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and South and South-West Asia

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**ROLE OF THE SUBREGIONAL OFFICES IN ADDRESSING THE  
PRIORITY NEEDS OF THE FOLLOWING SUBREGIONS:  
EAST AND NORTH-EAST ASIA**

(Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda)

**ROLE OF THE SUBREGIONAL OFFICE FOR EAST AND NORTH-EAST  
ASIA IN ADDRESSING THE PRIORITY NEEDS  
OF THE SUBREGION**

*Note by the secretariat*

**SUMMARY**

The present document discusses the role of the ESCAP subregional office in Incheon, Republic of Korea, which is responsible for East and North-East Asia, in addressing the priority needs of the subregion. The areas of work of ESCAP that are relevant to the subregion are briefly discussed, along with some overarching principles for guiding the relationships among ESCAP headquarters, the subregional office and potential partner entities.

The meeting may wish to provide the secretariat with guidance to further refine the programme of work of the subregional office.

\* The late submission of the present document is due to the exhaustive consultative process undertaken by the working group on subregional offices, which is comprised of ESCAP senior managers, in order to develop the agenda and scope for the meeting.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction.....	2
I. RELEVANT WORK AREAS OF ESCAP .....	2
II. POSSIBLE AREAS OF WORK OF THE SUBREGIONAL OFFICE.....	3
III. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ENTITIES .....	3
IV. CONCLUSIONS AND OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION.....	4

### Introduction

1. The primary role of ESCAP subprogramme 8, component 2, Subregional activities for development in East and North-East Asia, is to support the work of ESCAP at the subregional level through better targeted programme delivery which addresses specific key priorities. The countries covered under this office are China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation.

### I. RELEVANT WORK AREAS OF ESCAP

2. With respect to the North-East Asian subregion, through the work of the Environment and Development Division, ESCAP is currently facilitating two subregional initiatives related to environment and energy: (a) the North East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC); and (b) the Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia.

3. NEASPEC was launched in 1993 as a comprehensive intergovernmental cooperation mechanism through which China, Japan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, with shared vision, strive to make concerted efforts to address environmental challenges in the subregion.

4. In November 2005, the Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia was established to facilitate energy cooperation and trade to enhance energy security in North-East Asia. The Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism was endorsed by the Senior Officials Committee on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia at its first session.<sup>1</sup>

5. ESCAP annually publishes a report on progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific*. Both publications are produced by the Macroeconomic Policy and Development Division and include subregional perspectives.

6. Through the work of the Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP conducts knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities and develops technical materials on multi-hazard preparedness and

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<sup>1</sup> See the report of the Senior Officials Committee on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia on its first session, Ulaanbaatar, 16-17 November 2005 (ESD/CECNEA/Rep.).

early warning, which could cover subregional perspectives, with a view to improving disaster management and reducing socio-economic risks.

## **II. POSSIBLE AREAS OF WORK OF THE SUBREGIONAL OFFICE**

7. The short-term programme of work of the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia revolves around supporting representatives of member States, building the capacity of government officials in key development sectors (statistics, environment, energy and infrastructure development) and sharing knowledge through the dissemination of technical materials on economic and social development policy and good practices in the East and North-East Asian subregion (see A/64/6 (Sect. 18), para. 18.91). In addition, areas identified as priorities during the Expert Group Meeting to Identify Work Priorities of the New ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia, which was held in Bangkok on 19 and 20 October 2009, included sustainable development and the environment, with an emphasis on green growth, energy, infrastructure development, the monitoring of progress made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, gender equality and disaster risk reduction (see E/ESCAP/SRO/IGM/1/1, para. 10 and table).

8. In the short to medium term, collaboration with member States, civil society and other relevant development partners to monitor progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is considered important. In the medium term, the focus will be on knowledge-sharing and capacity-building efforts related to disaster risk reduction, and the dissemination of technical materials.

9. Green growth and a low carbon development approach to attaining sustainable development could be highlighted as a win-win development strategy for the subregion. However, activities in this area would require sufficient support from member States.

10. The Subregional Office would also assist the secretariat of ESCAP in mainstreaming a gender dimension in development policies and programmes to be formulated and implemented by member States.

## **III. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ENTITIES**

11. Working increasingly with partner organizations and institutions at the national and subregional levels to strengthen relationships, while supporting the relevant work of ESCAP headquarters to strengthen linkages with regional organizations, institutions and mechanisms, will ensure the efficient utilization of resources.

12. A harmonized approach will be used to maintain balance when engaging in collaborative efforts in order to manage the workloads of the Subregional Office and ESCAP headquarters effectively. Collaboration among the ESCAP subregional offices, where necessary, will use the same approach.

13. The relationship of the Subregional Office with partner organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and with regional institutions, such as the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), would be complementary and avoid the duplication of efforts, wherever possible.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

14. Through the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia, ESCAP plans to deliver more effective services to member States. The initial focus areas of the Subregional Office would include the promotion of subregional collaboration, environmental sustainability and energy-related work. A complementary and balanced approach is considered sensible in guiding strategic partnerships and operational linkages.

15. The meeting may wish to recommend that the Subregional Office should support efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including gender equality, as a cross-cutting area of relevance to its work and that, in this regard, partnerships to implement such efforts should be built in the short to medium term.

16. The meeting may wish to recommend that the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia should be mandated to be the permanent secretariat of NEASPEC in the medium term.

17. The meeting may wish to recommend that the Subregional Office should disseminate information related to best practices and success stories from the East and North-East Asian subregion related to effective socio-economic development policies, poverty reduction, energy security and cooperation, environmental sustainability and other areas to increase knowledge-sharing within the subregion and with other subregions, and that this information should also be shared at the regional level through the work of ESCAP headquarters in the short to medium term.

18. The meeting may wish to recommend that a subregional perspective should figure prominently in knowledge-sharing and capacity-building efforts and technical materials related to disaster risk reduction.

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