VI of the Paris Climate Agreement). The workshop aimed to build the capacities of private sector companies operating in all sectors that cause greenhouse gas emissions, to educate these companies on the tools to reduce emissions and the considerations required to participate in carbon markets; it also aimed to encourage them to take further measures to reduce emissions, That is within the framework of the directives of Dr. Yasmine Fouad, Minister of Environment, to inform the private sector of the considerations of participating in voluntary carbon markets.<sup>109</sup>

The workshop was attended by many companies working in the sectors of renewable energy, oil and gas, transportation, infrastructure, cement industries, fertilizers, iron and steel, spinning and weaving, metal industries, food industries, the Suez Canal Economic Zone and many representatives of government agencies and emerging companies in all interested parties carbon markets to consider appropriate models to replicate and build upon.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>107</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>108</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>109</sup> عقد ورشة اسواق الكربون وآليات التعامل مع التغيرات المناخية، وزيرة البيئة، فيسبوك، <http://bitly.ws/HTtL>

<sup>110</sup> المرجع السابق

The workshop also dealt with the presentation of Egypt's efforts to prepare to enter the market for issuing and trading carbon certificates after it was announced that the launch of the first voluntary market for issuing and trading carbon certificates in Egypt and Africa during the activities of Climate Conference 27 as a platform to help economic entities operating in various activities in Egypt and Africa to enter into emissions reduction activities carbonaceous. In addition, Egypt's efforts in the climate file have been presented at the international level for many years. The Prime Minister chaired the formation of the National Council for Climate Change, and the members are the relevant ministries, in addition to preparing the National Climate Change Strategy 2050 and the updated National Contributions Plan 2030.<sup>111</sup>

Dr. Ali Abu Sunna, CEO of the Environmental Affairs Agency, participated in the "Global Green Growth" forum held in Korea, organized by the Korean Ministry of Environment, under the auspices and presence of the Korean Prime Minister, with representatives of more than 80 countries attended the forum to strengthen partnerships and deepen aspects of cooperation in the field of environment between the Korean government and the participating countries, as well as encourage the participation of the private sector and Korean companies in investment in the environmental and climate projects sector<sup>112</sup>.

During May, Egypt celebrated the International Day for Biological Diversity 2023 on social media platforms under the slogan "From agreement to action: rebuilding biodiversity". The Ministry of Environment celebrated through social media platforms by presenting a number of videos and notices to raise awareness of biodiversity and its importance to the environment, people, and the role of the individual and Society to participate in protecting and preserving these natural resources.<sup>113</sup>

Dr. Yasmine Fouad, Minister of the Environment, explained that this year's celebration coincides with a distinguished year of preserving biological diversity due to the adoption of the "Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework". It is a historic agreement signed in December 2022 and sets concrete goals and measures to stop the loss of nature and recover from it by 2050. Fouad stressed the importance of focusing on returning to harmony with nature as the real opportunity to protect humans and the planet, highlighting the importance of biodiversity and protecting it from the effects of climate change,

<sup>111</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>112</sup> <http://bitly.ws/HlRo> مشاركة الرئيس التنفيذي لجهاز شئون البيئة في منتدى النمو الأخضر العالمي، وزارة البيئة، فيسبوك،

<sup>113</sup> <http://bitly.ws/HTyL> مصر تحتفل بإحياء اليوم العالمي للتنوع البيولوجي، وزارة البيئة، فيسبوك،

especially in light of the successes achieved by Egypt in the twenty-seventh session of the Climate Conference.<sup>114</sup>

Within the framework of supporting youth participation, the Minister of Environment, Dr. Yasmine Fouad, met with a group of students from the Information Systems Division at the Modern Academy of Computer Science and Management Technology in Maadi, who formed the graduation project team "Together ... to combat climate change" which won second place in the global competition organized by (Google) The American University in Cairo building. The meeting was attended by Ms. Nahla Al-Naqeeb, Head of the Central Administration for Environmental Information and Awareness, Dr. Rehab Youssef, Director General of Environmental Awareness at the Ministry, Prof. Mahmoud El-Sayed Jadallah, Dean of the Academy, and Dr. Hisham Mahmoud, the team supervisor, at the headquarters of the Ministry of Environment in the New Administrative Capital.<sup>115</sup>

Dr. Yasmine Fouad explained that the graduation project includes presenting a website containing a three-dimensional simulation model that simulates the global problems of environmental pollution at the level of each country, providing environmentally friendly products for marketing at competitive prices, and referring to global environmental events from international conferences such as the 27th Climate Change Conference in Sharm. Sheikh and others, the most important pioneers in environmental work, linked all of this to an Android mobile application in several languages that is available to all individuals and different age groups.<sup>116</sup>

During her meeting with the project team, Fouad stated that the ministry is ready to provide all aspects of support and technical information to develop the student's graduation project and to discuss the possibility of participating in the project and presenting it through environmental events and conferences. The Ministry always seeks to benefit from environmental research and ideas and to encourage youth graduation projects to raise awareness of environmental issues and combat climate change, in line with the efforts of the Egyptian state in dealing with the problem of climate change.<sup>117</sup>

## 2. Tunisia

Within the framework of strengthening individual and institutional capacities and raising awareness of climate issues, the Ministry of Environment held, on May 2, the third

<sup>114</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>115</sup> <http://bitly.ws/HTzY> وزيرة البيئة تلتقي بفريق مشروع تخرج معاً لمكافحة التغير المناخي، وزارة البيئة، فيسبوك،

<sup>116</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>117</sup> المرجع السابق

meeting of the Leadership Committee of the project “Strengthening Institutional Capacity to Implement Nationally Determined Contributions in Tunisia” in the presence of members of the Leadership Committee and representatives of ministries and national institutions active in the field of climate change. To follow up on the progress of the project components, facilitate its implementation, and consult on the next steps.<sup>118</sup>

This meeting is part of the project "Strengthening Institutional Capacity for the Implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions in Tunisia" NDC-IKI "funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economics and Climate Protection (BMWK) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI) and implemented in partnership between the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Ministry of the Environment (MEnv) and the National Agency for Energy Control (ANME).<sup>119</sup>

## **B. Arabian Gulf:**

### **1- Saudi Arabia**

The most important efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in raising individual and institutional capacities and raising awareness were in honoring the Ministry of Environment, in cooperation with the General Directorate of Prisons, for many inmates of reformatories in Riyadh and Jeddah for their participation in a protected cultivation training program. This course is part of the Ministry's community efforts to support and motivate the inmates of the reformatory and train them to acquire various skills in agriculture. It helps them to practice the agricultural profession after leaving the reformatory.<sup>120</sup>

The training program, which lasted for three months, aims to build the capacities of the inmates of the correctional facilities, train them on modern techniques in the field of protected agriculture, and raise awareness and introduce them to how to build and manage greenhouses to overcome difficult climatic conditions, in addition to acquiring the skills of crop cultivation, post-harvest operations, and various selling methods.<sup>121</sup>

### **2- Qatar**

Within the framework of raising institutional and individual efficiency in dealing with climate change, the State of Qatar has tended to raise the efficiency of its climate plans

<sup>118</sup> <http://bitly.ws/l2on>، وزارة البيئة، NDC اجتماع مشروع " تعزيز القدرات المؤسسية لتنفيذ المساهمات المحددة وطنيا في تونس " <sup>118</sup>

المرجع السابق <sup>119</sup>

<sup>120</sup> <https://shorturl.at/hkrRY> وزارة البيئة تكرم نزلاء الاصلاحيات لمشاركتهم في برنامج الزراعة المحمية، وزارة البيئة والمياه والزراعة، <sup>120</sup>

المرجع السابق <sup>121</sup>

through cooperation with a group of partners who will work side by side with the Qatari side on climate issues, the most prominent of which are examples.

President Dr. Mohamed Irfan Ali, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, received His Excellency Sheikh Dr. Faleh bin Nasser Al Thani, Qatari Minister of Environment and Climate Change on May 16, at Irfan's residence in Doha. During the meeting, the Qatari minister discussed cooperation between the two sides, especially in the environment and climate change, and ways to enhance and develop them.<sup>122</sup>

Dr. Faleh bin Nasser Al Thani, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, also met with Mr. Gautam Bhattacharya, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Qatar, and many Swedish businessmen on May 18, in a meeting in which they discussed many issues of common interest and ways to enhance cooperation to advance efforts to develop climate-smart solutions. The meeting was attended by many officials from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and some members of the Swedish Embassy in the State of Qatar.<sup>123</sup>

### 3- Yemen

Within the framework of raising individual and institutional capabilities and raising Yemeni awareness towards climate issues, the Minister of Water and Environment, Engineer Tawfiq Al-Sharjabi, met with the Director of the Office of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Aden “FAO” Dr. Walid Saleh and the two discussed many issues related to the environment and climate, as the Yemeni Minister of Water and Environment reviewed A project to build capacities for climate change, and capacity-building of the authority’s two branches in Hadramout Governorate, the coastal regions (Mukalla) and the valley and desert regions (Saeyun), which will also include the rest of the authority’s branches, estimated at one million dollars, funded by the friendly Kingdom of the Netherlands, and implemented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, which focused Yemen to develop the skills of cadres working in the environmental field in Yemen.<sup>124</sup>

#### d) Levant Countries:

##### 1- Jordan

The most important effort of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in the framework of raising institutional and individual capacities and raising awareness is the launch of the

<sup>122</sup> لقاء بجمع رئيس جمهورية غويانا التعاونية ووزير البيئة القطري، وزارة البيئة والتغير المناخي بدولة قطر، <http://bitly.ws/l2MP>

<sup>123</sup> لقاء بجمع وزير البيئة القطري وسفير مملكة السويد، وزارة البيئة والتغير المناخي القطري، <http://bitly.ws/l2MP>

<sup>124</sup> مرجع سابق، الوزير الشرجي يبحث التعاون والتنسيق بين الوزارة والمنظمة مع مدير مكتب الفاو بعدن



Ministry of Environment training workshop for national ozone units, where the Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment, Dr. Muhammad Khashashneh, and the regional coordinator of the Montreal Protocol in West Asia, Eng. Khaled Al-Kalali inaugurated the training workshop for the national ozone units, which It is organized by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Compliance Assistance Team (CAP) of the Montreal Protocol in Western Asia in the capital, Amman, from 21-23 May 2023.<sup>125</sup>

The workshop aimed to build and enhance the capabilities of the new employees working in these units, in addition to providing them with the information, knowledge, techniques, and contacts necessary to manage the approved projects and ensure the effectiveness of the work of the unit and its contribution to achieving the obligations of countries within the framework of the Montreal Protocol and its amendments. In addition to providing an opportunity to exchange experiences between the participants and to enhance communication and cooperation between the national ozone units in the region, these workshops come within the framework of compliance with the mechanisms and directives of the Montreal Protocol to protect the ozone layer and its direct effects closely related to the climate changes that the world is currently witnessing<sup>126</sup>.

### **Axis III:**

#### **Efforts of the League of Arab States in Combating Climate Change during May**

The most important effort of the League of Arab States in the climate file during May in the meeting of the Arab team to follow up on the international environmental agreements concerned with desertification and biological diversity in meeting No. 21 held by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Meteorology and the Technical Secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs, during the period 14-17 May 2023 at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the University.<sup>127</sup>

This meeting is in implementation of the decision issued by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs, under the guidance of Ambassador Dr. Ali bin Ibrahim Al-Maliki, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Economic Affairs Sector. The meeting discussed many items, the most important of which is the follow-up to the conferences of the parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and Combating Desertification, which were held during the year 2022, and preparation

<sup>125</sup> <http://bitly.ws/HXT5> بدء ورشة العمل التدريبية لوحدة الأوزون الوطنية، وزارة البيئة،

<sup>126</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>127</sup> <http://bitly.ws/l8t7> اجتماع الفريق العربي للاتفاقات البيئية الدولية المعنية والتصحر والتنوع البيولوجي، الاخبار المسائت،





for the next session of those conferences, especially since the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will host the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which is scheduled to be held during period 2- 12/13/2024.<sup>128</sup>

On the sidelines of the meeting, a series of workshops will be held, on top of which will be a training workshop for negotiators of the desertification and biological diversity conventions in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme.<sup>129</sup>

Within the framework of appreciating the efforts working in the field of sustainable development and climate change, the meeting of the League of Arab States in Jeddah included a great appreciation of the efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in supporting the climate file in the Arab region, within the framework of its work in the field of sustainable development in its cultural, environmental, social and economic dimensions, and its work during The year of the Kingdom's presidency of the Arab Summit (32) on many initiatives that would contribute to advancing joint Arab action in the cultural, economic, social and environmental fields, the most important of which is the Culture and Green Future initiative, which aims to raise the level of commitment of the cultural sector in Arab countries towards the goals of sustainable development and climate change, and the development of cultural policies related to sustainability.

#### Axis IV

### Analysis of the Reality of Climate Action in the Arab Region

#### What Does the Data Indicate?

Data extracted from the May Climate Observatory indicate a set of points, mainly:

- **The environmental file in general and the climate file in particular are not at the top of the priorities of the work agenda for a number of Arab countries that are witnessing conflicts and unstable security conditions**, as attention to political and security issues and files has taken over the list of priorities in countries such as Sudan, which is witnessing a vital conflict at the top of its activity.
- **Security and political instability is a major common feature** in a number of African countries that have a weak presence in the climate action field, including countries such as Somalia, Mauritania, and Iraq, despite being a group of countries most affected by climate change.

<sup>128</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>129</sup> المرجع السابق



- The reality of the Israeli occupation reveals **the extent of the strength and activity of the Palestinian Environmental Authority**. Despite obstacles posed by the occupying authorities towards environmental initiatives, Palestine's environmental sector remains active and committed to exerting diverse efforts towards climate action.
- **Arab partnerships dominate the reality of climate efforts** during May, as the Egyptian leadership revealed its intention to transfer its experience in the presidency of the African Union to the State of the Comoros and support its climate efforts. At the same time, the United Arab Emirates extended an invitation to the State of Iraq to attend the COP28 conference, while emphasizing the organization of coordination visits and training courses to exchange experiences before the climate conference.
- Despite the fact that Libya is one of the most prominent Arab countries that suffers from the desertification crisis and the deterioration of agricultural lands significantly, while it intersects with drought and the march towards water and food insecurity, all of which are crises that are directly linked to the negative effects resulting from climate change, Libya's efforts towards addressing the crises are deemed too slow and insufficient, especially considering the direct relationship between these issues and the adverse impacts of climate change. One of the shortcomings that Libya faces in the field of climate is the lack of announcing a national climate strategy in which environmental and climatic plans and directions for Libya are disclosed, which leaves the climate issue vulnerable to proceeding according to temporary and urgent plans that actors in the environmental sector are working on in the absence of plans a long-term solution to the country's climatic problems.
- It is remarkable to note the absence of Arab cooperation in the issue of desertification in particular, as it is one of the issues that dominate the reality of a number of Arab countries such as Iraq, Mauritania, Yemen, and Libya. However, the environmental sectors in the four countries have not yet come up with a collective project aimed at joint work on discussing ways of cooperation and strengthening work on that issue.
- The practical environment for the climate action sector in the Arab countries expands and tends to benefit in a real way from young experiences and active capabilities for youth projects, visions and solutions to climate crises in the Arab region. Which takes place within the framework of discussing climate issues and exchanging experiences and opinions on solutions.
- After years of closing the public sphere to women, Arab countries begin to integrate women strongly into sustainable work projects and solutions to crises related to climate change. The UAE Undersecretary for Climate Change and Environment and Assistant to



the Food Diversity Sector of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, His Excellency Mohammed Musa Al-Amiri, participated in a session Titled "Breaking Barriers: Inspiring Visions of Pioneering Women in the Field of Science," stressing the importance of the leadership role of women in accelerating climate action, in addition to that, women in the current scene dominate the position of minister in the majority of Arab ministries of environment.

## Recommendations:

**First:** Within the framework of accelerating the pace of work to solve the Arab desertification disaster, Maat recommends that the governments of countries (Iraq, Mauritania, Yemen, Libya) meet together under the framework of the League of Arab States to discuss ways to enhance cooperation and joint action to solve the desertification crisis with similar conditions in the four countries, in addition to raise international capabilities to solve the problem.

**Second:** Within the framework of large-scale work to solve the desertification crisis in Libya, Maat recommends the Libyan government to start work on issuing a national strategy to combat desertification, including diversifying energy sources in the country, and increasing vegetation cover on Libyan lands, which will represent the first building block for combating climate warming and drought, which leads to desertification.

**Third:** In the context of exchanging experiences between Arab countries that are least active in the framework of climate action, Maat recommends that the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment in the United Arab Emirates organize a number of workshops and panel discussions to exchange experiences between Arab ministries of environment and each other to support the efforts of the ministries that are least active in the framework of a conference Climate Parties XXVIII (COP28).

**Fourth:** Regarding the rapidly exacerbating desertification crisis afflicting the State of Libya, Maat recommends that the Libyan Ministry of Environment and the Sub-Committee on the Climate Framework Agreement quickly announce a national strategy for climate action in a way that supports and organizes Libyan efforts to deal with various climate crises.

**Fifth:** In light of the poor readiness and capabilities to deal with climate crises in countries such as Somalia and Yemen, Maat recommends the ministries of climate in the two countries to establish local mechanisms for cooperation with United Nations bodies, led by the UN Development Program to support the implementation of a greater range of



climate development projects in the international community and to provide support to troubled State bodies in light of the instability of the situation in the two countries.

**Sixth:** Maat encourages the efforts of the Arab League regarding the strategy of the Arab countries to obtain and mobilize financing for climate action (2022-2030) and recommends that the Arab League quickly launch this Arab strategy and put it into force as soon as possible.

**Seventh:** Arab days and weeks are of great importance to Arab governments, and in light of that importance, Maat reaffirms its recommendation to the League of Arab States to launch an Arab week to address climate change to encourage Arab countries and their governments to launch and develop their policies related to climate action and follow up on the implementation of international agreements on climatic change.