

LIMITED

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development
in Asia and the Pacific

Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials
10-13 October 1990
Bangkok

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting

The Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials will be opened by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP.

2. Election of officers

The Meeting will elect a chairman, two vice-chairmen and a rapporteur.

3. Adoption of the agenda

The Meeting will consider the provisional agenda for adoption.

4. Review of the state of the environment in Asia
and the Pacific

The Senior Officials will consider the report on the state of the environment in Asia and the Pacific prepared by the Expert Group Meeting on the State of the Environment in Asia and the Pacific held at Bangkok in April-May 1990. In reviewing the state of the environment in the region, the Meeting may wish to refer to the executive summary, which also provides an analysis of the causes and effects of the environmental problems, the need for national and regional responses and the policy implications. The Meeting may wish to reflect on the prevailing environmental situation and offer its perception of the environmental problems and priorities in the region.

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5. Review of the status of implementation of the recommendations of the World Commission on Environment and Development and identification of further measures to be taken in respect of the Asian and Pacific region

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) constituted by a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly in the face of the environmental crisis and the need for sustainable development, published in 1987 its report Our Common Future, which proposed wide-ranging recommendations on environment and development. The Meeting will review the progress of implementation of these recommendations at the national level by ESCAP member Governments, and at the regional level by United Nations bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations and development financing institutions. The discussion will be aided by a secretariat paper on the subject summarizing the follow-up of WCED recommendations in the region, reviewing the economic growth in the Asian and Pacific region vis-à-vis environmental sustainability, and identifying major constraints for sustainable development in the region.

6. Global environmental problems of the depletion of the ozone layer, climatic change and the rise in sea level: their implications in the context of the Asian and Pacific region

The Meeting will consider the issues of global warming, climatic change, ozone layer depletion and rise in sea level with their policy implications and related responses in the Asian and Pacific context. The secretariat working paper on this subject reviews different projected scenarios for global warming and rise in sea level, and analyses of their impact on mangroves, coral reefs, coral islands and low-lying coastal areas. The discussion will also be concerned with the problems of coastal areas and island countries and atolls in the Asian and Pacific region in the face of this threat posed by global climatic change and rise in sea level. The policy implications of these problems, which are being discussed in global forums, will be the subject of major discussions so that appropriate responses by the Asian and Pacific countries may be formulated.

7. Regional co-operation in the field of environment and development

The Meeting will consider the role of Governments, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and United Nations bodies and agencies in regional co-operation in the field of the environment, and examine the feasibility of establishing a regional environment centre for

Asia and the Pacific. As recommended by the Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment at its first session held in November 1989, the Meeting will also discuss regional co-operation on a warning system against natural disasters and on coastal area resources development and management.

The deliberations will be guided by a secretariat paper on the subject in three parts: (1) current regional efforts to deal with the most severe environmental problems, (2) the status of warning systems against major environmental disasters, and (3) the feasibility of establishing a regional environment centre. Recommendations are made for the strengthening of institutions at the national level and expansion of programmes and activities at the regional level aimed at increasing effectiveness for dealing with environmental problems, disaster warning and coastal area resources development and management. The objectives of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction are also highlighted in the paper. The Meeting will review the issues raised in the secretariat paper on this agenda item and provide suggestions and recommendations for effective regional co-operation in the field of the environment.

8. Regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development

A major focus of the Ministerial Conference is the consideration of a framework for a regional strategy towards promoting environmentally sound and sustainable development. The framework as presented in the document concerned is closely linked with the review of environmental problems and issues of significance to the region under the various agenda items.

The strategy addresses the following issues within the framework of environmentally sound and sustainable development: alleviation of poverty; population and human settlements planning; natural resources management; agriculture; investment; trade and tourism; and industrial and energy development. The interrelationships between these issues on the one hand, and sustainability on the other, are analysed and recommendations made for both a short-term, problem-centred, curative approach and long-term, preventive measures.

9. Regional input to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development 1992

The United Nations General Assembly decided, in its resolution 44/228 of 22 December 1989, to convene the United Nations Conference on

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Environment and Development in Brazil in 1992; that Conference will deliberate on strategies and measures to halt and reverse the effects of environmental degradation in the context of strengthened national and international efforts to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development.

While the outcome of the Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific will serve as an important input to the 1992 Conference, the ESCAP secretariat, in close co-operation with the Conference secretariat, intends to convene a regional preparatory meeting in early 1991 to finalize the regional input. The Meeting may wish to suggest that the Ministerial-level Conference consider the matter and discuss and endorse an outline for a regional input to the 1992 Conference, which is proposed in the relevant document.

10. Other matters

The Meeting will consider any other matters which may be raised by either the delegations or the secretariat. One such matter for consideration by the Meeting of Senior Officials could be a draft ministerial declaration.

11. Adoption of the report

The Senior Officials will consider and adopt the report of the Meeting.

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