

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to foreword the “State of Environment Report” of the Arab Republic of Egypt for 2007, which is issued for the **fourth year** successively as a significant step in political environmental commitment of the Government of Egypt (GoE). This comes in the framework of the keenness of Egypt’s political leadership on incorporating the environmental dimension in all fields for achieving sustainable development, which springs from its belief that protecting the environment **has become a necessary requirement to protect the People’s health** and increase production through the optimum utilization of resources.

The President of the Republic has vested great interest in the environmental preservation issue, starting with his Excellency’s words in his speech inaugurating People’s Assembly session that **“preserving the environment has become a necessity not a luxury. It has become an issue on which the ability of Egyptian citizens to lead a safe life and enjoy good health enabling them to produce and innovate relies”**. The President has crowned his support to environmental issues by his request to the People’s Assembly to amend a number of articles in the Egyptian Constitution so that the amended constitution would incorporate an article stipulating environmental preservation.

The amended constitution was issued in 2007 following the People’s Assembly approval in a public poll, including Article 59 stipulating that **“Environment preservation is a national duty”, and that “the Law shall regulate measures needed to maintain sound environment”**.

Stipulating in the **Egyptian Constitution** that environment preservation is a national duty would undoubtedly promote all State efforts represented in government agencies, NGOs, civil society, and the private sector towards achieving a sound environment for decent life for Egyptian citizens.

This Report is **issued** in compliance with Law no. 4/1994 on Environment Protection, which stipulates in its Chapter Two on **developing an annual “State of Environment” report to be submitted to the President of the Republic and the Cabinet**, with a copy lodged with the People’s Assembly.

This report comes as outcome of efforts of many competent experts and those concerned with the environment in Egypt, as well as ministries, institutions and authorities concerned who collectively collaborated in developing this report with the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs (MSEA) and its Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA).

The State of Environment Report for 2007 has focused on **Biodiversity** and on the significance given by Egypt to establish a system and legislation for natural heritage preservation. Egypt now boasts 27 protectorates, equivalent to approximately 15% of Egypt’s land area. Maintenance processes aims at achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goal to mitigate biodiversity loss rate by 2010.

The report has also highlighted Egypt's accession to **international biodiversity conventions** and its achievements in this respect within the framework of a National Strategy and a respective National Plan of Action.

Maintaining citizens' health and livelihood issues came on top of priorities implemented by the government, particularly the impacts of overpopulation, increased industrial facilities and augmented number of vehicles leading to increased air polluting emissions. The government has, therefore, adopted **air** pollutants control policy and has developed an emissions level reduction strategy. Scientific indicators show tangible improvement in **air pollution prevention**.

The report has highlighted MSEA efforts in minimizing **noise** levels in major cities and governorate capitals as a result of increased population and associated activities. These efforts rely on modern monitoring equipment and scientific analysis, as well as associated public awareness.

The report presents impacts of **climate changes**, particularly increases in temperatures and sea level, as well as efforts exerted to mitigate greenhouse gases and adapt to the climatic change phenomenon.

The report pointed to the **Ozone** layer adverse impacts and the required Ozone depleting substances monitoring, as well as Egypt's commitment to the provisions of **Montreal Protocol** and efforts towards mitigating adverse impacts through the Egyptian Ozone Layer Protection Program, in cooperation with all world countries.

In the framework of maintaining the quality of **fresh water and lakes** in Egypt, the report has included methods for implementing water quality integrated management systems and programs, giving attention to water quality and pollution prevention while focusing on upgrading citizens awareness level, setting water environment reform programs for ceasing industrial effluents discharges to the river Nile, in addition to programs for the reuse of treated wastewater in establishing tree forests.

The report has taken into consideration highlighting sources of **marine environment pollution and coastal zone degradation** referred to by UN reports, as well as their causes, and measures required to prevent such pollution and maintain marine and coastal environments clean.

Planting trees, forests, green belts and areas has been an issue of attention by all Egyptian governorates, with the objective of maintaining environmental equilibrium and protection in order to mitigate the adverse impacts of pollution.

The report has also included the **environmental development of informal settlements** and highlighted objectives of upgrading such areas in a framework of decentralization and sustainable development programs.

The report has also referred to the **Energy Sector** in Egypt, and its diverse sources, as well as strategic alternatives required, such as **new and renewable energy** and the use of modern technologies for improving energy rationalization in production and consumption sectors in order to improve on air quality and minimize greenhouse gaseous emissions causing the climatic changes phenomenon.

The report has also included **Solid Wastes and Hazardous Materials and Wastes Management Systems** in the framework of an integrated and linked system, using appropriate means within available resources and according to safe scientific techniques. This is associated with the establishment of a relative database on their sources, quantities and qualities in order to assist proper planning for setting up respective integrated management systems.

The Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs is adopting integrated environmental action to strike the balance between development requirements and rational use of **natural resources and wealth** in cooperation with all agencies and institutions in Egypt in order to preserve the environment and Egyptian citizens' health, as well as to preserve the rights of future generations in natural resources and wealth.

MSEA hopes to achieve significant improvement and development in environmental action year on year, promptly avoiding shortcomings.

I hope this report would communicate the State of Environment in Egypt as well as its improvements and developments during 2007.

Minister of State for Environmental Affairs

Eng. Maged George Elias