



---

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Forty-seventh session  
1-10 April 1991  
Seoul

REPORTS OF LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES, AND REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE  
COMMISSION AND ESCAP REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING PROGRAMME  
OF WORK AND PRIORITIES, 1992-1993: ENVIRONMENT: FOLLOW-UP  
TO THE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND  
DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC AND  
OTHER ISSUES AND PROGRAMMES

(Item 7 (e) of the provisional agenda)

FOLLOW-UP TO THE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT  
AND DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
AND OTHER ISSUES AND PROGRAMMES

Note by the secretariat

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction .....	1
I. MAJOR OBSERVATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	2
A. Ministerial Declaration .....	2
B. State of the environment in Asia and the Pacific .....	3
C. Status of implementation of World Commission on Environment and Development recommendations .....	3
D. Global environmental problems .....	4
E. Regional co-operation .....	4
F. Regional strategy .....	4
G. Regional input into the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development 1992 .....	5
II. NGO/MEDIA SYMPOSIUM ON COMMUNICATION FOR ENVIRONMENT .....	5
III. EXHIBITION OF CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES .....	5
IV. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION .....	6

ANNEXES

I. Findings and recommendations of the Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific .....	7
II. Summary of the report of the NGO/Media Symposium on Communication for Environment .....	20
III. CLEANTECH 1990 - Summary .....	22

## Introduction

1. At its forty-fourth session in 1988, the Commission adopted resolution 267 (XLIV) on the adoption and implementation of the principle of environmentally sound and sustainable development in the Asian and Pacific region, in which it decided to convene a ministerial-level conference on the environment in 1990. Subsequently, in 1989, the Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment reviewed the provisional agenda of the conference. At its forty-sixth session in 1990, the Commission approved the provisional agenda and venue and provided the necessary direction for the holding of the Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific. It was also decided to use that Conference to prepare for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992.

2. The Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific was convened to formulate a regional strategy towards environmentally sound and sustainable development. The purpose of the strategy was to achieve socio-economic development that was complementary to and strengthened by environmentally sound policies in virtually every sphere of economic activity. The discussions at the Conference covered a wide range of topics, including the relationship between environmental sustainability and international trade, the role of clean and clean-up technology, environmental management and natural resource development, and curative environmental measures such as the conservation of environmental resources and biodiversity, management of renewable natural resources and other issues. An important area of focus of all of the discussions was regional co-operation and its relationship to the role of Governments, non-governmental organizations and United Nations bodies and agencies.

3. Held at Bangkok on 15 and 16 October 1990, the Conference was preceded by the four-day Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials from 10 to 13 October 1990. Other activities held in conjunction with the Conference were the NGO/Media Symposium on Communication for Environment, the CLEANTECH 1990 exhibition of clean technologies and products, a children's painting competition on the theme of technology and the environment and a photographic exhibition on environment and development in Asia and the Pacific.

4. The findings and recommendation of the Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific are provided in

annex I of the present document for endorsement by the Commission. A summary of the report of the NGO/Media Symposium on Communication for Environment along with the recommendations and the Universal Code of Environmental Conduct adopted by the Symposium are provided in annex II for the consideration of the Commission. The Commission may also like to take note of the brief reports on the exhibition of clean technologies and products, CLEANTECH 1990, the children's painting competition and the photographic exhibition presented in annex III. The report of the Ministerial-level Conference is available as a background document.

## I. MAJOR OBSERVATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Ministerial Declaration

5. The major achievement of the Conference was the Ministerial Declaration on Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. The Declaration made specific reference to the various causes and types of environmental degradation prevalent in the region today, and the link between conventional production and transformation processes. It called upon all countries to intensify environmental protection through an integrated approach to environment and development at the national, subregional, regional and global levels. It also called for the adoption of an approach to economic growth at all levels directed towards environmentally sound and sustainable development.

6. The Declaration also made specific mention of the integration of developed and developing countries in the process of reorienting economic growth towards environmentally sound and sustainable development objectives, and noted in particular the need for adequate financial and technological support to the region's developing countries in pursuing environmentally sound and sustainable development on a region-wide basis.

7. An important aspect of the Declaration is the affirmation of the right of individuals and non-governmental organizations to relevant information which may affect their environment, and the recognition of the need for strengthening non-governmental organizations to carry out activities for promotion of public awareness and people's participation in environmental protection and management.

/B.

B. State of the environment in Asia and the Pacific

8. The report State of the Environment in Asia and the Pacific 1990 was distributed to the delegations. A summary version of the report was introduced as a conference document. The Conference identified the most urgent environment-development issues confronting the Asian and Pacific region and the world as the following:

- (a) Rapid population growth
- (b) The all-pervasive problems associated with poverty
- (c) Natural resource depletion and loss of biodiversity
- (d) Land degradation
- (e) Pollution of air and water
- (f) Toxic and hazardous wastes
- (g) Natural disasters
- (h) Global environmental problems such as ozone layer depletion and climate change

9. The state of the environment report was recognized as serving as a reference source and a basic document in reviewing the region's environmental situation and ESCAP was requested to update it at 5-year intervals.

C. Status of implementation of World Commission on Environment and Development recommendations

10. The Conference generally endorsed a set of recommendations at the national level derived from the recommendations of the World Commission on Environment and Development intended for institutional strengthening, legislative reform to remove weaknesses in implementation, and the introduction of various measures to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development and resource management. Similarly, at the regional level, the Conference recommended activities in support of the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of environmentally sound and sustainable development at the grass-roots level and programmes and policies of resource management.

11. The Conference stated specifically that the establishment of environment sections in relevant government agencies should be encouraged in order to promote the integration of environment and development.

/D.

D. Global environmental problems

12. The Conference called for concerted global action and co-operation to overcome the global environmental problems of climate change and sea-level rise. It recommended specific measures for implementation, such as massive afforestation and protection of forests, transfer of appropriate technology, training and institutional strengthening. The impact of sea-level rise on island nations and on countries with long coastlines were of great concern. In that respect it was recognized that the effects of climate change might greatly exceed the financial and technical capabilities of many developing countries. The Conference generally supported the secretariat's efforts at the national, regional and international levels, and recommended active participation of all ESCAP members in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

E. Regional co-operation

13. The recommendations of the Conference on regional co-operation touched upon strengthening the environment-related activities of non-governmental organizations, promotion of public awareness and participation in environmental protection and management activities. The other major recommendations concerned strengthening national efforts for environmentally sound development, the transfer of technologies, setting up a regional bank of modern technologies, establishing an international centre for early detection and warning on approaching cyclones, and a multilateral convention on the protection of the sea and biological resources of the region.

F. Regional strategy

14. The regional strategy was discussed in detail and its concept and the main thrust were endorsed. In order to fine-tune the strategy, taking care of the regional diversities and delivery mechanisms, the Conference recommended that a meeting of experts be convened early in 1991. That meeting would elaborate on and finalize the regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development, and the regional input to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in 1992.

15. The Meeting of Senior Officials on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific is being held from 13 to 19 February 1991 at Bangkok. Because of the relatively short time between that Meeting and the Commission session, the report of the Meeting will be presented at the session as a conference room document.

G. Regional input into the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development 1992

16. The Conference recognized the role of ESCAP in preparing for the 1992 Conference. It emphasized the importance of the eradication of mass poverty as a cause of environmental degradation in developing countries, and urged donor countries and agencies to provide financial assistance and technology transfer to developing countries, especially those expected to face serious difficulties in implementing sustainable development programmes and in enforcing recent international environmental agreements.

II. NGO/MEDIA SYMPOSIUM ON COMMUNICATION FOR ENVIRONMENT

17. The Symposium participants represented most of the non-governmental organizations and media groups actively involved in promoting public awareness and participation in environmentally sound and sustainable development activities. The major achievement of the Symposium was the formulation of the Universal Code of Environmental Conduct, the creation of awareness to crystallize co-operation between the non-governmental organizations and the media at the national level, and formulation of a set of recommendations for follow-up at the regional, national and local levels to achieve sustainable development as presented in annex II.

III. EXHIBITION OF CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES

18. The exhibition was intended to promote awareness of these technologies and to achieve exchange of information between the planners and users, and the developers of these technologies. For the benefit of the participants at the Conference and the Symposium, and to promote awareness on sustainable development, a photographic exhibit on environment and development was organized. To mark the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on 10 October 1990, the exhibition also depicted destruction due to disaster, in order to attract the attention of decision makers and planners to the severity of natural disasters in the region.

19. The exhibition also included a regional painting contest on technology and environment. Three winning entries from each of the participating countries were displayed, from which the top three were selected for a special prize. A short report on these events is provided in annex III for the consideration of the Commission.

/IV.

#### IV. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

20. In view of the urgency of the need to act to reverse the trend of environmental degradation in the region, the recommendations of the Conference are to be implemented immediately. In order to address all the issues raised at the Conference, there will be need for an expanded work programme with adequate financial support, concerning which the comments of the Commission are requested. The mechanism for implementation of the regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development as discussed at the meeting of senior officials in February 1991 mentioned in paragraph 15 above, will be submitted to the Commission for its endorsement at an appropriate time.

21. The Commission may wish to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (annex I), along with the report of the Conference, submitted as a background document. The Commission may also like to review the recommendations of the NGO/Media Symposium and the Universal Code of Environmental Conduct (annex II) to guide the secretariat for further follow-up action. The Commission may also wish to comment on the exhibition of clean technologies and other events (annex III) and suggest a future course of action for the promotion of public awareness on these issues.

22. The Commission may also wish to suggest ways and means for the early implementation of the various recommendations of the Conference and to call for the support of donor Governments, and United Nations bodies and agencies in this task.

/Annex I



Annex I

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MINISTERIAL-LEVEL  
CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT  
IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific was held at Bangkok on 15 and 16 October 1990, preceded by the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials from 10 to 13 October 1990. The NGO/Media Symposium on Communication for Environment, and CLEANTECH 1990, an exhibition of clean technologies and products, and a children's painting competition on the theme of technology and environment were also held in conjunction with the Conference.

The Conference was attended by ministers and representatives from 44 members and associate members of ESCAP, observers from 10 countries, representatives from 21 United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, and intergovernmental organizations, and eight non-governmental and other organizations. The NGO/Media Symposium was attended by 176 participants from all over the Asian and Pacific region and from elsewhere, representing many of the non-governmental organizations and media groups which are actively involved in promoting public awareness and ensuring people's participation in environment and sustainable development programmes.

H.E. General Chatichai Choonhavan, Prime Minister of Thailand, delivered the inaugural address. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered the opening statement and read a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Opening statements, addresses, and policy statements were also delivered by the following: the Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), on behalf of the Administrator of UNDP; the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB); the Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; and the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. H.E. Mr. Prachuab Chaiyasan, Minister for Science, Technology and Energy of the Royal Thai Government was elected Chairman of the Conference.

The Conference adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and generally endorsed the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials. It

/supported

supported ESCAP efforts of regional co-operation to improve the co-ordination of environment and development activities within the region; on the development of a regional strategy for environmentally sound and sustainable development; and to prepare a comprehensive regional input as part of the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Further, the Conference requested the Executive Secretary of ESCAP to keep the progress of implementation of the Declaration under review and to report to the annual sessions of the Commission. The significant decisions, suggestions and observations of the Conference are summarized below.

#### State of the environment in Asia and the Pacific

(a) The Conference expressed serious concern at the rapid deterioration of the environment as reflected in the report State of the Environment in Asia and the Pacific 1990 and called for immediate steps to be taken to arrest the current trends.

(b) The Conference identified rapid population growth, the pervasive problems of poverty, depletion of natural resources and loss of biodiversity, land degradation, pollution of air and water, toxic and hazardous wastes, natural disasters, and the global environmental problems of the depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer and climate change as the most urgent environment-development issues confronting the Asian and Pacific region and the world.

(c) The Conference recognized that the report State of the Environment in Asia and the Pacific would serve as reference material and a basic document in reviewing the environmental situation in the region and noted that the secretariat would update the report every five years.

(d) The Conference noted that ESCAP bore the primary responsibility for the preparation and issuance of the report, and welcomed the following suggestions: that representatives from as many members as possible should take an active part in the preparation of the report; that the constitution of a drafting committee composed of representatives of members be considered to collaborate with the secretariat in the endeavour; and that the co-operation and support of subregional organizations be sought for the purpose.

(e) Several delegations made the following suggestions for subsequent state of the environment reports: to expand the coverage of a number of issues, namely, the unsustainable pattern of marine fishing,

/nuclear

nuclear testing and the dumping of toxic and hazardous wastes in the Pacific, natural disasters, and subregional perspectives; to cover the Asian part of the Soviet Union; to integrate more fully economic and environmental considerations; and to include an assessment of environmental issues.

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

(a) The Conference generally endorsed the following recommendations at the national level: to strengthen national environment agencies and place them at the same level as economic planning agencies; to implement environmental impact assessment for all development projects; to remove the weaknesses in environmental legislation; to collect additional data on environmental parameters in order to establish their relationship with economic indicators; to enhance training and skills development; to initiate the process of natural resource accounting; to increase public awareness and promote grass-roots level action; and to prepare action plans for environmentally sound and sustainable development.

(b) The Conference also generally endorsed the thrust of the following recommendations at the regional level: to formulate actions to alleviate poverty-related environmental degradation and identify means to rehabilitate natural resources; to develop management plans for coastal areas; to demonstrate the implementation of the polluter-pays-principle; and to implement a regional project to promote environmentally sound and sustainable development at the grass-roots level.

(c) The Conference agreed that the establishment of environment sections in other relevant government agencies should be encouraged in order to promote the integration of environment and development objectives.

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

(a) On the global environmental problems of depletion of the ozone layer, climate change and loss of biodiversity, many delegations called for concerted global action and co-operation to overcome those problems, including massive afforestation and protection of forests, transfer of appropriate technologies, training and institutional strengthening, participation in the work of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

/(IPCC),

(IPCC), as well as provision of financial resources similar to the ozone layer protection fund and the global environment facility.

(b) Several delegations expressed their serious concern at the impact of sea-level rise on island nations and on countries with long coastlines. It was pointed out that climate change-induced sea-level rise might be aggravated by land subsidence in a number of coastal areas in the region. In that respect, the Conference welcomed the initiative of the Netherlands, in co-operation with Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America, to examine the possibility of establishing an international study and training centre to develop and disseminate know-how to limit the negative effects of a rise in sea level.

(c) Many delegations expressed their concern that the implications of climate change might greatly exceed the financial and technical capabilities of many developing countries, especially island countries. The changes were expected indiscriminately to affect countries in different stages of development, and urgent additional support to developing countries from industrialized countries would therefore be justified. The Conference noted with appreciation the willingness of the Netherlands to supplement the contributions of developing countries to global efforts to cope with global environmental problems, including climatic change. In general, it was stressed that environmentally sound technology should be made available to developing countries on favourable terms.

(d) The Conference generally supported the thrust of the secretariat recommendations at the national, regional and international levels and recommended the active participation of all ESCAP members in IPCC as well as in the negotiation of a framework convention on climate change. It was stressed that recommended actions needed to address national concerns accurately.

(e) Several delegations stressed the importance of protecting the marine environment, in particular the coral reef ecosystems, and of the transfer of information aimed at disseminating the results of IPCC and at protecting the ozone layer, and noted that subregional organizations could carry out some of the activities proposed at the regional level. At the international level, activities aimed at putting an end to those practices which contributed to the intensification of the greenhouse effect should provide acceptable and viable alternatives.

/Regional

Regional co-operation in the field of  
environment and development

(a) The Conference noted the proposal that a ministerial-level conference on environment and development should be convened at least once every five years. However, some delegations felt that such an interval might be too long, particularly given the importance of regional action in response to anticipated follow-up recommendations of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

(b) The Conference emphasized the need for all countries and relevant international agencies to intensify their co-operation to support and assist the developing countries of the region in such efforts.

(c) The Conference requested the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, in consultation with representatives from the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies, multilateral funding organizations and Governments to find ways and means to enhance effectiveness of co-operation and co-ordination in the development and implementation of regional environment and development activities, as envisaged by the Declaration.

(d) The Conference recommended the strengthening of environment related activities of non-governmental organizations and the promotion of public awareness and people's participation in environmental protection and management activities, and welcomed all United Nations initiatives which sought to assist the media, non-governmental organizations and community groups targeting the poor. In that context, the Conference noted that the NGO/Media Symposium had adopted a universal code of conduct and endorsed a 15-point recommendation for promoting sustainable development in the region.

(e) The Conference welcomed and encouraged the efforts to establish research, training, policy and other institutes/centres dealing with environment and development activities with a view to promoting exchange of information, technical assistance and regional co-operation for activities relevant to environmentally sound and sustainable development, and agreed that ESCAP should play an important role to promote the formulation of a regional network of such institutes/centres.

(f) The Conference recommended that a regional study on scientific and technological development aimed at strengthening national efforts in the development and transfer of technologies, including environmentally sound ones, be undertaken by ESCAP.

(g) The Conference recommended considering the feasibility of setting up a regional bank of modern technologies, including clean ones, as well as a regional training centre on technology transfer to be attached possibly to the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology. In that regard, the Conference welcomed the offer of the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to contribute to the study and to participate in the activities of the above regional bodies.

(h) The Conference also recommended the establishment of a system of ecological assistance, an international centre on early detection and warning on approaching cyclones, as well as the working out of a multilateral convention on the protection of sea and biological resources of the Pacific.

(i) Some delegations observed that some environmental issues were specific to certain parts of the region and encouraged ESCAP to continue to play an active role in strengthening subregional organizations and enhancing co-operation among them in support of regional programmes and activities. A suggestion was also made for ESCAP to take the initiative in preparing guidelines for environmental ethics, in collaboration with other concerned agencies of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and media groups.

(j) Several delegations pointed to the environmental impact of the functioning of the present international economic system and called for commodity agreements and innovative trade and investment regulations which would promote sustainable development. Those would call for the strengthening of regional and international co-operation.

Regional strategy on environmentally sound  
and sustainable development

(a) The Conference welcomed the important ongoing work of ESCAP on the elaboration of a regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development, which took into consideration existing subregional and national strategies, and called for its early completion;

(b) The Conference requested the ESCAP secretariat to convene meeting(s) of representatives of members and associate members of the Commission before the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development to follow up the Ministerial-level Conference decisions, particularly to elaborate a regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development and to continue preparation of the regional contribution to the 1992 Conference.

(c) The Conference agreed that further measures would be needed to assist the developing countries in the region to prepare national action plans for promoting environmentally sound and sustainable development; assist in setting project priorities; promote human resources development, institution building, and administrative and legal reforms for environmentally sound and sustainable development; and, in general, to implement the regional strategy for environmentally sound and sustainable development.

(d) The Conference recognized that adequate resources would be needed for the implementation of activities agreed to in the Declaration, and urged all donor Governments and agencies to make appropriate voluntary contributions so that actions identified could be implemented.

(e) However, several delegations felt that the suggested funding level of \$US 5 million per year was much too small for implementation of the comprehensive plan. It was further suggested by some delegations that some of the funds could be channeled through the subregional organizations; that funding support could also include contributions in national currency, as well as facilities; and that effective use of existing mechanisms should be explored.

(f) With regard to programme implementation, some delegations proposed that several projects could be implemented through the existing subregional environmental programmes, and that ESCAP should play an expanded role towards strengthening the capabilities of the programmes.

(g) The delegations generally shared the view that the problems of the environment could not be isolated from national realities and international economic factors that continued to perpetuate poverty, and that initiatives to overcome environmental problems would require concerted regional and international co-operation based on the principle of equitable sharing of responsibilities. Controlling environmental degradation conformed to the fundamental interests of developing countries and many delegations called on developed countries to assume more responsibility for the attainment of sustainable development.

(h) Apart from the need for fundamental policy changes, the Conference recognized the magnitude of the financial efforts that would be required for the active promotion of environmentally sound and sustainable development. On the one hand, the industrialized countries would have to supply their specific know-how, together with the necessary financial /resources,

resources, while on the other hand, they would have to reduce their disproportionate share of utilization of natural resources to a globally sustainable level.

(i) The Conference noted with appreciation efforts to institute financial mechanisms, such as the Global Environmental Facility, and stated that those were needed to support national and regional initiatives on environment and development. A suggestion was made that it was important to develop an international environment development fund to make available to countries funds for investments in environmental development and resource restoration, comparable to international investments in economic reconstruction and sound and sustainable development. That could include "debt-for-sustainable development" swaps, adapting the experience from debt-for-nature swaps.

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

(a) The Conference recognized the important role ESCAP would need to play in the preparations for the 1992 Conference, placing emphasis on the eradication of mass poverty as a cause of environmental degradation in developing countries, and urged the donor countries and agencies to provide necessary financial assistance and technology transfer to developing countries, with special attention to countries expected to face serious difficulties in implementing programmes aimed at sustainable development and in the enforcement of recent international environmental agreements.

(b) The Conference pledged full support for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992 and called for measures to ensure the full and active participation of ESCAP members and associate members, in particular the developing countries in the preparatory process for the Conference.

(c) The Conference recommended that the timing of the ESCAP regional preparatory meeting be advanced to February 1991, in order to provide the regional input to the second preparatory meeting of the 1992 Conference, scheduled to begin on 18 March 1991. In view of the heavy schedule of international environmental meetings, a suggestion was made to hold the regional preparatory meeting back to back with the proposed meeting of government-nominated experts on the further elaboration of the regional strategy and action plan.



(d) With respect to the prioritization of issues, it was mentioned that that was a difficult task requiring additional efforts on the part of the Governments and of the ESCAP secretariat. As it was not possible to have regional priorities in the great diversity of situations in the ESCAP region, it was proposed to concentrate on a limited number of common issues such as climate change, discharge of wastes, pollution issues and transfer of technology and resources.

(e) The Conference emphasized the necessity of paying more attention to developmental aspects and especially to their interlinkages with environmental issues because, it was observed, that matter had been insufficiently highlighted during the first substantive preparatory meeting for the Conference on Environment and Development, held in August 1990 at Nairobi.

(f) The Conference supported the recommendation of the Nairobi session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 Conference to hold that Conference at the level of heads of State and Government, which undoubtedly would raise the efficiency of its recommendations concerning the solution of global ecological problems.

(g) The Conference considered that the widest possible participation of the non-governmental organizations in the preparation of the 1992 Conference would have a substantial impact on achieving positive results and invited the Preparatory Committee to work out a form of involving non-governmental organizations to the preparatory process.

(h) A suggestion was made for ESCAP to take the initiative to collect information on oriental customs and traditions on environment to form a part of the regional input to the 1992 Conference.

(i) The Meeting concluded that the ESCAP regional input into the preparatory process for the 1992 Conference should, wherever possible, reflect national and subregional priorities and hoped that the national contributions for the preparation of regional inputs would be transmitted to the secretariat as soon as possible.

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND AND  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

1. We, the Ministers of the ESCAP region, representing more than half of the global population, met at Bangkok from 15 to 16 October 1990 at the Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific;
2. Recalling resolution 267 (XLIV) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific adopted at Jakarta in 1988 and the United Nations Development Programme Governing Council decision 90/20 adopted at its 38th meeting in 1990;
3. Recalling also the United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/228 on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992, and recognizing the importance accorded to regional inputs to that Conference;
4. Deeply concerned about the threat to environmentally sound and sustainable development due to environmental degradation and the depletion of natural resources in the ESCAP region and other adverse conditions, as highlighted in the report on the state of the environment for Asia and the Pacific 1990, such as forest destruction, desertification, watershed degradation, soil erosion, waterlogging and salinization, flooding, destruction of mangroves and corals, loss of biological diversity and pollution of air and water, as well as the ozone layer depletion and the potential rise in the sea level and other expected impacts of climate change associated with the emission of greenhouse gases;
5. Reiterating that poverty, human health, population pressure and environmental degradation are closely interrelated and that environmental protection in the developing countries of the region must, in this context, be viewed as an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it;
6. Affirming that the major cause of the continuing deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable pattern of production and consumption, particularly in industrialized countries, and that the responsibility for containing, reducing and eliminating environmental damage must be borne by the countries causing such damage and must be in relation to the damage caused and in accordance with their respective capabilities and responsibilities;

7. Recognizing the urgent need for all countries to intensify efforts to protect and improve the quality of the environment at national, subregional, regional and global levels, wherever relevant, by adopting an approach in which economic growth should be directed towards environmentally sound and sustainable development;

8. Recognizing further that the developing countries have specific concerns and needs which should be given special attention in any global effort for the protection of the environment;

9. Acknowledging the need to address the special environmental problems of small island developing countries of the region;

10. Stressing that the current international economic situation should be improved in order to remove obstacles hampering environmentally sound and sustainable development, particularly in the developing countries, with special attention to the least developed countries of the region;

11. Realizing that the majority of the developing countries in the region lack the necessary financial and other resources and technologies for them to participate effectively in the global and regional efforts for environmental protection;

12. Recognizing further the diverse economic conditions and consequently, the varying technological, financial and other capabilities of the countries in the region, and the opportunities arising therefrom for strengthening regional co-operation to achieve environmentally sound and sustainable development;

13. Reaffirming the objectives in the operative paragraphs 15 (j) and (m) of part I of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/228 on the need for new and additional financial resources and on favourable access to, and transfer of, environmentally sound technologies, in particular to the developing countries, for achieving environmentally sound and sustainable development;

We, the Ministers:

14. Commit ourselves to adopt an integrated approach to environment and development, and wherever possible and in accordance with our priorities and capabilities to incorporate environmental considerations into economic planning with a view to effecting the co-ordinated development of our economies and environment;

15. Believe that all economic and social development activities should meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
16. Affirm the crucial importance of maintaining the proper balance between economic development, population growth, the rational use of natural resources and environmental protection;
17. Urge countries in the region to adopt effective and sound population policies and accompanying measures for that purpose;
18. Affirm that States have the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their social, economic and environmental policies, ensuring that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction;
19. Believe that, to achieve sustainable development, policies must be based on the precautionary principle;
20. Affirm the important role of science and technology in economic development, environmental protection, promotion of human health and population planning, especially the popularization and wider use of related science and technologies, in particular in the rural areas in the developing countries, in achieving this goal;
21. Emphasize the need for all countries and relevant international agencies to intensify their co-operation to support and assist the developing countries of the region in such efforts;
22. Welcome and pledge our full support for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992 and call for measures to ensure the full and active participation of ESCAP members and associate members in the preparatory process for the Conference, in particular the developing countries;
23. Recognize that adequate resources will be needed for the implementation of activities agreed to in this Declaration, and urge all donor Governments and agencies to make appropriate voluntary contributions so that actions identified can be implemented;
24. Welcome the important ongoing work of ESCAP on the elaboration of a regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development by taking into consideration existing subregional and national strategies and call for its early completion;

25. Request the ESCAP secretariat to convene meeting(s) of representatives of members and associate members of the Commission before the second meeting of Preparatory Committee of the 1992 Conference to follow up our decisions, particularly to elaborate a regional strategy on environmentally sound and sustainable development and to continue preparation of the regional contribution to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

26. Request also the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, in consultation with representatives from the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies, multilateral funding organizations and Governments to find ways and means to enhance the effectiveness of co-operation and co-ordination in the development and implementation of regional environment and development activities as envisaged by this Declaration;

27. Affirm the right of individuals and non-governmental organizations to be informed of environmental problems relevant to them, to have the necessary access to information, and to participate in the formulation and implementation of decisions likely to affect their environment;

28. Recommend the strengthening of the environment related activities of non-governmental organizations, the promotion of public awareness and people's participation in environmental protection and management activities and in this context welcome all United Nations initiatives which seek to assist media, non-governmental organization and community groups targeting the poor;

29. Reaffirm the necessity to promote environmental education, especially of the younger generations, as well as other measures to increase awareness of the value of the environment;

30. Welcome and encourage the efforts to establish research, training, policy and other institutes/centres dealing with environment and development activities, with a view to promoting exchange of information, technical assistance and regional co-operation for activities relevant to environmentally sound and sustainable development, and agree that ESCAP should play an important role in promoting the formulation of a regional network of such institutes/centres;

31. Welcome the participation of the Asia-Pacific UNDP regional resident representatives at this Conference which will enable them to better assist in the effective follow-up activities;

32. Further request the Executive Secretary of ESCAP to keep the progress of implementation of this Declaration under review and report to the annual sessions of the Commission.

Annex IISUMMARY OF THE REPORT OF THE NGO/MEDIA SYMPOSIUM ON  
COMMUNICATION FOR ENVIRONMENT

1. The Symposium was attended by 111 representatives of non-governmental organizations, 25 members of the Asian Forum of Environmental Journalists and 40 other media professionals from all corners of the Asian and Pacific region. This is the first time in the ESCAP region, and may be anywhere else, that such an event was organized, bringing together the media and the non-governmental organizations on one platform to discuss environmental issues. In view of the large-scale participation by both groups and the readiness expressed by them to co-operate for the protection of the environment of the Asian and Pacific region, as well as of the global environment, the Symposium may be considered a big success.

2. The Symposium discussed extensively the relationship between the media and the non-governmental organizations. On economic growth and environmental sustainability, the Symposium reflected on aspects of equity, the relevance of growth in the protection and enhancement of the environment, and various issues of sustainable development. The Symposium urged the participants to examine their own capacities for promoting increased environmental awareness and practical, affordable alternatives to present patterns of economic growth.

3. The Asian Forum of Environmental Journalists wished to extend their activities in the Pacific and renamed their organization the Asia-Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (AFEJ). A new executive body had been elected with Mr. Adlai J. Amor (Philippines) as its Chairman. The statute of AFEJ was amended to have four vice-chairmen, one each from South Asia, South-East Asia, East Asia and the Pacific (to be appointed later). Besides the Secretary and two members there is also a Joint Secretary making a total of nine members in the Executive Committee. A new work programme has also been proposed.

4. The Symposium recommended that each national forum of environmental journalists within the network of AFEJ should include in their work programme the regular preparation and dissemination of feature articles on the environment. Those could be channeled through various networks such as Depthnews, PANOS and Interpress Service.

5. The Symposium also recommended that non-governmental organizations should continually orient journalists on current environmental issues.

6. In a separate session, the non-governmental organization groups discussed the direction of their programme up until 1992 and the issues to be communicated to the Ministerial-level Conference. They expressed the desire to provide support to the national state of the environment reports to be prepared by February 1991 for presentation to the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992 in Brazil. They further expressed their desire to be part of the official delegation to that Conference so that they could contribute to the discussions.

7. An outstanding achievement of the Symposium was the development of the Universal Code of Environmental Conduct which should be disseminated in the region and adopted and put into practice by communities and Governments. The Symposium also adopted a statement with a set of recommendations for submission to the Ministerial-level Conference and for wide dissemination among non-governmental organizations and the media.

8. The Symposium recommended that the co-operation between non-governmental organization and the media groups crystallize at the national and local levels based on issues and concerns of the people about their environment. Consultation between those two groups was considered to be of the utmost importance. ESCAP was requested to establish a small working group of six non-governmental organization and media representatives and convene a meeting to follow up on the outcome of the Symposium.

Annex III

## CLEANTECH 1990 - SUMMARY

In conjunction with the Ministerial-level Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific an exhibition on clean technology - CLEANTECH 1990 - was also organized. The objective of the exhibition was to: (i) create, promote and enhance awareness on availability of pollution control and prevention technologies; and (ii) provide a forum for technology transfer between suppliers and users of technology.

The organizers of the Ministerial-level Conference, ESCAP, UNDP, UNEP, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Royal Thai Government were all represented at the exhibition, presenting their activities in the field of environment and development. Eighteen organizations from 10 different countries supplying environmentally sound technologies were also represented. A wide spectrum of expertise and products were displayed, such as:

Air pollution control equipment, air scrubbers, dust collectors, electrostatic precipitators and catalytic convertors;

Environmental impact assessment of power stations; systems for use of fly-ash in the building industry;

Systems for separate collection of solid waste; waste incinerators; garbage compactors and hazardous waste management technologies;

Computer based system for the analysis of remotely sensed data;

Waste-water treatment technologies for pulp and paper industries, tanneries, chemical industries, electroplating industries and domestic sewage;

Systems for chromium recycling in tanneries, recovering heavy metals in industrial waste waters and recovery and recycling of industrial oils;

Low waste car engines, catalytic convertors for automobiles, system for recovery of chloro-fluorocarbons from car air-conditioners and a low waste bus engine powered by a hybrid of diesel and electricity;

The following four exhibitors were awarded for their outstanding presentation of clean technology:

Toyota Motor Corp., Japan, presenting a system for recovery of chloro-fluorocarbons from air-conditioners;

SIAM DHV Consultancy Services, Thailand, presenting a pellet reactor that softens water, removes phosphates and recovers heavy metals from waste water;

/HASKONING



HASKONING, Royal Dutch Consultants, India, presenting the Up Flow Anaerobic Sludge Blanket (UASB) technology for waste-water treatment and a chrome recovery and reuse technology for tanneries; and,

China National Machinery Import & Export Corporation, People's Republic of China, presenting waste-water treatment technology for tanneries, textile industries, electroplating industries printing and dyeing industries, etc.

A painting competition for schoolchildren and an exhibition of photographs on the environment were also organized as a part of CLEANTECH 1990. The exhibition of photographs was funded by the Government of Japan.

All ESCAP members were invited to organize national painting competitions for schoolchildren on the theme "Technology and environment", and to participate with their three winning national entries in the regional competition.

In total 23 countries participated in the regional competition, and all these paintings were displayed at the exhibition during the Ministerial-level Conference.

A panel of judges with representatives from the organizers of the Ministerial-level Conference made the selection of the following three winning entries:

- |                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Samaria Poching<br>Samoa    | 17 years |
| 2. Gargi Bhattacharya<br>India | 13 years |
| 3. Suseno<br>Indonesia         | 17 years |

In addition to a certificate of recognition, the three winning entries received cash prizes of \$US 350, \$US 300 and \$US 250 respectively. A consolation prize of \$US 50 and a certificate were awarded to all other national winning entries.

The photographic exhibition included a number of photographs from Japan and the ESCAP secretariat collected photographs from other countries of the region illustrating the state of environment in Asia and the Pacific. To mark International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction, one part of the photo exhibition was reserved for photos showing the effect of natural disasters.

UNIVERSAL CODE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONDUCT<sup>1/</sup>

The world is in a deep environmental crisis. This crisis is rooted in global patterns of human behaviour that are ecologically unsustainable, socially alienating and economically unjust. We need a transformation of human purpose that unites material and spiritual realities and creates a common conscience: a conscience which restores and nurtures a world of balance and harmony, peace and justice; caring through community trusteeship, stewardship and accountability for now and for future generations.

Recognizing that unity is essential if diverse people are to work towards a common future, we, the citizens of this earth, hereby proclaim this Universal Environmental Code of Conduct.

All peoples and their Governments should strive:

- To recognize that we cannot segregate the human heart from the environment; humanity is organic with the world: its inner life molds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it;
- To advocate economic and social justice for the inarticulate masses who bear a disproportionate burden of the consequences of environmental degradation;
- To support the individual's right of access to information from all sources relating to the environment;
- To value the intrinsic worth and diversity of nature; protect, promote and support life-styles that enrich both cultural diversity and moderation of wants based on ecologically sustainable principles, growth and development;
- To recognize that bio-regions, their organic rhythms, cycles and species, transcend political boundaries and therefore endeavour to enhance inspired global and regional action;
- To protect the natural heritage of future generations by adopting an all-embracing perception and vision of non-exploitative technology in industrial, agricultural and aquatic practices;
- To maintain the integrity and sanctity of nature by exercising extreme caution in the disposal of wastes and the use and propagation of man-made substances and organisms;

/- To

---

<sup>1/</sup> Declaration of the NGO/Media Symposium on Communication for Environment, Bangkok, 10-16 October 1990.

- To develop rural infrastructure that sustains life and avoids the crowding and alienation from nature characterized by urban society today;
- To encourage and urge social and environmental accountability by Governments, powerful global enterprises and organizations;
- To nurture the spirit of this Code in ourselves and in all people and plant the seeds of responsibility to protect and conserve the environment;
- To initiate a process of consultation with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies which would lead to the establishment of a Global Convention on Environmental Rights and Duties.

Recommendations adopted by the NGO/Media Symposium on  
Communication for Environment, Bangkok,  
10-16 October 1990

We recommend that:

1. Environmental education be introduced at all levels in schools and colleges, and that United Nations agencies and multilateral finance institutions, such as the Asian Development Bank, support the development and introduction of such curricula.
2. There be timely access to reliable environmental data, and training in communicating such knowledge and information on a national, regional, South-South and South-North basis.
3. Governments and development agencies must integrate NGOs and local organizations closest to the grass-roots in development programmes and processes from the planning stage on. To achieve this, free flow of and access to information by people is essential; the public's right to know and be consulted must be recognized and put into effect.
4. The people's right to organize and the media's right to maintain their independence be respected.
5. Bio-regions and not national boundaries must become an essential framework of planning and action in, for example, the low-lying island systems, the Himalayan region and war-affected zones.
6. The Himalayan region must be recognized for its unique bio-regional, cultural, spiritual and natural status. Developments there have an impact on the world outside the immediate region. The region is being destroyed to the detriment of the entire earth, perhaps through ill-conceived development plans involving exploitative logging, mining, damming and tourism with total disregard to long term survival and population transfers that displace communities already disadvantaged. An international effort should be urgently undertaken to halt further destruction of the Himalayan bio-region by according priority to conservation and tree farming for food, fodder and fibre.
7. In preparation for, and during the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, there be full participatory involvement of non-governmental organizations.
8. All nations must include non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process and in their official delegations to the 1992 Conference in Brazil, one of the most important Conferences of our times.

9. The vital interests of women as trustees of the environment, who undergo increasing hardships as users of energy, as family educators, as nurturers of children must be recognized in the shaping of environmental policies.
10. Environmentally-friendly policies and practices be instituted in all aspects of development to ensure sustainability. Our Symposium urged that the Asian and Pacific Governments examine their own capacities for adopting affordable alternatives to present patterns of economic growth.
11. Energy plays a key role in development, environment, climate and sources of supply. Governments and energy corporations are urged to speed up efforts to find substitutes for environmentally harmful energy sources.
12. Urgent measures be taken to protect threatened habitats and species, to prevent widespread destruction of forests and to reclaim wastelands.
13. United Nations initiatives, such as the UNDP Asia-Pacific 2000 Programme, be welcomed and jointly designed and implemented with the full involvement and assistance of NGOs, voluntary agencies and the media. This would play a major part in our ongoing initiative.
14. The Universal Code of Environmental Conduct adopted by this Symposium be accepted and widely distributed by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with a view to initiating consultations among Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies towards establishing a global convention on environmental rights and duties.
15. Each country should take into account the loss of natural resources and the costs in human losses and suffering due to economic development in calculating their development indices and not merely adhere to rates of economic growth.
16. The unsustainable practices adopted by the industrialized countries are causing continuing deterioration of the environment. The responsibility for eliminating such environmental damage and for introducing alternate technologies must be borne by them in due proportion.

In conclusion, this Symposium of NGOs and Media has appointed a small Working Group to ensure follow-up actions and requests UNDP and ESCAP to facilitate its work.

. . . . .