



13-G Bilateral and Multilateral International Cooperation

Introduction

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a growing concern towards environmental preservation and increasing efforts to raise the environmental awareness on the importance of protecting and maintaining natural resources. International conferences were held, in the light of which international and regional conventions and agreements were signed. National legislations were promulgated to reflect such a concern at international, regional and local levels.

Thus, ideas were laid down aiming at planning the main features and certain dimensions for drawing the environmental policy during the coming phase.

By the end of the twenties century and on the threshold of the twenty first century, sayings on unity and cooperation values

have widely prevailed the world. Some analysts have described such sayings collectively as a result of “Globalization”. Despite of the disagreement of some, these sayings are widely exchanged and they even take various political, cultural and economic and other dimensions. Analysts, despite of their different approaches, pointed out that the clear purpose behind such a term viz; globalization is that individual in old eras was not able to live by himself, thus groups were formed. Today, a country cannot live in isolation from the others, concurrently with the communication revolution widely expanded all over the world. To that end, it was necessary to integrate the environmental dimension within this new system and to maintain the pioneering status of the Arab Republic of Egypt whether on the Arab or the developing countries levels.

Illustrating environmental policy in Egypt

is considered to be one of the process through which several dimensions should be observe that serve the development process and assist to undertake actions through a joint system including all bodies and entities concerned. It is essential also to bear in mind the domestic and international dimensions, as well as the identified dimensions for setting the external environmental policy ahead, including:

Egypt's Geography

Egypt occupies a special and distinguished place; it is located in the center of the world and controls the maritime transportation lines especially with the existence of the Suez Canal. On the cultural level, Egypt is one of the countries whose cultural history reflects the subsequent civilizations starting from the pharaonic, Roman and finally the Islamic civilizations. Moreover Egypt is playing a leading role among the Arab nations.

Economic, Social and Political Dimensions

The Economic Dimension

The major objective Egypt is currently seeking embodied in elevating the individual standard of living; decreasing the unemployment rate; and accelerating the development process. These objectives cannot be attained unless through a surge in exports and reduction in imports: a difficult equation which is not easily solved amid the increasing rate of population and resources scarcity. Consequently, Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs endeavors, in coordination with the service and production sectors, to achieve the international environmental standards, hoping to integrate total quality in the Egyptian product enabling it to meet competitiveness in the

world market. The ministry also aims to improve the Egyptian environmental status which actually affects a number of developmental sectors in Egypt, especially the tourist and agricultural sectors, in addition it enhances the performance level for the tourist, health, energy, housing and utilities sectors.

The Social Dimension

Egypt seeks to develop citizens' standard of living; to improve the development process to increase citizens' awareness; and to preserve public health, aiming at reaching all family members in Egypt. Several points have been focused on to develop environmental awareness and to achieve societal effective participation. Great concern was shown towards women and children issues, aiming at attaining thorough coordination with civil society organizations and observing the geographical dimensions.

The Political Dimension

International and political changes impose a new type of political mechanisms to be used; sayings ranging from globalization, small village, one world, and technological and telecommunication revolutions have raised the concern towards developing new tools to strengthen cooperation among countries away from critical political issues. They are established to tackle new subjects, the most important of which are human rights and environment. Diplomacy of environmental action was proposed to develop many collaborative activities with other countries to serve a common aim, namely; environment protection. Water and air constitute a common factor connecting all countries together, benefiting thus from all these activities. It is noteworthy to mention that the Ministry of State for Environ-

mental Affairs has relied on various bases to design the external cooperation policy, including the necessity of observing the regional dimension. The first priority here is to harmonize the international stances with the Arab countries through the Arab Environment Ministers' Council. Belonging to the African cooperation is via the African Environment Ministers' council. Finally there is the coordination at the developing countries level including, G-77 and China; and coordination with the European Union states and the Americas aiming in developing projects.

Egypt's Fulfillment of the International Commitments

Based on Egypt's persistence to fulfill its commitments stated in the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), seeking as well to provide a healthy environment for its citizens based on accomplishing the sustainable development principle, Egypt has joined 55 multilateral environmental agreements since 1933 until now.

During the last decade, increasing awareness of transboundary impact of environmental problems lead to signing a number of international agreements supporting sustainable development. In this respect, Egypt entered a number of international conventions and some regional cooperation agreements in order to face the environmental problems. The Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs and its executive body, in collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs played a vital role in this context, through the coordination of implementing Egypt's obligations.

Egypt participates in a number of regional and international organizations, which require regional and international activities within the environmental field. These ac-

tivities are divided into the following circles:

1. **The Arab Circle:** It is categorized into the Arab League, the Common Arab Committees, the Arab Regional Authorities, the Center for Environment and Development of the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) and the Regional Authority for the Protection of the Environment in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (PERSGA).
2. **The Islamic Circle:** It includes the Islamic G-8 and the Organization Islamic Conference.
3. **The African Circle:** It is divided into North Africa Group, Nile Basin Countries Group and the African Union countries.
4. **Central Asia:** It includes the Eight Russian Commonwealth group and Iran.
5. **South Eastern Asia:** Asian Tiger countries, China, India and Japan.
6. **Latin America States:** The most important of which are Columbia, Argentina, Cuba and Brazil.
7. **The European Circle:** European Union, Poland, Baltic Sea Countries, Slovenia, Bosnia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czech Republic, Albania, Romania, Ukraine, and Croatia.
8. **Mediterranean Circle:** Activities are achieved through the cooperation with the Mediterranean countries within the framework of Barcelona Agreement (1976).
9. **The American Circle:** Activities are undertaken throughout cooperation with the United States of America and Canada.

Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Resolutions

After the Earth Summit held in Rio De Janeiro 1992, the concept of sustainable development appeared emerged widely all over the world. It was agreed to introduce this concept to different fields. After five years, however, it is was obvious that states did not undertake any tangible actions to develop this concept. Accordingly, a grace period of five years was identified for world countries to integrate sustainable development in all fields and to observe its sustainability in various activities until the coming world summit on sustainable development in Johannesburg 2002. Such a summit would aimed at review to what extent these countries fulfilled in the field of sustainable development, relevant achievements and what is required from the international arena to assist other countries to achieve the same results in such a field. Egypt participated in the summit through an official delegation constituted of representatives from different ministries, including the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs. Recommendations approved encompass the necessity of integrating five subjects: water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity within the framework of improving and sustainable actions as a real local response to development in Egypt.

Egypt, meanwhile, exerts various efforts to achieve further sustainable development. Such efforts are shown clearly in many procedures, programs and projects Egypt implemented over a complete era since the Earth Summit in 1992 until now.

The speech delivered by President Hosni Mubarak before the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg

reflects the reality of the Egyptian efforts exerted. Most important among these efforts is laying down a comprehensive program for economic and social reform; combating poverty; expanding social welfare network; providing drinking water, sanitary drainage, and transportation and electricity network; integrating the environmental dimension within the development process; enlarging protectorates; and supporting women's role and effective participation in development plans.

Accordingly, it is clear that Egyptian government deployed many efforts to develop sustainable development in several development sectors, believing in the importance of studying the environmental conditions scientifically and building the capabilities of the new generation of those concerned with the environmental affairs in both Egypt and the Arab world.



Fulfilling the Egyptian Leading Role Obligations towards Protecting African and Arab Environment

Egypt's important regional role in the Arab world and Africa makes it always endeavoring to achieve integration between Arab nations, through establishing bilateral cooperation with most of the Arab countries. Nine memoranda of understanding were signed with different Arab countries, namely: Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria,

Morocco, Syria, Jordan, Yemen and United Arab of Emirates. Aiming at realizing an environmental integration among the Arab countries, Egypt established strengthened bilateral cooperation with donor countries to exchange experts and overcome financing problems, which is considered an essential obstacle before the progress of the developing countries' policies. Memoranda of understanding were concluded, as well, with Romania, China and Italy. Further, a Strategy for Environmental Action with Germany was signed in 2003 for a period of 5-10 years.

- **Following guidance of successful international experiences in the field of environment and natural resources management.**
- **Achieving communication with environmental action organizations at the local, regional and international levels to identity the latest international changes concerning the usage of clean environmental technologies.**
- **Enhancing bilateral liaison between Egypt and other countries through implementing joint environmental projects.**
- **Encouraging foreign investments to contribute in implementing some environmental projects that would achieve concurrently sustainable development.**

At the African level, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has been launched, upon the initiative of the presidents of Egypt, Algeria, South Africa and Senegal, Nigeria in 2001, into which the environmental dimension represents a vital factor.

Implementing Egypt's environmental policy depends on four essential principles, in terms of environmental management and initiatives on environment protection

- Boosting integration capacity of governmental sectors of locally and centrally via different means, depending essentially on cooperation protocols, ministerial committees and joint working groups.
- Enhancing partnership between the private and public sectors. The Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs provides continuous support to the private sector to take part in offering environmental services and encouraging technology transfer; and exchanging experts with the foreign side.
- Establishing partnership with environmental NGOs; challenges facing the civil society organizations to identify and how to overcome them.
- Integrating gender issues in environmental policies and plans in response to establishing the National Council for Woman, under the auspices of Egypt's first lady Mrs. Susan Mubarak along with paying special attention to gender issues related to natural resources and the environmental challenges and applications.

Executive Status of Cooperation with Foreign Countries

First: Cooperation at the Arab Level

1- Arab Environment Ministers' Council

Egypt is a member state of the Arab Environment Ministers' Council, which convenes on an annual basis. The Council consists of 22 Arab countries represented at the cabinet level to discuss environmental joint Arab collaboration among other issues.

Trade and environment issues are often ad-

dressed through the Council's meetings; joint environmental projects and the possibility of funding such projects by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP); partnership created between the Council and the European Union; the Arab Environment Ministers' Council award; and the Arab environment day slogan.

Relationships Development Proposal

It was accustomed for the Arab League to receive and study the agenda; afterwards Egypt's perspectives are presented during the meetings held. During the last period, an initiative for preparing an Egyptian action paper was launched, including:

- Egypt's hosting for the Regional Bank for Plants biological Genes.
- Egypt's hosting for a number of workshops on training Arab personnel to meet Arab nations' obligations set forth in Basel Agreement. Currently, Egyptian action papers and projects for cooperation are in the preparation phase. These projects can start with training concerning protectorates and biodiversity; joint Arab market; and mechanisms of Arab cooperation in the field of inter-trade. Furthermore, Egypt has shown progress in the field of strategic planning, for the Egyptian five-year plan became an example to follow in designing Arab strategic plans.

2- Arab Bilateral Cooperation

Egypt took the initiative to submit and propose bilateral cooperation agreements with the Arab countries and called for the mobilization of common Arab resources to initiate effective collaboration, encouraging in particular the joint Arab environmental investments.

The following is an overview of bilateral cooperation with some Arab countries:

The Egyptian-Syrian Cooperation

The Egyptian-Syrian cooperation is a leading experience, in comparison to the other cooperation projects. This is due to the direct relationships conducted at the Egyptian and Syrian environment ministers' level and the availability of international donors to finance some projects, the most important of which is the Swiss Project for hazardous substances. Syria is assisted by the Egyptian experience in this respect. Moreover, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on environmental preservation and a bilateral cooperation agreement (2002). Lately, the two sides have signed the first executive program for technical cooperation in environmental preservation in December, 2003. The Syrian side called for cooperation in training protectorates Syrian rangers in Egypt.

The Egyptian-Tunisian Cooperation

This bilateral relationship is of special significance due to the Tunisian tendency towards the European Union, particularly after signing the Mediterranean-European Partnership Agreement.

In 1999, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding and a technical cooperation agreement for environment protection.

Another cooperation agreement was concluded between the Tunisian Training Center and the EEAA. Currently, Egyptian trainees are arriving to the Tunisian Center. The two sides exchange visits at the ministerial level. The last meeting was in Cairo, in August 2003.

Development proposal with Tunisia

Egyptian-Tunisian relationships can be developed by inviting Tunisian side to visit Siwa protectorate in Egypt and selecting a similar area in Tunisia to implement a joint project funded by the EU, in a bid to developing the urban and tourism environment in the two protectorates.

The Egyptian-Emarati Cooperation

At the end of 2003, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates signed a memorandum of understanding.

Egyptian-Gulf Cooperation

Currently, cooperation agreements are under discussion to be concluded between Egypt and the Saudi, Kuwaiti and Bahraini sides.

Development Proposal with the Gulf Countries

Opportunities are now provided strongly to market environmental projects among gulf investors, as well as to benefit from Arab donors organizations to find some financing sources for training activities and effectuate the NGOs role.

Egyptian-Sudanese Cooperation

Due to the nature of political relationships between the two countries, the two sides are keen on exchanging advices and consultations. Thus, in October 2002, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding. In addition a Sudanese delegation participated in a seminar on environment and trade. Currently, communication with the Sudanese side is intensified to receive Sudanese trainees in the field of protectorates and inspection.

Egyptian-Moroccan Cooperation

The Egyptian Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs is keen on holding joint meetings with the Moroccan side, due to the sensitive geographical location of the Morocco Kingdom in north and west Africa and its presidency of the G-77 and China working group in a bid to realizing the memorandum of understanding and cooperation agreement concluded between the two parties. Meetings were successfully held. An executive program on cooperation was concluded. Besides, the Moroccan side offered a proposal concerning the possibility of funding these projects by the Islamic Bank for Development. The last meeting was held at the end of January (2004) aiming at commencing joint cooperation programs.

Egyptian-Yemeni Relations

Egyptian-Yemeni cooperation is confined to the membership of the two countries in the Arab Ministers' Council and their signing of a memorandum of understanding on environment preservation in October 2002. Currently, environmental documents and publications are exchanged between the two countries to decide on the possibility of conducting joint bilateral environmental projects. Coordination is ongoing at higher level, through their membership in the Regional Authority for the Protection of the Environment in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (PERSGA).

Egyptian-Jordanian relations

Egypt signed a memorandum of understanding with Jordan during the meetings of the International Conference on Protectorates and Sustainable Development held in Sharm El-Sheikh late in 2002. Egypt, also, participates in experience exchanging

concerning the Jordanian desert project.

Development Proposal with Jordan

Egyptian-Jordanian cooperation can be strengthened in the field of training for protectorates.

Secondly: Cooperation with Europe

Romanian Cooperation

On 14th of April, 2003, a memorandum of understanding has been signed between the Egyptian concerned ministry and the Romanian Ministry of Water and Environmental Protection.

Egyptian-Czech Republic Cooperation

An invitation was sent to the Czech minister to visit Egypt to discuss cooperation means between the two countries ministries and the possibility of signing a bilateral memorandum of understanding.

Cooperation with Ukraine

Environmental cooperation was approved as one of the joint cooperation domains between the two countries through signing cooperation protocol between the Egyptian and Ukraine governments during the Egyptian-Ukrainian committee fourth session meetings, held on 26 March 2003.

Cooperation with Croatia

Croatia submitted a memorandum of understanding proposal of cooperation with Egypt in the environmental field. The proposal was studied and the Ministry comments were sent to the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reviewed by the Croatian side. The Croatian side expressed their approval and proposed signing the memorandum on July 2003, in Cairo.

Thirdly: Cooperation with Asia

The Egyptian perspective is based on dividing the Asian continent into a number of cooperation areas as follows:

South Eastern Asia

Including: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Singapore. These relations witness a relative development, however, it is currently confined to bilateral cooperation in the field of exchanging environmental brochures and publications. Meanwhile, cooperation is developed through the Developing Eight Countries (D-8), including the following Asian countries: Pakistan, Iran, Bangladesh and Malaysia. Egypt initiated a number of cooperation projects in the field of agricultural wastes recycling and converting it into energy. These projects are under study and preparation.

Central Asia

It refers to Islamic Republics (the Russian Commonwealth). Despite the growing cooperation, in particular Egyptian-Azerbaijani relationship, communications lately between the Egyptian MSEA and the technical cooperation fund of the Commonwealth states at the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs are intensified aiming at reviewing the extent of benefiting such states from the Egyptian experience.

China, Japan and India:

Cooperation with China

Cooperation with China aims at benefiting fully from rice straw. Cooperation in this field was developed between Sichuan Provincial Science and Technology Department and MSEA to abate air pollution and to produce materials of great economic

value. Consequently, upon examining Chinese technologies in this respect, communications between Sichuan Institute for design and researches agricultural machinery and the MSEA were conducted seeking to implement the project for establishing two gas station operating with rice straw. No obstacles were encountered and technologies of the two gas stations were purchased and delivered.

In addition, an agreement was concluded between the MSEA and the Chinese Academy of Forestry. This agreement aims at establishing forests, and protective and green belts; exchanging relevant experience and information; exchanging different kinds of tree seed; and using wastewater to irrigate trees.

A memorandum of understanding was signed on 17th of February 2003 between the Minister of State for Environmental Affairs and the president of the Chinese Academy Mrs. Jiang Zehui.

Cooperation between the MSEA and the State Environmental Protection Administration of the People's Republic of China

A memorandum of understanding was signed for cooperation in the field of solid wastes management; development of environmental policies statistical indicators and climate change; and exchange in technologies for recycling rice straw and clean agriculture. These actions were to be effected through information and experience exchange; relevant workshops and seminars; and joint projects implementation. The memorandum was eventually signed on 1st September, 2003 between the MSEA and the State Environmental Protection Administration of China

Cooperation with All-China Youth Federation (ACYF)

This initiative was carried out to develop and support the Egyptian-Chinese Friendship Forest founded in Sadaat city; to enhance youth delegations exchange in various fields; to encourage practical visits between young businessmen in the two countries aiming at stimulating investment in various environmental projects; to transfer environment friendly technologies and experts; to generalize youth ecotourism; and to facilitate brotherhood ties among cities in the two countries. This initiative resulted in signing a memorandum of understanding on 12th January 2004 to boost abovementioned cooperation areas.

Cooperation with India

Egypt aimed at benefiting from the experts of Maharashtra Institution for Cultivating Forest, mainly Bamboo cultivation that enjoys high economic value. Thus, a memorandum of understanding was concluded with the Indian institution on 11th August 2003, for cooperation in transferring Indian Bamboo cultivation technologies to the desert land using treated drainage water; providing the MSEA with Bamboo seedlings; and exchanging experts and information.

Fourth: At the African level

African environmental cooperation is enhanced within the framework of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The environmental component represents a significant part of this initiative. It includes several issues: combating deforestation; protecting wetlands; the spread of species outside their original environment (invading species); coastal administration for the transboundary protectorates; transnational protected areas; iden-

tifying authority problems in environmental ; and funding. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) is the cornerstone for bringing this initiative to real terms.

Cooperation with Senegal

Based on Senegal's willingness, represented by the Ministry of Environment and Sanitation, to enhance the cordial ties in technological cooperation field for environmental protection, recognizing the similarity between environmental problems in both countries, the two states signed a memorandum of understanding during the conference held in Algeria (2003).

Multilateral Cooperation

Egypt is keen on abiding by international obligations within the framework of the concluded international and regional environmental agreements. These agreements provide opportunities for investments; transferring environment friendly technologies; building national capabilities; supporting international cooperation in the diverse environmental domains to fund environmental action national plan programs. Following are multilateral environmental agreements, in which Egypt is a member state (Annex 5).

First: European Union

1- The European Union Commission in Cairo

Action is coordinated effectively between MSEA and the European Union commission. Among the most critical issues that has witnessed growing cooperation lately is the genetically modified organisms; climate change issues; European Union compliance with Kyoto protocol and its willingness to assist member states to the Pro-

ocol to meet their goals concerning the greenhouse gases and work together with developing countries to shoulder their relevant obligations; develop technologies for clean development; and grant general financial allocations for partnership.

2- LIFE Program

The year 2003 is considered to be the funding program LIFE last year for initiating environmental programs. Three projects were introduced:

First: Project for reduction of environmental impacts on agricultural activities.

Second: Project for Solid Waste Integrated Management System in Fayum.

Third: Project proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture on skins tannery.

Until now, European Union's approval to finance these projects was not received. The projects proposal is currently studied by the EU.

3- Egypt's Membership in the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP)

The Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) was the first international regional program under the umbrella of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) within the framework of Barcelona convention ratified in 1976. The plan embodies arduous efforts exerted with the aim of securing a healthy environment for the Mediterranean basin. The Action plan includes the whole Mediterranean basin 20 member states and the European Union countries, to create a Mediterranean healthy environment founded on the sustainable development principle.

The Mediterranean Action Plan framework has officially expanded since 1995 to reflect changes in understanding the relation-

ship between environment preservation and development. The plan second phase is called Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development of the Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean Sea.

The stage following Rio De Janeiro summit in 1992 was a significant period in the history of Mediterranean Action Plan, during which the Mediterranean country governments and the European group started to translate and adopt the principles set forth by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development within the Mediterranean context. This step is effected via the preparation of the Mediterranean 21st century agenda; reorienting the Mediterranean Action Plan and Barcelona conventions, and relevant protocols; and constituting a Mediterranean committee for sustainable development. Then, the sustainable development implementation plan in Johannesburg (2002) improved the understanding of sustainable development mechanism, and the requirements and actions necessary for sustainable development effective promotion.

Egypt is an active member in the Mediterranean area. Environmental issues have become priorities to be addressed, creating opportunities for cooperation at the regional and international levels. The MAP has a significant position on Egypt's environmental agenda (Annex 6), where it represents one of its strategic components.

The environmental agenda aims at creating better environment for all Egyptians. Egypt is a member in 55 multilateral environmental international and regional agreements. This requires considering the environmental resources from a social and economic perspective, for the value of these

resources benefits everybody.

MAP members participate in approving the strategy, budget and action program to attain MAP objectives of improving the Mediterranean environment through the sustainable development perspective. MAP activities are funded mainly by the Mediterranean Fund supported by the contracting parties and the UNEP. Financial voluntary contributions are also accepted. MAP is also supported by the European Union and the Global Environment Facility.

MAP and the European Union Partnership

Since the MAP inception, the European Group has played an active and specified role represented in:

- Contributing to aquatic environment protection for Mediterranean states through implementing the relevant directives such as the bathing water quality and wastewater treatment, thus, contributing to the implementation of the wildlife resources protocol.
- Encouraging MAP members to protect the environment via the compliance process with resolutions adopted by the European Group.
- Supporting establishing the infrastructure with the aim of enhancing the environment in Mediterranean countries via funds like; LIFE, European Assistance Program and Cards.
- Supporting regional projects undertaken by MAP through the abovementioned funds and voluntary assistance.
- Participating in the environmental technological assistance program for the Mediterranean area, which is an effective partner in the MAP.

After 1995, European-Mediterranean partnership was pushed to encourage coopera-

tion between the European Union and neighboring countries in the Mediterranean area. In the light of the contracting parties thirteenth meeting, partnership was emphasized as follows:

- Geo-politically, some Mediterranean countries shall be members in the European Union, during the coming years; Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta to be accepted in 2004.
- The European Group intensified its activities, legislations and strategies in the field of aquatic and coastal environment through the following initiatives:
 - Adopting a structural approach concerning water.
 - Initiatives for preventing maritime accidents and pollution (the first and the second Reka accidents) via new approaches.
 - Adopting a strategy on European coastal areas management.
 - Preparing a European strategy for aquatic environment.

Secondly: Egypt Membership in the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The Global Environment Facility supports the Egyptian government in the efforts exerted to protect the environment, in five domains, namely: biodiversity, climate change, international water, ozone layer erosion, soil deterioration and persistent organic pollutants. The Organization encourages private and public sectors to implement projects, and enhance and promote initiatives addressing global environmental challenges and resulting adverse effects at the national level. In addition, the Organization supports and develops the non-governmental sector initiatives through the micro-credit finance program.

GEF implements several projects in Egypt for an amount more than US \$ 100 million. Within the framework of partnership between Egypt and GEF many projects are currently conducted, including:

- The Wetlands Development Project located at the Mediterranean protectorates such as: Zaranik, Burulus, Ayumaid.
- Generating thermal power for solar energy.
- Medical Plants conservation.
- Al-Manzalh Integrated Management.
- Introducing electrical power technologies to transportation buses sector.
- Supporting capacities in climate change.
- Enhancing capacities in biodiversity.
- Developing fuel cells in Cairo buses.
- Developing underground water resources in the Western desert.
- Micro-credit finance program.
- Facilitating early implementation of Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Thirdly: Cooperation at local level

The external development in Egyptian relationship in the field of environmental protection was necessary to be accompanied by an advance at both the institutional and legislative levels. This was a major momentum for the MSEA to assume its coordinative role set forth by law no.4 of 1994. The year 2000 is considered the real launching point for establishing a network of cooperation agreements and protocols with ministries, research institutes, and Egyptian universities, in addition to a number of other cooperation instruments concluded between the MSEA and NGOs and civil society organizations, in particular those concerned with woman, childhood and motherhood.

Based on the MSEA policy to face air pollution problem hazards resulting from car

exhausts and sever damages affecting road users due to the skyrocketing increase in harmful gases exhausted from vehicles. The MSEA signed cooperation protocol with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in pursuance with the provisions of traffic law no 66 of 1973 and its executive regulations and implementing the provision of article (33) of the aforementioned law, granting traffic policeman the right to stop any vehicle does not comply with the conditions of safety and soundness.

The MSEA, further, signed a cooperation protocol with Alexandria University, aiming at protecting and developing the Egyptian environment; assessing environmental impacts for new and existing projects; contributing in preparing models for environment friendly industrial projects; endorsing a number of consulting organizations and research centers to conduct environmental reports; and considering Alexandria University an experts center in the field of Environmental Impact Assessment.

Another cooperation protocol was signed between the MSEA and Mubarak City for Scientific Research and Technology Applications (MCSRTA) in accordance with the target behind establishing MCSRTA and pursuant to the Republican decree no. 85 of 1993 stipulating that such MCSRTA shall be an institute for genetic engineering and biotechnology researches with the aim of addressing environmental, industrial and medical issues via genetic engineering and biotechnology applications.

Desiring to enhance the governmental and non-governmental sectors participation in an integrated development process with an enlightened concept of environment protection, especially in the field of environment protection, natural resources preservation,

the MSEA signed a cooperation protocol with the Social Fund for Development.

Believing in the importance of Egyptian women advancement both socially and culturally and in women's effect on environment and environment effect on women, a cooperation protocol was signed between the MSEA and the National Council for Woman, aiming at improving life quality in all local communities and achieving advancement for Egyptian woman. Affirming the MSEA's role in this issue, a special unit inside the MSEA was established for woman and environment.

Bearing in mind the industrial zones important role and their environmental compliance, MSEA signed a cooperation protocol with the Environment Studies and Researches Institute in Qaliuobia Governorate, through conducting studies and researches serving environmental purposes; disseminating environmental education in Qaliuobia governorate; involving the Institute in developing establishments and in applying environmental management systems in various fields including coal kilns, landfills and industrial zones in Al-Khanka.

Effectuating the EEAA role in implementing the MSEA's policy aiming at preserving the air, land, and water environment, a cooperation protocol was signed between the EEAA in its capacity as the MSEA executive authority and the Arab Academy for Sciences and Technology and Maritime Transportation to control maritime pollution and provide training on the principles and techniques of facing oil pollution accidents.

Seeking to face environmental crisis and hazards and setting up complete preparation for control their consequences, EEAA

established an early warning unit to predict any environmental danger. To support the efforts undertaken by the aforementioned unit, a cooperation protocol was signed between the EEAA and the Egyptian Meteorological Authority to protect and develop the environment and to achieve sustainable development for all projects. This protocol aims at providing the EEAA with the information needed by the pollutants dispersion model and providing the early warning unit with qualified experts to design early warning system.

Gender

Since the National Council for Women foundation on 19th January 2002, the MSEA has been keen on establishing a unit for woman with the following objectives: disseminating environmental awareness among women leaderships; assisting in forming female NGOs to take part in environment protection projects in Governorates; paying special attention to rural women and effectuate their role in environment preservation; organizing environment protection training programs and activities for young females; encouraging and activating women leaderships' role inside the MSEA and its executive body (EEAA); giving woman greater part to play in duties and activities; increasing the number of women leadership; and paying special attention to woman's role in RBOs activities. Thus, a cooperation protocol was signed in February 2002 between the National Council for Woman and the MSEA.

Future Perspective

The MSEA perspective concerning the future of environmental action at the local and international levels, is built on making use of local and foreign factors to serve environmental issues, emphasizing, thus,

the achievements of Egypt's leading role as an environmental action top priority. Consequently, Egypt adopted some procedures to support sustainable development, including:

- Developing a coordinating entity for sustainable development issues as a supreme committee headed by the Prime Minister.
- Forming a council including heads of NGOs, public interest societies, private sector, representatives of special groups such as: women and youth unions, media, religious men, intellectual and research centers, universities and syndicates. The council aims at holding a forum to discuss and deliberate sustainable development priorities and methodologies to ensure attaining different parties' interests.
- The council shall forward recommendations and proposals to the Sustainable Development Supreme Council, through a sustainable development consultant appointed by the prime minister so that these recommendations and proposals be considered when taking decisions at the Sustainable Development Supreme Council.

Internationally, it is clear that there is a solid ground for Arab cooperation to rely on. The current political strengthened ties can be used to integrate economic dimensions assisting thus in diversifying Egypt's environmental activities funding sources. This requires exploiting Egypt's capacities and proficiencies to support developing southern countries, via foreign financial support encompassing North cooperation and South to South cooperation. Reaching that end, the focus can be on the following cooperation aspects:

- Cooperation experience exchange, provided that funding be effected by a do-

nor country, especially the European Union states.

- Cooperation in training.
- Supporting and encouraging Arab investments in recycling wastes, investment projects and environmental services in Egypt.
- Organizing joint environmental exhibitions and conferences.
- Exchanging visits and opinions.
- Benefiting from political and economic situations in the Arab Gulf area and attracting Arab governmental investments to Egypt to invest in environmental domains including: waste recycling, ecotourism and tourism in protectorates.
- Benefiting from Egyptian human capacities and exchanging training delegations for Arab trainees.
- Developing Egyptian environmental activity to become pioneering in North Africa and cooperation with the European Union after Egypt's introduction to the European Egyptian partnership, as well as the cooperation for African advancement.
- Addressing Funding entities in the Arab, Islamic and African worlds to undertake regional environmental projects providing more opportunities for achieving sustainable development.
- Harmonizing international stances towards environmental issues.

The MSEA seeks to strengthen its ties with the European countries facing similar environmental problems, such as: Albania, Romania and Czech Republic. Furthermore, planning is in the pipeline for establishing partnership principles with developed countries, capitalizing on Egypt's participation in the Egyptian-European Partnership Agreement and its implementation. Thus, the Egyptian government becomes eligible for more support to implement

more outcomes to reach the project final objective. Consequently, Egypt becomes a partner in the process of drafting and implementing foreign projects.

Bilateral Cooperation through Donors Support

Since the beginning of nineties, bilateral cooperation has been built on technical and financial support granted by the donors to enhance the environmental policies at that time. These policies were based mainly on reducing pollution, in particular protecting the Nile river water, building capacities and protectorates, (Attached is a chart on completed projects). With environmental policies change in the new millennium and issuance of the national environmental action plan (2002-2017), which prioritize integrating development and organizations, and enhancing information technology, technical assistance was directed towards initiating projects for adopting new environmental policies, alongside supporting previous policies (Attached is a chart on ongoing projects). Egypt's role changed, from a receiver of foreign assistance to a major partner in these projects. During the nineties, Egypt depended greatly on receiving external aid along with technical support assisting in achieving the projects objectives agreed upon.

As for next stage starting with the new millennium, a number of outputs were identified to be implemented, so that the Egyptian government can be eligible to receive more support for more outputs to achieve the project final objective. Thus, Egypt became a partner in the process of designing and implementing foreign projects.