

GENERAL

E/ESCAP/1093
23 February 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Fifty-fourth session
16-22 April 1998
Bangkok

**EMERGING ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL:
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

(Item 6 (b) of the provisional agenda)

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 1995 MINISTERIAL
CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AND
ON THE OUTCOME OF THE 1997 SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Note by the secretariat

SUMMARY

The present note describes progress in the implementation of Commission resolution 52/8 of 24 April 1996 on the Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific. It focuses on major achievements and salient issues relating to the regional implementation of the outcome of the Conference and the priority issues that have emerged in the light of discussions and recommendations made in ESCAP forums, in particular at an expert group meeting convened at the request of the Commission. It also reviews the outcome of the Nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly, held in June 1997, in relation to the regional implementation of Agenda 21, along with the outcome of the Conference. The Commission is invited to provide views and comments on the progress achieved and the priorities arrived at and to make recommendations on further implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 1996-2000.

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Introduction

1. At its fifty-second session, held in Bangkok in 1996, the Commission adopted resolution 52/8 of 24 April 1996 on the Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific. The resolution stipulated that a report on the review of the progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference should be presented to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session.

2. The Ministerial Conference adopted the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 1996-2000, which provides a blueprint for action to promote sustainable development in the region. It envisages the achievement of 141 tangible results within 24 programme areas under the following objectives: (a) pollution reduction, prevention and control, and enhancement of environmental quality; (b) conservation and management of natural resources and ecosystems; (c) sustainable development policy improvement; and (d) sustainable development indicators and assessment.

I. IMPLEMENTATION BY MAJOR OBJECTIVES

A. Pollution reduction, prevention and control

3. In order to check the deterioration of air and water quality and the adverse effects of toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes, countries of the region have taken steps to promote cleaner production and the use of substitute fuels, to upgrade infrastructure, to promote integrated water resource planning, to promulgate legislation, to set standards and prepare codes of practice, and to enhance chemical safety and promote integrated facilities for the collection, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes.

4. The secretariat is implementing a number of catalytic projects in support of national activities. Six projects have been or are being implemented on air quality. These projects address issues related to climate change and actions on integrating environmental issues into the transport sector. Five projects were undertaken to address water quality issues, such as the rehabilitation of water quality in contaminated rivers. In addition, considerable attention was paid to urban water management and gender issues in the protection and management of water resources. In terms of toxic chemicals and hazardous waste management, the secretariat's projects promoted industrial audits for waste minimization and safer transport of dangerous goods. A publication, *Guidelines for Establishment of National and Regional Systems for Inland Transportation of Dangerous Goods* was issued. The secretariat is now collaborating with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on an in-depth analysis of legislation related to the transport of dangerous goods. Regional cooperation in the environmental management of agrochemicals was strengthened through the Fertilizer Advisory, Development and Information Network for Asia and the Pacific (FADINAP), while the Asian and

Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) continued to promote the dissemination of information on clean technologies.

5. With regard to water pollution control, the Expert Group Meeting on Technology Transfer for Wastewater Treatment of Small and Medium-Scale Industries was held in January 1997, and five national seminars were organized in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal and Viet Nam. Recommendations were formulated for the promotion of the transfer and use of cleaner production and wastewater treatment technologies by small and medium-sized industries at the national level, as well as on the role of international organizations towards that end.

6. With respect to the urban environment, support was provided to the Regional Network of Local Authorities for the Management of Human Settlements (CITYNET). Seminars, workshops and advisory services and exchange programmes were conducted in the area of solid waste management. A project was also undertaken on the use of environmental audit for waste minimization. Several projects have been implemented on urban environmental issues. A project on "Healthy Cities" is being implemented in collaboration with the World Health Organization.

7. In the context of both pollution control and resource conservation, a major area of attention was energy. Energy policies in many countries of the region were reviewed for the purpose of incorporating environmental and social concerns into energy pricing and energy policy decisions. In several countries, inter-fuel substitution, integrated resource planning and demand management were pursued to increase energy efficiency. The secretariat assisted member countries through projects on energy and environmental planning, energy conservation, the promotion of clean coal technology, integrated resource planning and the promotion of efficiency in energy end use. Institutional networking was promoted under the Programme for Asian Cooperation on Energy and the Environment (PACE-E) to foster regional cooperation in the efficient utilization and conservation of energy.

8. The ESCAP secretariat, together with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank, is also promoting the implementation of the Framework for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation, which was adopted by the Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia, at their third meeting, held at Ulaanbaatar in September 1996. In follow-up of the Framework, a fourth meeting was held at Moscow in January 1998 to review projects on energy and air pollution, and capacity-building, and the institutional and financial aspects of cooperation, as well as the priorities in relation to the outcome of the Nineteenth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The meeting endorsed four proposals for implementation as measures to further cooperation.

B. Conservation and management of natural resources and ecosystems

9. The Regional Action Programme has promoted actions in the areas of forestry, biodiversity, coastal/marine and wetland resources as well as land resources. At the national level, plans and programmes have been undertaken in social forestry, farm forestry and block energy plantations in order to bridge the wide gap between demand and supply. At the regional level, support has been provided to the forestry sector through financial assistance from ADB and UNDP and capacity-building through research and studies by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In addition, FAO has provided technical training on watershed management and social forestry in support of enhancing forest management capacity.

10. Efforts at the national level to conserve biodiversity are being strengthened through the storage of germ plasm in gene banks and the establishment of botanical gardens, as well as through the development of wetlands and lake conservation plans and the strengthening of protected areas, including national parks, sanctuaries and biosphere reserves. Regional and international efforts have focused on the enhancement of national capacity. The World Bank and ADB have funded various activities, while FAO, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) have provided technical assistance and training for capacity-building. Regional cooperation is increasing through the establishment of transborder reserves, sanctuaries and parks. One example of this is the transborder reserve in Borneo on the border of Sarawak and Kalimantan; another is the first ASEAN Transfrontier Marine Turtle Sanctuary between Malaysia and the Philippines.

11. To protect coastal and marine resources, coastal environmental management plans have been prepared at the national level. ESCAP issued *Planning Guidelines on Coastal Environmental Management*. It also issued *Towards Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Asia*. Cooperation between ESCAP and ADB led to a study on promoting investment in the coastal areas of Cambodia, China and Viet Nam in order to enhance environmental resources. Coastal environmental management plans developed for Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Tonga are to be followed up in national workshops for capacity-building and the identification of investment projects. The implementation of the South Asian Seas Action Plan, which was developed together with UNEP, is to be promoted through the secretariat of the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP). The International Maritime Organization has also been undertaking a project of the Global Environment Facility for capacity-building in marine environmental protection in the East Asian seas. A regional working group of institutions has been formed to share information and experience relating to the marine environment and oceanographic studies.

12. Problems and issues relating to desertification and land degradation were addressed by the Regional Network of Research and Training Centres on Desertification Control in Asia and the Pacific (DESCONAP), which brought together countries of the region to design and draft the Asian annex to

the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. A number of case studies were conducted to develop national action programmes to combat desertification in China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Pakistan and Turkmenistan. The secretariat is currently striving to promote projects to put into operation the national action plans as well as the Regional Action Programme to Combat Desertification, in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Convention.

13. Development of mountainous areas has been promoted through forestry and agriculture, as well as rural development programmes. Regional cooperation and capacity-building towards this end are being promoted by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development.

C. Sustainable development policy improvements

14. As part of the Regional Action Programme, activities addressed issues related to strengthening institutions and legislation; setting environmental standards; promoting tools and methods for environmental management, such as environmental impact assessment (EIA), environmental accounting and economic instruments; combating poverty to promote sustainable development; adopting mutually supportive trade and environment policies, national strategies and action plans; education and awareness-raising; and the implementation of international environmental conventions.

15. At the regional level, ESCAP is carrying out a project to enhance national capacity to integrate environmental considerations into economic planning and decision-making. The project includes a review of the institutional modalities for making policy decisions and coordination mechanisms between ministries and agencies. A critical analysis is also being conducted on the types of measures being used to integrate environmental considerations into economic decision-making and the types of monitoring and enforcement mechanisms being used to achieve stated policy objectives. Also included in the project are studies on tools and methodologies such as EIA, economic instruments and natural resources accounting, which can assist in policy-making for sustainable development at the national, local and sectoral levels. To date the envisaged 27 country case studies, as well as two subregional synthesis papers each for the South Asian and the Pacific subregions have been completed. A subregional expert group meeting for South Asia was organized in Sri Lanka to review the synthesis of case studies and exchange experience on (a) institutional arrangements at the national, provincial/local and sectoral levels for integrated policy-making, (b) the modalities for environmental assessment and the tools for integrated decision-making, and (c) best practices. Two subregional meetings are scheduled to be held: one in the Philippines in February 1998 and one in Vanuatu in March 1998. A regional meeting is planned to be held at Bangkok in May 1998.

16. ESCAP has also widely disseminated guidelines on environmental impact assessments. Further, to promote the use of economic instruments, efforts have been concentrated on dissemination of information on preferential tax treatment, including tax credits, reduction of duties on the import of

pollution-abatement equipment and machinery, accelerated depreciation allowance on investments, deposit refund schemes, and eco-marks or eco-labelling. In addition, national training programmes on modelling for sustainable development, including tools and methodologies for integration of the environment in economic decision-making, are being promoted in selected countries of the region. Moreover, a project was implemented on systems of environmental and resource accounting in which sectoral case studies were undertaken by selected countries. These case studies and other materials were reviewed at a seminar in May 1996.

17. A theme study was conducted to examine rural poverty alleviation from the perspective of sustainable development, macroeconomic reforms and changes in development strategies. The study recommended policies to alleviate rural poverty in the light of its major findings. In addition a project aimed at assisting developing countries to formulate appropriate policies to mitigate the negative aspects of price behaviour related to market reforms and price liberalization in the primary sector was also implemented. Another project promotes poverty alleviation through market-generated rural employment. The project is being field-tested in eight countries through an innovative success-case-replication methodology, designed to enhance the income of the rural poor by replicating successful micro-enterprises.

18. The secretariat also conducted two projects for assessing the interrelationship between trade and the environment. A number of case studies were conducted and regional meetings held under each project. Perceptions on trade and environment issues in the region varies, depending on the export structure of individual countries. However, a common concern among all developing countries in the region is the potential effect that environmental measures can have on their exports. Measures such as eco-labelling and the introduction of ISO 14000 have begun to be debated and understood. The projects attempted to help bridge the information gap on trade and environment issues in the region.

19. ESCAP, together with the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment of the Government of the Netherlands will convene an expert group meeting on strategic environmental planning in March 1998 to discuss and disseminate case studies and methodologies on the development and implementation of action plans, to assist the countries of the region in the enhancement of the capacity to develop and implement plans and action strategies.

20. The work in environmental education and awareness at ESCAP is directed at various groups, such as youth, organizers of non-formal environmental education activities, government officials, professionals, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the general public. Numerous reference and resource materials, learning sequences and corresponding training materials were disseminated, including the publications *State of the Environment in Asia and the Pacific* and *Road Transport and the Environment* and reports on the state of the environment. Through the Asia-Pacific Forum

of Environmental Journalists, ESCAP disseminated information on the environment and organized training for environmental journalists. The media and NGOs were also strengthened in 15 countries of the region through a project which involved designing training materials on environmental protection for community leaders.

21. To make existing international agreements effective a mutually reinforcing system of international and national environmental legislation is required. Through technical assistance, training and advisory services, ESCAP is assisting countries of the region to strengthen national environmental legal instruments, which will facilitate the implementation of international agreements. For example, the secretariat disseminated the publication *Prevention of Illegal Traffic in Hazardous Waste* in support of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal. To promote the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ESCAP is promoting the development of an information network and has also organized regional seminars, consultative meetings and workshops on climate change. It also prepared a regional input to the third session of the Conference of the Parties held in Kyoto, Japan in December 1997.

D. Sustainable development indicators and assessment

22. ESCAP organized a regional meeting on indicators of sustainable development in November 1996. The meeting was attended by representatives of countries and several United Nations agencies, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is implementing the Commission on Sustainable Development programme of work on indicators of sustainable development. The meeting helped evaluate efforts to develop such indicators in the region. Information was exchanged and modalities discussed for coordinating national, regional and international efforts. It also reviewed the procedure for pilot-testing of indicators at the national level. A follow-up project involves national testing of the indicators in China, Maldives, Pakistan and the Philippines.

23. The secretariat continued to implement the UNDP-funded project on integrated application of geographic information systems and remote sensing for sustainable natural resources and environment management, with current focus on developing national capability in spatial information technology applications. In addition, a multi-year, multidisciplinary project for research and studies on applications of advanced satellite data for sustainable natural resources and environmental monitoring and management is being implemented in collaboration with 20 scientific and technological teams from 15 ESCAP member countries. The studies and research focus on topics such as geographic information systems; the global climate system; monitoring of the water and energy cycle and development of scientific methodologies for natural resource mapping.

24. ESCAP also disseminated a publication entitled *Guidelines on Monitoring Methodologies*

for Water, Air and Toxic Chemicals/Hazardous Wastes to promote national capacity in monitoring. *Guidelines on the State of Environment Reporting in Asia and the Pacific* was also disseminated to assist countries and subregional intergovernmental organizations on such reporting. Close cooperation is also maintained with the national focal points as well as the UNEP Environment Assessment Programme to promote development of a database on state-of-environment reporting at the national, regional and subregional levels. Work on the preparation of the report on the state of the environment in Asia and the Pacific for the year 2000 has also commenced.

II. PRIORITY AREAS OF THE REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME

A. Regional meeting and priorities

25. As requested by the Commission, an expert group meeting was organized from 27 to 30 May 1997 to review ongoing activities and draw up new project profiles for implementation and strengthening of the Regional Action Programme.

26. The meeting took note of the priority areas expressed by various clusters of countries in relation to the Regional Action Programme. Desertification, for example, emerged as an important problem in the arid and semi-arid countries of the region. Coastal and marine environment was identified as a major area of concern for island and archipelago countries. Management of toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes was listed as a major problem by countries recording fast industrial growth, while transboundary air pollution was identified as an important problem in the countries of North-East Asia. Threats to biodiversity and deteriorating water and air quality were recognized as universal problems in the region. On policy related issues, capacity-building; environmental training and awareness; institutions and legislation; tools for environmental management; and environmental standards were considered priority issues. Environmental assessment and reporting were also rated important.

27. The meeting prepared a portfolio of 27 project profiles. A list of these is given in the annex to the present note. While preparing the project profiles, the meeting first identified the tangible results (outputs) expected from the projects and worked backward to enlist the specific activities, intended impacts and justification along with the objective for each project.

28. The activities to be taken up through the proposed projects can be classified into the following categories:

- Regional: To deal with subregional and regional issues of a common and transboundary nature and capacity-building for meeting the objectives of Agenda 21
- National: To deal with the environmental issues that are mainly national in character

- Local: To deal with issues for which decentralization at local levels is required to develop infrastructure, skills and the capability to solve local problems, including poverty alleviation

29. As can be seen from the above list, project activities focus on capacity-building at various levels, human resources development, management of sensitive ecosystems, cleaner technologies, trade related policies and economic instruments.

30. The emphasis is on integrated approaches involving preventive and mitigative measures for achieving the objectives of sustainable development. The meeting realized that the pursuit of sustainable development can no longer be confined to regulatory actions (command and control) alone. Pro-active approaches including the use of economic instruments and other measures are advocated.

B. Outcome of the Nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly

31. In the plenary debate of the Special Session of the General Assembly, delegations pronounced their policies and achievements on sustainable development, the constraints encountered, their needs and the support required for international cooperation. There was general agreement that considerable achievement had been made in developing national policies and legislation to support the implementation of Agenda 21. At the same time, there was a sober reminder that little progress had been made during the past five years on implementing various components of Agenda 21. The Committee of the Whole established by the Plenary negotiated the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21, which was endorsed by the General Assembly.

32. The Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 contains a large number of organizational and policy decisions for the achievement of sustainable development, such as:

(a) Reaffirmed the political commitment by all members of the international community, as well as from all major groups of civil society, to sustainable development, and of the key role to be played in this area by the United Nations;

(b) Clarified the specific roles of various United Nations organs and institutions in the further work on sustainable development;

(c) Adopted a more focused programme of work for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), including its reconfirmation as the central policy forum for building consensus and promoting further action on sustainable development. This included more systematic and substantive attention to economic sectors and major groups in the future work of CSD. It also underlined the need to focus more prominently on development;

(d) Reaffirmed that official development assistance (ODA) is essential for sustainable

development, particularly for the least developed countries, and that developed countries should fulfil their commitments and make intensified efforts to reverse the decline in ODA;

(e) Continued the political process related to forests, under the auspices of CSD, including direct action on the recommendation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and more focused consideration of modalities and elements for a possible legally-binding instrument in this area;

(f) Initiated intergovernmental processes on freshwater and energy as an input to the work of CSD;

(g) Promoted a better understanding of the importance of and a stronger commitment at the global level to such issues as tourism, transport, changing production and consumption patterns and eco-efficiency, among others;

(h) Promoted a number of practical agreements in specific areas, such as the world-wide phase out of lead in gasoline;

(i) Recognized the importance of and need to learn from practical country-level and non-governmental experience in implementing the concepts of sustainable development.

33. Agreements and recommendations that are relevant to specific programme areas of the Regional Action Programme are listed below:

(a) *Climate*. The international community confirmed its recognition of the problem of climate change as one of the biggest challenges facing the world in the next century. At the Special Session, countries reviewed the state of preparations for the third session of the Conference of the Parties of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. They all agreed that it was vital that there should be a satisfactory result. The subsequent adoption of the Kyoto Protocol provided reduction targets of greenhouse gases.

(b) *Fresh water*. Giving the issue "highest priority", governments called for a dialogue, beginning at the 1998 session of CSD, on a strategic approach to preserve and protect freshwater supplies and to build consensus on means of implementation.

(c) *Toxic, hazardous and radioactive wastes*. Governments agreed that safe substitutes for toxic chemicals should be developed and those technologies transferred to poorer countries. The Basel Convention should be strengthened to define hazardous wastes covered, and a protocol should be negotiated on liability for damage from hazardous wastes shipped across national borders. Governments agreed on the need to support the clean-up of contaminated sites from nuclear activities. In general, radioactive wastes should be disposed of in the country in which they are generated, and each country has a responsibility to ensure proper management, taking into account transboundary effects. Governments should make efforts to prohibit the export of radioactive wastes to countries

that do not have appropriate disposal facilities, and they should not allow storage or disposal of radioactive wastes near the marine environment.

(d) *Energy and transportation.* It was agreed to encourage governments and the private sector to consider ways to promote internalization of environmental costs in energy prices, and to recognize the need to encourage the reduction and gradual elimination of subsidies that inhibit sustainable development. The need was recognized for "evolving commitments" for the transfer of clean technologies to developing countries. It was also agreed that talks on how to advance sustainable production and use of energy should take place at CSD in 2001, with preparations to take place within an open-ended intergovernmental group of experts. Governments also agreed to accelerate the phasing out of leaded gasoline as soon as possible in the transport sector.

(e) *Forests.* Governments agreed to implement the Proposals for Action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and decided to set up an intergovernmental forum on forests under CSD.

(f) *Biodiversity.* Governments agreed on the urgent need to take decisive action to conserve genes, species and ecosystems, to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity, paying further attention to the provision of new and additional resources, and to complete the biosafety protocol under the Convention.

(g) *Oceans.* Governments agreed on the urgent need to eliminate over-fishing, to consider the impact of subsidies to fishing fleets, and to strengthen implementation of existing agreements on marine pollution and sustainable use of oceans.

(h) *Land/desertification.* It was agreed that governments should ratify and implement the Convention to Combat Desertification, but while developing countries urged donor countries to provide new and additional financial resources to the global mechanism to fund the Convention's implementation, developed countries preferred to support a mechanism that would be able to promote the mobilization and channelling of substantial resources.

(i) *Poverty.* Governments agreed that full implementation of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development was essential and listed priority actions.

34. The Special Session also identified the following supportive measures for the implementation of future programmes:

35. *Financing.* Governments agreed to a general statement that developed countries should fulfil their commitment made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to reach the UN target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for ODA, and that intensified efforts should be made to reverse the downward trend in ODA since 1992. Donor

countries were urged to provide new and additional resources through a satisfactory replenishment of the Global Environment Facility.

36. *Technology transfer.* Governments called for the urgent fulfilment of all commitments made at UNCED concerning concrete measures for the transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs) to developing countries, to be reviewed regularly by CSD. Recognizing that most advanced ESTs are held by the private sector, they called for the creation of an environment conducive to technology-related private investment and public-private partnerships.

37. Implementation of Agenda 21 in the context of the Regional Action Programme was discussed at the third and fourth sessions of the Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. The report of the fourth session is before the Commission for endorsement. The Committee had previously decided to review the implementation of Agenda 21 in line with the work programme of CSD. The Commission may consider requesting the Committee to continue undertaking such reviews whenever possible without duplicating the work of CSD and to report on the progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 in the Asian and Pacific region.

III. FUTURE ACTIONS

38. The recommendations of the expert group meeting, the two sessions of the Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, and the Special Session of the General Assembly provide substantial support for the implementation of the Regional Action Programme. The role of ensuring successful implementation of Regional Action Programme lies mainly with national governments. In many cases, the national governments have nominated focal points, but in order to streamline and enhance progress, there is a need to enhance inter-agency and inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation at the national level. It is imperative, therefore, that members and associate members of ESCAP establish appropriate institutional mechanisms for the purpose.

39. Regional and international support measures must continue as an integral part of the implementation process. In addition to the participating countries, the international, regional, and subregional institutions will need to implement and support these projects. ESCAP has already undertaken a number of projects and will continue to do so through its extrabudgetary resources, but funding remains a major constraint.

40. The Special Session also emphasized increased regional implementation of Agenda 21. This supports further implementation of the Regional Action Programme. Regional commissions were requested to provide appropriate support for regional meetings of experts on the implementation of Agenda 21. In line with such recommendations, concerned international and regional organizations and multilateral financing institutions need to develop the elements of Regional Action Programme into their activities and projects, wherever appropriate. It is also important to develop a data bank for new

projects under the Regional Action Programme. In addition, a number of regional networks promoted by the secretariat and other international agencies should be used effectively for the development and implementation of activities related to the Regional Action Programme.

41. National governments are mobilizing domestic resources from all possible sources to implement the Regional Action Programme. However, the Special Session of the General Assembly made clear that developed countries must significantly strengthen the financial and technological support they provide to developing countries if they hope to convince the governments to make additional commitments and to mobilize national resources to address various sustainable development goals on the regional or international agenda.

42. The Commission is invited to provide views and comments on the progress achieved and the priorities arrived at and to make recommendations on further implementation of the Regional Action Programme.

Annex

LIST OF PROJECT PROFILES

1. Local government capacity-building for urban environmental management
1. Capacity-building in air quality monitoring and management in the metropolitan cities of the ESCAP region
2. A study on the management of toxic and hazardous wastes in the ESCAP region
3. Capacity-building for developing and implementing national environmental strategies and action plans for sustainable development
4. Joint research on the long-range transport of pollutants in North-East Asia
5. Sustainable management and use of wetlands and lakes
6. Regional cooperation in monitoring and assessment for state-of-the-environment reports in Asia and the Pacific
7. Strengthening the capacity for environmental legislation in the context of sustainable development
8. Strengthening government institutions for training on sustainable development
9. Capacity-building to improve the water quality in major river basins in the ESCAP region
10. Enhancing sustainable use of biological resources
11. Formulation of environmental quality standards for transboundary/international rivers
12. Promotion of cleaner technology in the industries of the region
13. Mutually supportive trade and environment policies
14. Study on the use of economic instruments for environmental conservation in the ESCAP region
15. Alternate energy development
16. Strengthening national focal points for environmental education and networking
17. Development of databases and management capacities for the conservation of biological diversity
18. Regional cooperation for the development of approaches to integrated coastal zone management
19. Human resources development through strengthening regional centres of excellence in South Asia
20. Improving capacity and developing linkages with local communities for the sustainable development of tourism
21. Strengthening national and regional capacity to implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Asia and the Pacific

22. Capacity-building for meeting obligations under international environmental conventions
23. Strengthening of the environmental impact assessment review system
24. Marine pollution risk assessment
25. Integrated environmental management planning for mountain areas
26. Capacity-building of vulnerable groups to combat poverty