



## Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

**The 5<sup>th</sup> ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC) Technical Committee Meeting (Expert Group Meeting)**  
Beirut, 23-24 May 2017

### AGENDA

#### Day 1: 23 May 2017

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| 08:30 – 09:00 | <b>Registration</b>  |
| 09:00 – 09:30 | <b>Welcome and opening statement</b><br>TBC,<br><b>Tour de table</b>   |
| 09:30 – 10:00 | <b>Mandate of the Technical Committee (TC) and TC Chairperson Election</b><br>Nael Al Mulki, National Officer, ESCWA Technology Centre   |
| 10:00 – 10:45 | <b>Overview of ETC Activities from 2011 through 2017</b> , Fouad Mrad, Executive Director<br>ESCWA Technology Centre   |
| 10:45 – 11:15 | <b>Coffee Break</b>  |
| 11:15 – 13:00 | <b><u>Session 1: What are the priorities for National Technology Transfer Systems?</u></b><br><b>Moderator:</b> Muhamad Saidam, Royal Scientific Society, Jordan<br><b>Main Speaker:</b> Fouad Mrad , Executive Director, ETC<br><b>Panel:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alaa-Eldin Adris – American University of Cairo, Egypt</li> <li>- Mondher Khanfir – Columbus Consulting, Tunis</li> <li>- Hassan Charif – National Council for Scientific Research, Lebanon</li> <li>- Nazar Hassan – UNESCO, Egypt</li> </ul> |

In most Arab countries major efforts have been implemented towards harnessing science and technology for local sustainable development. However, the return has been below expectations, and missing links are blocking the productive system at national levels. The situation is different from one country to another even though we find similarities among clusters of countries. The aim of the session is to identify major gaps and discuss opportunities for bridging these gaps for scaling up the role of STI in facilitating sustainable development.

This session will address the following questions:

- ✓ What are the major hurdles blocking commercialization of research outcomes in Arab countries? (policies, funding, human resources, infrastructure, ...)

- ✓ Where are the relevant legislative gaps and which corrective measures can bring more coherence to the legislative system?
- ✓ How can the private sector be more effectively engaged in local R&D? (university-industry relations, tech transfer offices, incentives, ...)

13:00 – 14:00

**Coffee Break**

14:00 – 15:00

**Session 2: Which Emerging Technologies are Adequate for Sustainable Development in the Arab Countries?**

**Facilitator:** Carol Cherfane, Chief Water Section SDPD, ESCWA

**Main Speaker:** Khaled Saoud – Virginia Commonwealth University, Qatar

**Panel:**

- Awni Ootom - Jordan University for Science and Technology, Jordan
- Latifa A. Alhajji – Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, Kuwait
- Ahmad Al-Busaidi – The Research Council, Oman
- Hanan Malkawi – Royal Scientific Society, Jordan

The emerging technologies have become multidisciplinary by nature addressing effectively challenges in all areas globally. The priorities of sustainable development challenges in the Arab countries offer unique opportunities to leapfrog into applying emerging technologies in the era of open science, education, research and tools. Despite abundance of proven local capacity and open access to knowledge, the challenge remains how to determine the most adequate emerging technologies that can contribute to social wellbeing, economic growth and job creation, while safeguarding the sustainable management of natural resources.

Specifically, this session will address the following questions::

- ✓ How can we accelerate the transformation of experimental research from local labs to local society and economy? (MNC, partnerships, ...)
- ✓ Which ET has been successfully rooted in Arab countries? (Nanotech, biotech, ICT, artificial intelligence, robotics, ...)
- ✓ How can we build critical mass from existing islands of excellence? (knowledge platform, open innovation, co-funding mechanisms,..)

15:00 – 16:00

**Session 3: What is ETC Potential Role in Promoting Green Technologies?**

**Facilitator:** Roula Majdalani, Director SDPD, ESCWA

**Main Speaker:** Nizar Halasah, ESCWA Technology Centre

**Panel:**

- Hosni Ghedira – Masdar Institute, UAE
- Hanadi Awadallah – Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Sudan
- Hakam El Alami – Royal Scientific Society, Jordan
- Fareed Bushehri, UNEP, Bahrain

The concept of green technologies has been widely accepted and promoted globally. However, there is no consensus on the criteria of qualifying technologies as green uniformly. Therefore, in Arab countries there is a need to localize the characteristics of green technologies especially in the region known for water stress, food insecurity, unequal distribution of energy resources, and climate fragility. This session aims to answer the following questions:

- ✓ What are the criteria of green technology in local context? (emissions, efficiency, recycling, consumption patterns, ...)
- ✓ How can green technologies enable the nexus approach towards achieving water, energy, and food security? (tradeoffs vs integrated)
- ✓ How can climate resilient technologies improve the capacity of Arab countries to deliver on their commitments in Paris agreement?

## Day 2: 24 May 2017

09:00 – 10:30

### **Session 4: Where are the Business Opportunities in Solving the Sustainable Development Challenges?**

**Facilitator:** Haidar Fraihat, Director, TDD, ESCWA

**Main Speaker:** George Nasr, ESCWA Consultant

**Panel:**

- Najiba El idrissi – Sidi Mohamed University, Morocco
- Emad Kashgary – Badir Incubator Network, KAUST, Saudi Arabia
- Omar Hamarneh – iPark, Jordan

Local sustainable development needs may offer lucrative business opportunities with wide markets through applying scientific discoveries and innovative technologies. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) highlighted a clear path for deploying science, technology and innovation towards achieving the SDGs. A major track called for promoting entrepreneurship, partnerships with MNC, innovation funds, and business incubators. These elements constitute the core pillars that can scale up innovative ideas and demonstrative research towards Private Purposeful Enterprises. This session will address the following questions:

- ✓ What are the local obstacles in attracting investments for innovation? (regulations, security and stability, culture and confidence, markets, ...)
- ✓ How can regional integration and complementarity support growth in technology startups?
- ✓ What are the lucrative opportunities in meeting sustainable development challenges in Arab countries? (water tech, renewable energy, waste recycling, food, ...)

10:30 – 11:00

### **Coffee Break**

11:00 – 12:30

### **Session 5: General Discussions**

Chairperson of Technical Committee,

**Co Chair:** Ms. Roula Majdalni, Director SDPD, ESCWA

**Facilitator:** Fouad Mrad, Executive Director ETC

This session will distill outcomes from the previous sessions' discussions and offer an open platform for developing proposed forward path for ETC. This concluding session should deliver priority themes for collaborative work among ETC stakeholders in the Arab countries, as well as opportunities for partnerships and resource mobilization.

- **Conclusion and Way forward**