



Information session on the ITU's Arab Regional Initiative (RI) on "Use of telecommunications/ICTs for smart and sustainable development and protection of the environment"

Manama, Bahrain

6th May (17:00-18:30 pm), 2015

Background

Today, ICTs play a crucial role in sustainable development. Indeed, ICTs contribute to developing a green and resource efficient economy, minimizing e-waste, building smart cities and protecting the environment. In addition, the efficiency and availability of emergency telecommunication services help save lives and reduce the devastating effects of disasters.

During the last World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC2014), which was held in Dubai, UAE, from 30th of March to 10th of April 2014, five regional initiatives were adopted as part of the League of Arab States members' contribution. One of these initiatives in the Arab region is entitled: "Use of telecommunications/ICTs for smart and sustainable development and protection of the environment".

The overall objective of the initiative is to raise awareness of the importance of telecommunications/ICTs for sustainable development and environmental protection, and formulate legislation and regulatory frameworks in order to achieve smart and sustainable development.

Expected Results of this Regional Initiative are:

Assistance to the countries in the following:

1. Formulation of strategic plans and regulatory frameworks for the transition to smart and sustainable development in various relevant spheres;
2. Exchange of expertise between Arab countries in the field of smart and sustainable development in various spheres, and study of the negative effects resulting from e-waste and finding appropriate solutions to deal with it;
3. Addressing the challenges of scarce resources, for example water, in the Arab region by means of smart management of those resources using telecommunication/ICT applications;
4. Use of telecommunications/ICTs to confront the consequences of climate change for the Arab region, formulation of mechanisms to control emissions of harmful gases, and gradual transitioning to clean and sustainable energy;
5. Exchange of expertise in the field of policy for gradual transformation to smart, sustainable and green cities in the Arab region.

Objective of the event, main agenda and Meeting Outputs

During the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development (AFSD), an information session will be jointly organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The session will take place in Manama, Bahrain, on the 6th of May, 2015 at **(17:00-18:30pm)**.

The following issues will be the main areas for discussion:

- Key components of the Regional Initiative;
- Stakeholders' experiences, lessons learned and good practices;
- Challenges to be addressed, concerns and issues around the RI;
- The proposed work plan to be delivered to meet the expected results of the regional initiative).

A summary of the proposed work plan of the initiative on SSD will be prepared and feedback from stakeholder expected to be reflected.

Session Organization

The table below shows the key presentation to be delivered during this session.

1st Presentation: “Background Information of the Regional Initiative ”	17:00 - 17:20
The presentation will provide an overview to the Arab regional initiative on “Use of telecommunications/ICTs for smart and sustainable development and protection of the environment” and the proposed three years actions plan by ITU.	
Speaker: Mustafa Al Mahdi- Associate Program Officer, ITU	
2nd Presentation: “Overview on Technology & Sustainable Development ”	17:20 - 17:40
The presentation will describe the roles that Technology, and particularly ICT, could play in areas of Smart Sustainable Development related issues.	
Speaker: Dr Haidar Fraihat, Director Technology for Development- ESCWA (TBC)	
Discussion and Inputs	18:00 - 18:30
Discussions in the session will touch upon the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Baseline indicators describing the current state of the Smart Sustainable Development in Arab region;❖ A mechanism for continuing the dialogue between ITU and the stakeholders in the region for the implementation of the regional initiative on “Use of telecommunications/ICTs for smart and sustainable development and protection of the environment”.❖ Agreement on the future proposed work plan of the initiative.❖ Role of Technology, and particularly ICT, in Sustainable Development	

Contact information

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