

**The 27th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP27)**

**Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt**

**6-18 November, 2022**

**Side Event Concept Note**

**Thematic Day:** Biodiversity, Oceans & Coastal Zones, Transport

**Date:** Tuesday 15 Nov - 16:45—18:15 Thebes Room (150)

**Title:** Climate Threats and Adaptation Solutions and links with Ecosystem Restoration in the Arab Region

**Lead Organization:** Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)

**Co-organizer:** GEF/ Small Grants Programme - Egypt & Engineering Association for Development and Environment (EADE)

**Background**

The threat posed by climate change to biodiversity is expected to increase, yet thriving ecosystems also have the capacity to help reduce the impacts of climate change.

If current rates of warming continue, by 2030 global temperatures could increase by more than 1.5°C (2.7°F) compared to before the industrial revolution. A major impact of climate change on biodiversity is the increase in the intensity and frequency of fires, storms or periods of drought. This adds to the threat to biodiversity which has already been placed under stress by other human activities.

Furthermore, ecosystems support life on Earth. The healthier our ecosystems are, the healthier the planet - and its people. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) aims to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems on every continent and in every ocean. It can help to end poverty, combat climate change and prevent a mass extinction. It will only succeed if everyone plays a part. Ecosystem restoration encompasses a wide continuum of practices, depending on local conditions and societal choice” (UNEP, 2021). The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is a global rallying cry to heal our planet.

In this context, building on the MAVA Foundation and GEF/UNDP – Small Grants Programme – Egypt collaboration which witnessed a combination of site-based and thematic national actions, in addition to regional exchanges, government-CSO dialogues, and joint activities, Egypt was among the countries that significantly contributed to the main objectives of this partnership.

During the five policy dialogues (four national and one regional dialogue) held in 2021 & 2021, participants have touched base and discussed current challenges and opportunities concerning biodiversity and natural resources conservation in the region, highlighted several regional and global strategies on biodiversity. Also issues such as ecosystem restoration; climate change impacts on tourism and spatial Planning, impacts of COVID-19 and nature-based solutions were discussed. It is obvious that countries in the region should be fully prepared for CBD COP15 and the implementation of the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. In this context, the side event will highlight lessons learned and exchange of experience with other success stories from the region and beyond.

**Objectives**

* To address the link between climate change and ecosystem restoration more broadly with a special focus on the Arab region.
* Climate change threats to Arab ecosystems are significantly increasing, thus the session will highlight CC challenges and methods to address and implement these solutions within the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework- Post 2020.
* Highlight biodiversity and climate threats in the Arab region, with focus on strategic approaches and activities on climate change adaptation aiming to achieve ecosystem restoration.
* Highlight synergies between UN Conventions on BD, CC and Desertification.

**Expected Output**

* Build on the outcomes of the GEF/SGP – MAVA Foundation Partnership at the national, regional levels and beyond.
* Emphasize on the role of CSOs in facilitating national and regional dialogues on Ecosystem Restoration work at the national and regional level, with special focus on the Arab region.
* Highlight challenges and the link between climate change and biodiversity
* Showing best practices being implemented such as ecosystem restoration to mainstream biodiversity and climate change into different sectors.
* Define potential partnerships on the regional and international levels.

**Draft Agenda**

Opening remarks (10 min)

Dr. Emad Adly, GEF SGP Country Program Manager - Egypt

* Ms. Yoko Watanabe, Global Manager, GEF Small Grants Programme
* Ms. Salote Soqo, Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)
* Mr. Mohamed Abdulmawjood, Engineering Association for Development and Environment (EADE)

**Panel discussion** (60 min) Moderator: Dr. Emad Adly

Panelists:

* Dr. Mostafa Fouda, CBD National Focal Point – Egypt
* Dr. Amr El Sammak, Biodiversity Expert
* Dr. Bialy Hatab, Nature Conservation Sector - Egypt
* GEF Small Grants Programme
* Dr. Mahmoud Fathallah, LAS
* Dr. Hany El Shaer, Regional Director, IUCN ROWA
* MAVA Foundation (ppt. and materials to be presented)
* Eng. Mohamed Abdelmawjood, EADE

Q&A session (15 min)

Closing remarks (5 min)