



Committee: United Nations Environment Programme

Country: Libya

Agenda Item: Enhancing the transition to sustainable energy as a response to the energy crisis and climate change

Libya, officially the State of Libya, is a Maghreb and North African country located in the Mediterranean coast; bordered by Egypt in the east, Algeria and Tunisia in the west, Niger and Chad in the southeast. The country consists of three historical regions- Tripoli, Fizan and Sirtina. Libya has a population of 7.3 million and since the Sahara desert covers most of the country, the population is mostly concentrated in the coastal areas and the near hinterland.

Those who have the least impact on climate change are most vulnerable to its harmful repercussions. Carbon emissions in developing and underdeveloped countries are significantly lower than in developed countries. Our planet has warmed by 1.2 degrees since 1880, and the consequences are being felt more deeply everyday. Africa is one of the most affected regions to climate change and its consequences. While Africa has 20% of the world's population, it produces only 3% of the world's carbon emissions. Likewise, Africa is home to 27 of the 33 countries that will be most severely affected by climate change.

Libya is situated in a dry and semi-arid domain of Africa accompanying no enduring rivers or freshwater lakes and an average yearly rainfall of inferior 100 mm. Restricted access to surface water creates a major need for groundwater for a country whose agriculture relies heavily on irrigation. The overuse of groundwater, the lack of awareness of the efficient use and protection of water, and seawater intrusion in coastal aquifers all have led to a severe water crisis in Libya. Libya will suffer from a lack of available water resources and agricultural-related food shortages if the world continues to warm up as rapidly as it is currently.

If environmental sustainability becomes Libya's national goal, the following issues must be addressed: first, base desalination and pumping on renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind); second, invest oil receipts to export solar electricity; and third, achieve these two goals before oil or water runs out. Because water is so important for long-term sustainability and economic development, if fossil water pumping and desalination are powered by renewable energy, low-cost freshwater can be the foundation for long-term sustainability. Because Libya is so well positioned to create solar energy, the best sustainable option is to speed up the transition to renewables before international climate treaties force coal and, subsequently, oil to be abandoned in the ground. Libya may take the lead in making Europe carbon-neutral by exporting large amounts of solar energy.

The Libyan prime minister, representing a country that needs to take quick action on climate change and non-renewable energy sources, announced last year that his government had decided to sign the Paris Climate Agreement. This is just a small step towards the transition to renewable energy and climate change. In Libya, an oil-rich Arab country, conflicts and political and security crises since 2011 have plunged the country into an unstable structure. the UN-sponsored peace process between the eastern and western fronts, which have been in a ceasefire in the country since last year, and the timely holding of elections in the country are important for Libya to focus on environmental issues and turn fossil fuel production to renewable energy sources. Libya is open to all assistance and agreements to reduce the negative effects of climate change and to transition to clean energy sources.