Foster + Partners to host the Urban and Rural Areas Resilience Programme, Oasis Cities at COP22 Side Event

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The Urban and Rural Areas Resilience Programme, Oasis Cities, an adaptation of the COP21 Paris Agreement, will be presented during COP22 Side Event in Marrakech on 16th November 2016 organised by KIDPAAI and Foster + Partners.

Designed specifically for hot dry desert regions, this programme has been created in response to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) 3rd Scientific Conference that took place in Cancun, Mexico in March 2015. It is a collaborative project aimed at socio-economic assessments and evaluation of the interconnections between oasis cities and their rural areas in four desert cities: Marrakech (Morocco), Siwa Oasis (Egypt), Nizwa Oasis (Oman) and Liwa Oasis (United Arab Emirates), leading to a demonstration project in each city. Its objectives are to create viable and alternative livelihood strategies for their inhabitants while protecting and conserving the biodiversity and cultural knowledge. This would include defining viable livelihood strategies, initiating new economic activities through technology development and transfer, and identification of socio-economic linkages between oases and their urban areas.

The implementation of the COP21- Paris Agreement in the context of oasis communities is another paramount objective of the Oasis Cities Programme. It is demonstrated through Articles 6, 7,10, 11, and 12 – focused on Mitigation, Adaptation, Technology Development and Transfer, Capacity Building and Dissemination of Climate Knowledge. Several of The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are also taken into account. The SDG Goal No 17, addressing Global Partnerships and the Urban and Rural Areas Resilience Programme is an exemplar of multidisciplinary collaboration between public and private sectors, academia and the United Nations.

The project has been created by The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Dr Sandra Piesik, Architect at Foster + Partners and Professor Dr Abdelouahhab Zaid, Agricultural Advisor at the UAE Ministry of Presidential Affairs and Khalifa International Date Palm and Agricultural Innovation (KIDPAAI) Award Secretary General. In line with the COP21 recommendations on public and private sector linkages, the project also includes Foster + Partners, a London-based global architecture and integrated design practice; the Marrakech Date Palm Project, specialists in date palm genetic technologies; representatives of the academia: Sultan Qaboos University; and knowledge partners from UNFCCC and UN Habitat.

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