



Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.
GENERAL






31 March 2011

ENGLISH ONLY

REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR NORTH AFRICA
AND THE MIDDLE EAST ON UPDATING NATIONAL
BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS
Beirut, Lebanon, 2-7 May 2011

INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

QUICK LINKS (Control + click on icons for web page, click on page number to directly access text in document)

 Visa Information (pages 3)
 Meeting Documents (page 2)
 Hotel Information (page 4)
 Weather Information (page 4)
 Currency Information (page 5)

INFORMATION HIGHLIGHTS

1.	OPENING AND REGISTRATION.....	2
2.	VENUE	2
4.	DOCUMENTS	2
5.	GENERAL INFORMATION ON ACCESS TO BEIRUT, LEBANON	2
6.	VISA INFORMATION	3
7.	HEALTH INFORMATION	3
8.	FIELD TRIP	4
9.	HOTEL INFORMATION	4
12.	WEATHER AND TIME ZONE INFORMATION	4

1. Opening and registration

The Regional Workshop for North Africa and the Middle East on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans will be held Beirut, Lebanon from Monday, 2 May to Saturday, 7 May 2011.

The formal opening of the workshop will be at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, 2 May 2011 and registration will take place at 8:30 a.m. at the venue. The workshop is expected to wrap up in the evening on Saturday, 7 May 2011, with departures the following morning.

2. Venue

The workshop will be held at:

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA)

Mezzanine Room

UN-House

P.O. Box 11-8575, Riad el-Solh Square

Beirut, Lebanon

Tel: +961-1-981301

Fax: +961-1-981510

Web site: <http://www.escwa.un.org/index.asp>

3. Working language

The Workshop will be held in English.

4. Documents

Participants are kindly reminded to bring their own copies of the documents for the workshop as there will be no extra copies made available on site during the workshop. Pre-session documents will be on the Secretariat's web site as they become available:



<http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=CBWNBSAP-NAFRME-02>

5. General information on access to Beirut, Lebanon

Beirut is serviced by the Beirut - Rafic Hariri International Airport (8 km from the city centre). Taxis services are readily available at the airport next to the arrival gate at a rate of approximately US \$20-US \$25, please verify the rate before embarking. Some agencies/hotels may provide airport transfers, kindly check with your hotel prior to departure.

Shops and businesses are typically open Monday through Saturday, 9:00-18:00. Banking hours are Monday through Saturday, 8:30-12:30. Working hours for government offices and post offices are typically 8:00-14:00.

All information about Lebanon can be found on web site of the Ministry of Tourism of Lebanon: http://www.destinationlebanon.com/About/Practical_Information.aspx

6. Visa information



All participants must have a valid passport and visa to enter Lebanon and must be valid for at least six months. Participants from countries listed below may obtain an entry visa at the airport for Lebanon and all are strongly advised to contact the nearest Lebanese diplomatic or consular mission **as soon as possible** in order to secure the required entry visa in a timely manner, prior to departure.

Citizens of the following countries may obtain an entry visa upon arrival at the Beirut - Rafic Hariri International Airport or any other ports of entry:

Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Macau (S A R), Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Romania, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Samoa, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey (exclusively at the airport), Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, United States of America, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Venezuela.

Required documents for Visa:

- 1- Visa Application Form
- 2- A valid passport
- 3- 2 photos (passport size)
- 4- A proof of accommodation in Lebanon

Citizens of the following countries are granted a free visa at the airport: Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab of Emirates.

Please note that to obtain a Business Visa a letter from the business contact in Lebanon is necessary. For diplomats and officials, a recommendation letter is needed explaining the nature of the mission.

Information on visa procedures, including a list of relevant Lebanese diplomatic/consular missions abroad, is available on the web site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of the Republic of Lebanon at: <http://www.foreign.gov.lb/> .

To facilitate the issuance of visas, the Secretariat will issue upon request invitation letters to be attached to the visa applications.

7. Health information

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers over the age of 6 months coming from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission.

8. Field Trip

Please bring good walking shoes and appropriate clothing with you for the field trip that will take place during the workshop.

9. Hotel information

The Markazia Monroe Suites hotel is located near the workshop venue (ECSWA) and it is therefore recommended that all participants stay at this hotel. A block booking has been made on behalf of **all participants** to the workshop. Kindly confirm your accommodation by contacting the hotel directly (e-mails listed below) with a copy to Mr. Maroun Abi-Chahine (maroun.abichahine@cbd.int). Participants are kindly reminded that **they have to confirm their reservations at the Monroe Hotel as soon as possible**. Information on the hotel is listed below.

HOTEL MARKAZIA MONROE SUITES			
Hotel rooms:	Rate in US \$	Included	Not included
Junior Suite:	US \$120.00	Breakfast, Service Charges (16%)	Government tax (VAT 10%)
One Bedroom Suite:	US \$170.00	Breakfast, Services Charges (16%)	Government tax (VAT 10%)
Hotel Contact: Mr. Chady Morcos Tel: +961(0)1-991203/95-5693			
Address: Syria Street, Solidere Beirut, Lebanon (Markazieh Building, Down town, Close to ESCWA) Web site: http://www.monroebeirut.com/			
Tel: +961(0)1-991200 Fax: +961(0)01-991211			
E-mail: pilar.eid@monroebeirut.com , chady.morcos@monroebeirut.com , info@markaziamonroesuites.com			

10. Payment of the daily subsistence allowances (DSA)

The sponsored participants will receive DSA on the first day of the workshop.

11. Official language

The official language in Lebanon is Arabic. English and French are spoken in hotels and restaurants.

12. Weather and time zone information



In May, temperatures in Beirut usually range between a maximum of +27°C in the daytime and a minimum of +15°C at night. Current weather conditions in the area can be found at: <http://www.lebweather.net/>.

Lebanese time is G.M.T. +2 hours in winter (October to March) and +3 hours in summer (April to September), when daylight savings time is observed. The standard time zone will be GMT/UTC +3 hours.

13. Electricity

The electrical currents in Lebanon are 230 Volts, 50 Hertz and vary as shown below.



14. Currency



The currency in Lebanon is the Lebanese Pound, lira (L£), in French: livres. The current exchange rate as at 31 March 2011 is US \$1 = 1,500.54 L£ and € 1 = 2,126.11 L£.

Notes are available in denominations of: 1,000; 5,000; 10,000; 20,000; 50,000; and 100,000. There are also coins of 250 and 500. U.S. dollars are widely used throughout the country. Many establishments quote prices in both currencies. If you use U.S. dollars, it is advisable to bring small bills.

Money or travelers checks can be exchanged at banks, private money exchange shops, and major hotels. Major credit cards are accepted at most establishments. ATMs are also widely available in Beirut and some dispense both U.S. dollars and Lebanese pounds

Please bring some cash with you so that you will be able to pay necessary costs during your travel to Beirut well as for refreshments during the workshop.

15. Disclaimer

The CBD Secretariat disclaims all responsibility for medical, accident and travel insurance, for compensation for death or disability compensation, for loss of or damage to personal property and for any other loss that may be incurred during travel time or the period of participation. In this context, it is strongly recommended to secure international medical, accident and travel insurances for the period of participation prior to departure.
