

Chapter 22: International Cooperation

Introduction

By cooperating with the donor entities in specialized projects, and to maximize the use of such projects through a comprehensive developmental dimension, MSEA implements sector programs, so the donor countries programs can separately provide support for a number of sectors to achieve national developmental environmental goals.

Cooperation with the donor countries is divided into bipartite cooperation, multipartite cooperation, cooperation with international organizations and MSEA commitments to abide by international cooperation protocols.

Bipartite Cooperation

First: on The Arab Level

Because of its experience, MSEA is considered the cornerstone of the Arab ministers of environment, and to activate MSEA role in the Arab League (AL) meetings that MSEA is keen to attend and be presented by a high-level delegation headed up by Minister of State for Environmental Affairs, the following meetings have been held:

1. Minister of State for Environmental affairs headed up the ARE delegation during the emergency session meeting of the council of Arab ministers of environment at the AL headquarter during the period 21-22 July 2007. Among the most important AL recommendations for social and economic development was passing a resolution on including and emerging the environmental dimension in all the social and economic developmental issues to improve the Arab citizen life quality through the participation of the entities concerned with environment in taking the social and economic decisions and the concentration on the bases and principles of the Arab sustainable development in all decision-taking positions.
2. The joint meeting of the executive offices of the council of Arab ministries of environment and the council of Arab ministers of communication and information on 2 May 2007. The meeting was held in cooperation with the Arab satellite experts to discuss the establishment of an Arab satellite to monitor the Earth and the project of the Arab Sate statute.
3. The meeting of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR) 8th session, and the executive office of Arab ministers of environment was held in Cairo during the period 21-25 November 2006 at AL headquarter. This meeting was a preparation for 18th session of the council of Arab ministers of environment held in Algeria during the period 19-20 December 2006. The meeting discussed several environmental and sustainable development issues, and the most important recommendations came as follows:
 - a. Monitoring the implementation of the Arab initiative for sustainable development and the Arab states efforts in this field.
 - b. The trade and environment subjects.

- c. The consequences of the Israeli assault on Lebanon concerning the environmental situation.
 - d. The environmental situation in Palestine, Iraq, Sudan, and Somalia.
4. The meeting of the 18th session of the council of the Arab ministers of environment held in Algiers, the capital of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria during the period 19-21 December 2006. The most important results of the meeting are:
 - a. The organizing study of the Arab team work was adopted, and a study on the banking and private sectors contributions is currently conducted.
 - b. A recommendation on the use of Arab expertise and techniques in the field of establishing a new satellite to monitor the Earth and using the terrestrial stations in Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.
 5. MSEA headed the Egyptian delegation to the second Islamic Conference of the ministers of Environment, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), held in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the period 13-14 December 2006. The conference resulted in several environmental commitments such as:
 - a. Developing joint comprehensive Islamic strategy for sustainable development.
 - b. Enhancing peace and security efforts and raising awareness of their roles in supporting sustainable development.
 - c. Conserving water resources and rationalizing the use of them.
 - d. Taking care of air quality, energy and climate change effects.
 6. The 7th session of JCEDAR and the executive office of Arab ministers of environment was held in Cairo at AL headquarter during the period of 13-17 November 2005, as a preparation for the 17th session of the council of Arab ministers of environment during the period 20-21 December 2005. The council made the following recommendations:
 - a. Appealing to Arab states to form a national team of finance, agriculture, environment, commerce and health ministries representatives and to cooperate in removing the obstacles in the way of the Arab environmental trade.
 - b. Requesting from the JCEDAR Technical Secretariat to prepare a proposed Arab guiding list of the environmental services and goods to be discussed during the Arab states representatives meeting and introducing the results for JCEDAR in the next session.
 - c. Appealing to the Arab states to make use of the aids provided by advanced countries and donor entities to exchange techniques and enhance capabilities in applying the 3Rs concept internally.
 7. Several executive programs, MOU were signed between the MSEA and ministries of environment of Yemen, Syria, Kuwait, Libya, Sudan, Mauritania, Morocco and Emirates in the fields of the technical cooperation for environment protection, sound environmental management of hazardous materials and wastes and solid wastes and combating illegal trading in hazardous chemicals and wastes.



Picture (22-1) An interview with His Excellency UAE minister of environment

Second: on The African Level

1. Egypt became the rapporteur of the executive office of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) after the new constitution of the bureau in the AMCEN held on June 2006 in Congo-Brazzaville formulation.
2. The Egyptian delegation, headed by the minister of state for environmental affairs participated in the proceedings of the extraordinary session of AMCEN Bureau held on 29 August 2006 in Cape Town, South Africa. The minister of state for environmental affairs assured that Egypt could help the African states in implementing the environmental initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEDAP) in the following fields:
 - a. Persistent organic pollutants (Pops), desertification, sewage water-based green belt projects and issuing reports on the state of the environment on the national level.
 - b. Assuring the importance of implementing the decision concerning getting grants from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to combat soil deterioration and desertification.
 - c. Egypt and South Africa Provide support for the African countries in the field of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).
 - d. Developing cooperation protocol between Egypt and South Africa in the fields of biodiversity, climate change, CDM and solid wastes.

Third: on The European Level

MSEA efforts to strengthen its relationships with the European donor countries (Italy, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Finland, France and Canada) resulted in new financing programs with some states that will continue till 2008. MSEA adopted the policy of encouraging European private companies to invest in the Egyptian environmental fields, especially natural protectorates tourism (Italy), and programs for clean energy and industrial pollution combat (Finland-Germany).

MSEA also adopts a situation coordination policy especially with Adriatic Sea countries (Croatia- Albania) and Egypt membership in the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) concerned with implementing the Mediterranean Sea countries commitments concerning the Barcelona Convention and opening cooperation fields with Eastern Europe countries, such as Czech Republic and Romania.



Picture (22-2) The coordinating meetings with the donor countries

Bilateral Cooperation Agreements

Italy

On 7 March 2004, the project documents of the second phase of the Egyptian Italian cooperation program have been signed including such projects as:

1. Decision Support System for Water Resources Planning Based on Environmental Balance implemented in cooperation with the National Water Research Center (NWRA), Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI). The system is designed for planning water resources used in irrigation from drains and pipes, taking into consideration the environmental dimension.
2. The Environment Improvement of the Oasis of Siwa project designed for converting the oasis to be a natural protectorate in order to protect its natural resources, introducing pioneering agricultural development activities, and managing solid wastes. Within the frame work of the environmental management of Matrouh Governorate, planning is introduced to establish systems complying with the decision support systems of the water management project.
3. The Supreme Council of Antiques (SCA) institutional support for the environmental management and monitoring of Fayoum Oasis and North Saqqara grave. The project aims at conserving the civilizational heritage and historical locations by developing Saqqara grave management plan and drawing a map of the endangered locations in Fayoum.
4. The support and development of Wadi AlRayan protectorate. The project aimed at protecting the unique biological, geological and civilizational resources of the 1750 km² protectorate that has special features and an environmental diversity. The project aimed also at conserving the large deserts of environmental diversity, the rare wild life in Wadi AlRayan desert, fossils of early animals that lived in the protectorate in the past and the ancient places. The project also encompassed a part of Wadi Al-Hitan which is considered, on the international level, one of the most prominent places that show whale evolution, especially after being classified as international natural heritage area.

Czech Republic

Upon the invitation of Czech Prime Deputy Minister and the Minister of Environment, His Excellency the Minister of the State for Environmental Affairs visited the Czech Republic during the period 17-18 May 2007. The visit concluded that Egypt could benefit from the Czech experience in the fields of environmental management, especially drainage treatment and agricultural wastes management by adopting the new technologies and inventions in rationalizing clean and renewable energy consumption in the production of agricultural wastes Biomass and Jatropha bio fuel, using natural gas in power stations and vehicles and in applying plant garden management and administration system.

Fourth: On the Asian Level

The Egyptian-Asian relationships are distinguished ones, especially on the environmental level. Japan, represented in Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), is one of the first donor countries that contributed in the establishment of a comprehensive system, by establishing EEAA Central Laboratory and the EROs regional laboratories.

Cooperation with Japan

In cooperation with JICA, the Regional Environmental Management Improvement Project Record of Discussions was signed on 31 October 2005. The implementation of the 3 year project started on 27 November 2005 with a total budget of 400 million JPY (4 million U.S Dollars) distributed on the equipments supplied within the framework of the project, the training in Japan, and the technical aid.

Cooperation with South Korea

A Bilateral MoU was signed with the South Korean Ministry of Environment on 13 November 2006 during the South Korean Minister of Environment visit to Egypt on 12-13 November 2006. The MoU includes several fields of cooperation such as:

1. Reducing, controlling, and monitoring air pollution.
2. Climate change.
3. Biodiversity and environment protection.
4. Management of solid wastes, especially agricultural wastes.
5. Water quality management and development.
6. Drainage treatment.
7. Environmental education and awareness.

By the end of the visit, it was decided that the South Korean part will support a research project on river water quality improvement as a resource for potable water implemented in cooperation with the National Institute of Environmental Research (NIER) in South Korea. A recommendation has been made for the implementation of the Mercury comprehensive management project, financed by Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). Upon an invitation of the Korean Ministry of Environment, specialists from MSEA to participate in the sustainable waste management training program on June 2007 and in The 2nd Seoul Initiative Leadership Programme on Green Growth on October 2007.

Cooperation with China

Within the frame work of strengthening the Egyptian-Chinese relations and cooperation in the field of environment:

1. A cooperation protocol concerning artificial raining in Egypt was signed with the Chinese part on 13 June 2005.
2. An 8 China National People's Congress member delegation visited MSEA on 21 February 2006 to exchange experience in the fields of reusing and recycling agricultural wastes, using drainage water safely in the irrigation of tree forests and artificial raining.

3. A delegation of the Guangdong Provincial Congress committee visited MSEA on July 2006 to exchange experience in the fields of agricultural waste recycling, drainage water treatment and rainmaking.
4. Upon the invitation of China State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), the Minister of the State for Environmental Affairs visited People's Republic of China, Beijing during the period 1-4 April 2007 to activate the Egyptian-Chinese MoU and to consider the current and prospective environmental cooperation. The Egyptian and Chinese parties asserted the importance of strengthening cooperation in many environmental fields of a mutual concern such as, developing an experimental artificial raining project in Egypt and implementing a guiding pilot project for the establishment of gas, coal and organic condensers production unit. Egypt would benefited from the Chinese technology in using rice straw to manufacture wooden boards the use of filter bags in Egyptian cement factories. In addition to the above, cooperation would be strengthened in the fields of disposing bypass dusts, and the use of cement factories furnaces in disposing hazardous wastes by combustion.



Picture (22-3) The Egyptian-Chinese cooperation

Fifth: On the American Level

Within the frame work of the Egyptian- American relationships, several programs have been implemented including the environmental policy program whose results came as follows:

- a. A copy of amended external air standards approved by MSEA.
- b. The frame work of air quality national strategy approved by EEAA board of directors.
- c. A copy of amended fixed lead emissions resources standards approved by EEAA board of directors.
- d. Developing air quality information publishing plan approved by EEAA board of directors.
- e. Preparing a technical guides draft for closing a lead foundry and cleaning the location to be issued by EEAA in accordance with the location cleaning plan prepared and implemented in one of the experimental locations.
- f. EEAA developed a plan to convert the government cars to be compressed natural gas cars, got the required approvals, and implemented its commitments in accordance with the plan.
- g. The minister of state for environmental affairs introduced a copy of a proposal to extend the diving and scopa diving fees to be applied on the northern region to be approved by SCA.
- h. EEAA facilitated the coordination between the governmental entities concerned with developing, approving and agreeing on a plan to provide the resources and costs required for the protection and management of the Red Sea environmental systems.
- i. Writing a plan for the management and protection of the Red Sea southern region to be approved by EEAA, in addition to getting a written ratification from the participating public and private entities.

Sixth: Canadian Relationships

1. Establishing MSEA EIS containing an information system for international conventions signed by Egypt on environment protection, and another information system for environmental projects implemented in Egypt.
2. Initializing the implementation of one of the largest projects for fuel conversion in Egyptian clay brick plants to convert 311 plants in Arab Abu Sa'ed and Saff, Giza. The project, incepted in October 2006 through a funding of some \$35.5m in collaboration with Canadian investors, MOP, and plant owners, follows the environmental policy of encouraging the conversion of fuel to natural gas to control environmental pollution.
3. GOE and GOC collaborated to implement a national partnership project for environment protection in governorates. The project is budgeted at CAD 5m provided by GOC, in addition to EGP 5m by GOE. On 23rd January 2007, 12 environmental projects implemented by NGOs at CAD 5m investments were inaugurated, under the presidential electoral platform. The projects targeted training, qualification, and creating job opportunities for young people, in fulfillment of the decentralized environmental management.
4. A Contribution Agreement was signed on 14th November 2005 with the Canadian team in the National Project for Recycling Agricultural Wastes. The Agreement cost CAD 100,000 (equivalent to some EGP 500,000) as a first stage to support and encourage fresh graduates on implementing SMEs in transferring and recycling agricultural wastes. The project is implemented at the national level at total investments of some EGP 32m, in participation with SFD, banks, and governorates of Daqahleya, Sharqeya, Armed Forces National Service Project Organization (NSPO), and the Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI).



Picture (22-4) Egyptian-Canadian Cooperation

Multilateral Cooperation

1. Following up the implementation of Egypt's obligations in multilateral international agreements and focusing on agreements where MSEA is its national focal point (Convention on Biological Diversity, Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Agreement, Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution – Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).
2. **Horizon 2020 and the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on the Environment:**

MSEA and line ministries developed national observations on Cairo Declaration and the schedule for the Initiative, consulted with such ministries, and sent the Horizon 2020 Initiative national observations. Cairo Declaration by the Ministers of Environment in Euro-Mediterranean countries and the schedule for the first stage of the initiative were issued during their third meeting held in Cairo on 20 November 2006.
3. **European Neighborhood Policy:**

Many official consultations were held in Cairo and Brussels were conducted, followed

by official negotiations on the Egyptian action plan as per the European Neighborhood Policy section on environment and sustainable development in the Plan (2007-2013). This section was finalized, approved by both parties, and signed by GOE and EU in March 2007.

4. Institutional Twinning:

- a. MSEA submitted a proposal for institutional twinning in hazardous wastes and materials with other EU countries. The project was accepted by the EU and is now undergoing preparation.
- b. MSEA submitted its twinning priorities in terms of an administrative body for sustainable development and environmental inspection.

5. Stage III Short- and Medium-Term Environmental Priority Action Plan (SMAP3):

- a. 2 projects on coastal management incepted in March 2006:
 - (1) Project 1: Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Port Said at € 1.9m.
 - (2) Project 2: Integrated Coastal Zone Management for Mariout Lake shores at € 800,000.

Egypt will participate in the regional project “Awareness Raising and Developing a Framework for Development-Incentive Policies” in coastal management, where 10 South Mediterranean countries participate.

- b. SMAP3, through MSEA assistance and the National Committee for Sustainable Development, conducted 2 workshops for drafting the national sustainable development strategy.
- c. SMAP3 participated in the implementation of a pioneer project to apply the concept of sustainable development with NGOs in developing Ezbet al-Walda, Arab al-Walda, and Maassara, Helwan.

6. Life 3rd Countries:

MSEA proposed 14 environmental projects on 28 November 2005. EU replied on 15th September 2006 to the effect of the acceptance of only 2 projects:

- a. Egyptian-Italian capacity building in an integrated water and wastewater system supply through a funding by EU/Life of € 599,900 to the beneficiary, the Holding Company for Drinking Water and Sanitation of the Ministry of Housing.
- b. Protection and management for flooding in Egypt at a contribution of € 540,000 to the beneficiary, Water Resource Research Institute of the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation.

7. South Sinai Regional Development Program funded by MEDA 2:

South Sinai Governorate is the entity responsible for implementing this program. It is based on protecting marine environment, developing Bedouin communities, enhancing infrastructure and ecotourism, and protecting the cultural heritage.

The first and second components incepted and in April 2007, equipment purchase contracts were finalized and local community and environmental awareness projects were selected.

8. Environmental Pollution Abatement programme – Stage II:

The implementation of the Environmental Pollution Abatement programme – Stage II incepted. It is an extension to Stage I finalized in 2005 with \$ 35m where 24 projects for applying cleaner production technologies were conducted for 20 industrial facilities. Stage II budget amounts to some EGP 1bn. For the first time, 5 international agencies will contribute to the project budget. Facilities are funded by 80% through long-term loans, and 20% as grants, while focusing on highly polluted areas (Helwan, Shoubra al-Khaima, and Mariout Lake). Some 75 industrial facilities will take advantage during project implementation (2007-2012).

9. EU Environment Strategy for the Mediterranean and Horizon 2020 Initiative:

During the preparation of the 3rd Environment Euro-Mediterranean Conference, EC issued an information document reported by EC to the European Council and Parliament on the development of an environmental strategy for the Mediterranean, with objectives and achievement methods, besides Horizon 2020 Initiative and its schedule. The Initiative is composed of 4 components:

- a. Pollution abatement projects for industrial emissions, municipal wastes, and wastewater in urban areas;
- b. Capacity building measures;
- c. Research; and
- d. Review, steering, and follow-up.

Cooperation with International Organizations

One of the priority issues GOE is widely interested in and cooperates on which with national and international agencies is that of environmental pollution. A threat to sustainable development, it is not restricted to the region it exists in, but knows no geopolitical boundaries. Thus, it is an international problem challenging the international community and requires international effort intensification to withstand it. MSEA participates in maintaining the environment through its action within international organizations. This was clear through the Minister's activities as follows:



Picture (22-5) Meeting with UN Deputy Secretary-General

1. Meeting with UN Deputy Secretary-General on 8th November 2006 and agreeing on funding environmental projects at \$ 7m.
2. Chairing Egypt's delegation in the UN Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD) 14th Cycle on energy for sustainable and industrial development and climate change and air pollution held in New York, USA.
3. Chairing Egypt's delegation upon consensus to follow up CSD work implementation for small island developing states (SIDS) during 10th-14th January 2005 held in St. Louis, Mauritius. Egypt sought introduction to the trends of international cooperation development to overcome Egypt economical problems due to overpopulation, lack of water, lack of resources, and climate change. Egypt's participation in this meeting is

in continuation of the large Egyptian efforts existing for communication with other African states and following up the development of developed countries' attitudes. This reflects Egyptians' interest in global economic as well as political issues.

This conference was a response to the GA demand of conducting an international meeting to review what was implemented from Barbados Summit recommendations (1994) and Johannesburg Summit (2002) on developing countries sustainable development.



Picture (22-6) First meeting for following up CSD work implementation

International Workshops and Conferences

1. Environment Conference 2007:

Egypt is keen on the participation of all environmental players from governmental and civil society organizations, private institutions, international financial institutions, and regional and international institutions. That's why MSEA organized the 5th International Conference for Environmental Technology, Management, and Financing in Cairo during 21st-23rd May 2007.

The Environment Conference 2007 was centralized on "The Road to Environmental Compliance with Profitability and Sustainable Development". The main concern was transferring technology and financing mechanism in areas of CDM, CP, water and sanitation management, waste management, ICZM, oil spill control, ecotourism, protectorate management, and carbon trade, as an effective tool for eco-finance, and discussing the various for environmental efficiency definitions and the relationship between trade and the environment .

2. Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference:

Selecting Egypt in particular for organizing the first Euro-Mediterranean meeting on the environment outside the EU for negotiating environmental issues is a reflection to Egypt's pioneering role in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership issues. MSEA coordinated and collaborated with the EU to arrange for the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on the Environment held on 20th November 2006. The main topic of this meeting is the "Horizon 2020 Initiative" for cleaning the Mediterranean Sea from fundamental pollutants: industrial emissions, municipal wastes, and wastewater in urban areas. These were agreed by Heads of the Euro-Mediterranean governments during the celebration of the 10th anniversary for signing the Partnership Agreement to be representing 80% of the basic pollutants in the Mediterranean. The aim of this forward-looking initiative launched by the EU with South Mediterranean countries is to combine bilateral, regional and international efforts and assistances in the Mediterranean in the environmental arena in order to avoid duplication and to focus efforts so as to reduce pollution in the Mediterranean by 2020. During the meeting, a Ministerial Declaration was launched, entitled "Cairo Declaration" with a joint vision by Euro-Mediterranean Environment Ministers, and expressing an increasing interest in environmental issues to enlist them in all fields of cooperation among Euro-Mediterranean Partnership States.

3. Regional Workshop on National Sustainable Development Strategies and their Indicators in the Arab World:

The workshop was held in Cairo House and co-organized by the Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) and the UN Division for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), in collaboration with UNDP and MSEA. The proceedings of the workshop took place during 2-4 December 2006 and were attended by representatives from Arab countries (Syria, KSA, Yemen, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Qatar, and Bahrain), African countries (Djibouti and Comoros), several stakeholder organizations and entities (Islamic Development Bank (IDB), UNDP, MAP, Arab League, Agricultural Research Center, and UN Economic Committee for Africa), and different ministries (Economic Development, Transport, Trade and Industry, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Local Development, Electricity and Energy, and Housing).

The workshop aimed at:

- a. Supporting participants with an in-depth vision of the national sustainable development strategy development and implementation processes.
- b. Building local and regional capacities for managing the sustainable development process through cooperation, participation, sharing experiences and lessons learnt in the relevant field.
- c. Developing options for decision makers through monitoring and assessment of sustainable development at the national level via indicators.

4. National Workshop on Environmental Policy Inclusion:

SMAP Regional Unit held a national workshop aiming at:

- a. Discussing mechanisms through which sustainable development can be promoted effectively at policy levels in different national sectors.
- b. Encouraging idea sharing at cross-cutting sectors through supporting SMAP correspondents towards integrating environmental policies.
- c. MSEA signed a memorandum of understanding with MAP on a € 20,000 financial assistance to Egypt to develop the general framework for the national sustainable development strategy.
- d. A study was developed by METAP on the costs of Egyptian coastal zone environmental deterioration (an experimental 15-km zone along the North Coast in Marsa Matrouh).
- e. Examining and presenting some institutional structures for sustainable development for some European and Arab countries.
- f. Signing a memorandum of understanding between MSEA and SMAP PSU to participate in the Clearing House Information System.
- g. Localizing the 7th MDG, "Ensuring Environmental Sustainability".