



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Seventy-fourth session

Bangkok, 11–16 May 2018

Item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda**

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure
of the Commission, including the work of the regional
institutions: environment and development**

**Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for
Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture
on its fourteenth session**

Summary

The fourteenth session of the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture was held in Bangkok on 13 December 2017.

The Council reviewed and endorsed the Centre's activities and accomplishments since its thirteenth session, as well as the report on the Centre's administrative and financial status in 2017. The Council expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by the Centre in 2017 and noted the resource limitations for continuing substantive activities in 2018.

In reviewing the options for the Centre's future, the Council decided to recommend that the Centre transition to an independent intergovernmental organization outside of the United Nations system as of 1 July 2018. The Council also recommended that the Executive Secretary take all the necessary administrative and legal steps in that regard, and that the Centre should focus its activities in 2018 on completing the transition process.

The Council welcomed the announcement by the representative of Indonesia that her Government was ready to lead and support the transition of the Centre to a new organization outside of the United Nations system, and acknowledged the offer of other Council members to join Indonesia in supporting the transition process.

The Commission may wish to provide guidance on these matters and to endorse the report of the Council.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 30 April 2018.

** ESCAP/74/L.1/Rev.1.

I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

A. Matters calling for action

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) may wish to endorse the following recommendations and decisions by the Governing Council of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture:

Recommendations and decisions

(a) The Governing Council takes note of the report on the Centre's activities and accomplishments since its thirteenth session (E/ESCAP/CAPSA/GC(14)/1, section III);

(b) The Council takes note of the report on the Centre's administrative and financial status in 2017 (E/ESCAP/CAPSA/GC(14)/1, section IV);

(c) The Council recommends that the Centre transition to a new intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system as of 1 July 2018;

(d) The Council recommends that the ESCAP secretariat cooperate with the new organization and sustain the partnership and that the new organization may report to ESCAP on its activities;

(e) The Council recommends that the Executive Secretary take all the necessary administrative and legal steps to transform the Centre from a subsidiary body of ESCAP into a new intergovernmental organization by 30 June 2018;

(f) The Council recommends that all activities and funds available from January to June 2018 focus on the transition measures;

(g) The Council recommends that any unspent funds at the time of the Centre's transition shall be transferred to the new organization subject to the financial rules and regulations of the United Nations;

(h) The Council welcomes the announcement by the representative of Indonesia that her Government is ready to lead and support the transition of the Centre to a new organization outside of the United Nations system;

(i) The Council welcomes the offer of other Council members to join Indonesia in supporting the transition process by, inter alia, continuing to serve as Council members through the transition process, and continuing to provide annual financial as well as in-kind contributions, including the secondment of professional officers, as appropriate;

(j) The Council notes the position of the Government of Fiji that it will not be a part of the transition process, or a member of the new organization for the time being;

(k) The Council recommends that its current Chair convene the first meeting of the new organization at an appropriate time and venue.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission

Acknowledgements

(l) The Council acknowledges with deep appreciation the contributions and the high level of support extended to the Centre over the

years by the host Government, Indonesia, including cash and in-kind contributions;

(m) The Council also expresses appreciation to members and associate members of ESCAP for their contributions to the Centre and their engagement in the work of the Centre over the years.

II. Proceedings

A. Activities and accomplishments of the Centre since the thirteenth session of the Governing Council

(Agenda item 2)

2. The Council had before it the note by the secretariat on the report to the Governing Council on the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (E/ESCAP/CAPSA/GC(14)/1, section III).

3. The agenda item was introduced by the Chair and an overview presentation was made by the Director of the Centre.

4. Representatives of the following Council members made statements: Cambodia; Malaysia; and Pakistan.

5. The Council expressed appreciation for the work undertaken by the Centre in 2017 and acknowledged the relevance and importance of the Centre's activities in addressing the current development challenges of member States. The Council also noted broader areas of emerging concerns by member States, such as issues of food supply chain, food productivity, food safety and market, which could be taken up by the Centre in its future activities.

6. The Council noted that the Centre's activities in 2017 had benefited from collaboration with partners, such as the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia.

7. The Council took note of the report on the Centre's activities and accomplishments since its thirteenth session, as presented in the note by the secretariat.

B. Administrative and financial status of the Centre

(Agenda item 3)

8. The Council had before it the note by the secretariat on the report to the Governing Council on the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (E/ESCAP/CAPSA/GC(14)/1, section IV).

9. The agenda item was introduced by the Chair and an overview presentation was made by the Director of the Centre.

10. Representatives of the following Council members made statements: Bangladesh; Cambodia; Pakistan; Philippines; and Thailand.

11. The Council noted that the Centre's financial as well as human resource levels had continued to be depleted in 2017 and therefore the Centre was unable to fully respond to the growing expectations of member States. The Council noted the continued efforts by each of the member States to increase their annual contributions, and that owing to country-specific reasons, not all of the States had as yet managed to increase their contributions.

12. The Council took note of the report on the Centre's administrative and financial status in 2017.

C. Consideration by the Governing Council of the Centre's future
(Agenda item 4)

13. The Council had before it the note by the secretariat on the report to the Governing Council on the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (E/ESCAP/CAPSA/GC(14)/1, sections V and VI and annex VII).

14. The agenda item was introduced by the Chair and an overview presentation was made by the Director of the Centre.

15. A general discussion of the agenda item was moderated by the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP.

16. Representatives of the following Council members made statements: Cambodia; Fiji; Indonesia; Malaysia; Philippines; Sri Lanka; and Thailand.

17. The Council welcomed the announcement by the representative of Indonesia that her Government was ready to lead and support the transition of the Centre to a new organization outside of the United Nations system. The representative of Indonesia further highlighted the need for support from other member countries to achieve the transition.

18. The Council acknowledged the commitment of other Council member States, in particular Bangladesh, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka, to join Indonesia in supporting the transition process. The support might include continuing to provide annual financial assistance and/or considering providing in-kind contributions, depending on the domestic situation of each member State. The representative of Thailand underscored the difficulty of establishing the level and nature of her Government's support at that point in time.

19. The representative of Bangladesh pointed out that the impact analysis of the past contributions would help member States to consider their future contributions.

20. In concluding the discussion, the Council agreed to recommend that the Centre be transformed from a subsidiary body of ESCAP into a new intergovernmental organization by 30 June 2018. It was also recommended that, in the transition process, the present Council members should continue to serve as members of the governing body of the new organization.

21. With regards to the programme of work of the Centre for 2018, the Council recommended that all activities and funds available from January to June 2018 should focus on the transition measures.

D. Date of and venue for the next session of the Governing Council
(Agenda item 5)

22. The Council agreed to remove agenda item 5, based on the recommendation made during the discussion of agenda item 4 to transition the Centre to a new independent organization outside of the United Nations system.

23. The Council recommended that the current Chair convene the first meeting of the new organization at an appropriate time and venue.

E. Other matters
(Agenda item 6)

24. No other matters were brought to the attention of the Council.

F. Adoption of the report
(Agenda item 7)

25. The Council adopted the present report on 13 December 2017.

26. The Chair and Vice-Chairs and the Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP made closing statements, and thanked all participants for their contributions to the discussions. The Chair declared the session closed.

III. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

27. The Council held its fourteenth session in Bangkok on 13 December 2017.

28. The Deputy Executive Secretary, in his welcome remarks, emphasized that as the Centre had evolved over the past 36 years from a research centre working in the areas of coarse grains, pulses, roots and tube crops to a regional knowledge hub for increasing agriculture productivity, enhancing food security and improving rural livelihood, it had continued to serve its member countries on issues that were vital to agriculture sustainability. Over 200 training events had been organized, approximately 6,000 participants from Asia and the Pacific had been trained, and over 250 publications had been issued with the aim of supporting interregional knowledge-sharing and the exchange of experiences. The Centre was ready to evolve as a member State-driven entity outside of the United Nations system. The Deputy Executive Secretary thanked the Centre's host country, the Government of Indonesia, for being the bedrock of the Centre since its inception and stressed that any transition that took place would need continued leadership. In his closing remarks, he emphasized the need for the participants of the fourteenth session to make decisions on the future of the Centre and assured them that the ESCAP secretariat would fully support them in implementing whatever decision was taken by member countries.

29. Mr. Sahat Pasaribu, Senior Researcher of the Indonesian Centre for Agricultural Socio Economic Policy Studies, Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia, as the elected Chair of the fourteenth session of the Council, thanked all attending representatives of member countries and requested their support and cooperation to ensure a smooth and productive meeting.

B. Attendance

30. The session was attended by representatives of the following members of the Council: Bangladesh; Cambodia; Fiji; Indonesia; Malaysia; Pakistan; Philippines; Sri Lanka; and Thailand.

31. Representatives of Nepal and the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences also attended.

C. Election of officers

32. The Council elected the following officers:

Chair: Mr. Sahat Pasaribu (Indonesia)
Vice-Chairs: Mr. Tapsir bin Serin (Malaysia)
Mr. Rasnayaka M. Herath (Sri Lanka)

D. Agenda

33. The Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session.
 - (a) Opening statements;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Activities and accomplishments of the Centre since the thirteenth session of the Governing Council.
3. Administrative and financial status of the Centre.
4. Consideration by the Governing Council of the Centre's future.
5. Date of and venue for the next session of the Governing Council.
6. Other matters.
7. Adoption of the report.

Annex I**Financial statement of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture for the year ended 31 December 2017**

(United States dollars)

<i>Income</i>	
Contributions	170 508
Interest income	4 319
Exchange difference	357
Total income	175 183
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	(292 496)
Net income over expenditure	(117 313)
Fund balance as at 1 January 2017	696 407
Refunds to donors	—
Fund balance as at 31 December 2017	579 095

Annex II

Financial statement of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture for the year ended 31 December 2017, by project component
(United States dollars)

	<i>Joint contributions capacity development project: institutional support</i>	<i>Project funded by European Union led by the Centre: SATNET Asia</i>	<i>Integrated rural economic and social development programme for livelihoods improvement in the dry zone of Myanmar</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Income</i>				
Contributions	170 508	—	—	170 508
Interest income	2 167	442	1 710	4 319
Miscellaneous income and exchange difference	357	—	—	357
Total income	173 031	442	1 710	175 183
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>				
Net income over expenditure	(61 054)	442	(56 700)	(117 313)
Fund balance as at 1 January 2017	280 147	179 401	236 859	696 407
Refunds to donors	—	—	—	—
Fund balance as at 31 December 2017	219 093	179 843	180 159	579 095

Abbreviation: SATNET Asia, Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agricultural Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia.

Annex III

Cash contributions to the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture for institutional support received in 2017
(United States dollars)

<i>Country/area</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2016</i>
Bangladesh	7 000	7 000
Cambodia	2 000	2 000
Fiji	30 000	150 000
Indonesia	57 488	57 154
Macao, China	3 000	3 000
Malaysia	10 020	10 000
Myanmar	1 000	1 000
Papua New Guinea	—	—
Philippines	—	21 000
Republic of Korea	20 000	20 000
Sri Lanka	30 000	30 000
Thailand	10 000	10 000
Total	170 508	311 154