



المنتدى العربي للبيئة والتنمية  
ARAB FORUM FOR  
ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Tel: +961 1 321800, Fax: +961 1 321900  
info@afedonline.org www.afedonline.org

## **AFED Conference on Sustainable Consumption**

### **Recommendations for green investments and phasing out subsidies**

**Beirut, 17 November 2015**

The Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED) concluded its eighth annual conference on sustainable consumption, held at the Phoenicia Intercontinental Hotel in Beirut. The conference brought together 600 delegates from 48 countries, representing governments, private sector, regional and international organizations, research centers, universities, civil society and the media.

AFED secretary general Najib Saab cited draft recommendations which endorsed AFED report on Sustainable Consumption, advocating that adopting appropriate consumption patterns is key to rational management of resources, and contributes to sustainable development and environmental conservation. It also emphasizes the interrelationship between energy, water and food, especially with the increasing impacts of climate change.

The conference called for a range of measures that can help Arab countries shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns. Integrated development policies should be adopted, that incorporate sustainable consumption and production in all economic sectors, along with laws and regulations to support and promote sustainability, such as building codes, certification of sustainable agricultural products, and efficiency labeling of products and services.

Phasing out subsidies was endorsed, along with better social services and benefits, so that prices reflect the real cost of resources, especially energy and water. The conference urged for investment in human resource development and directing more financial resources towards sustainable investment in fields like renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, public transportation and green cars. It noted the importance of directing government procurement, giving preference to environment friendly products and services.

The conference called for allocating not less than 2% of GDP for scientific research and development, especially in the fields of water desalination, renewable energy, wastewater treatment, agricultural inputs, water-saving irrigation and green building. It also emphasized the

use of media, education and social communication to disseminate the benefits of sustainable consumption patterns and drive the public to take the right consumption decisions.

### **Second day sessions**

A session was held about green finance and how it influences consumption and production patterns. Another session discussed fighting climate change by changing consumption and production patterns, in view of the coming COP21 in Paris.

Consumption and production in post-2015 sustainable development agenda was the topic of a session held in cooperation with ESCWA. Two thematic sessions discussed innovative entrepreneurship for sustainable lifestyle, and UNEP's Global Environment outlook GEO6 consultations. A workshop on sustainable consumption and production was held by SCP/RAC for young entrepreneurs.

Policies for sustainable living were discussed at a high level plenary, in which the Future Environment Leaders Forum (FELF), gathering students from 12 Arab universities, presented their statement on sustainable consumption. The conference closed with a debate over recommendations.

**Photo: Najib Saab presenting AFED conference draft recommendations**