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(Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda)

**PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN
FOR THE PERIOD 2002-2005**

Note by the secretariat

SUMMARY

The secretariat submits to the Commission the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 pertaining to programme 15: Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific. The revisions to the medium-term plan are being proposed to reflect the outcome of the Intergovernmental Meeting to Review the Conference Structure of the Commission, including Its Thematic Priorities and Subsidiary Structure, held at Bangkok from 26 to 28 March 2002.

The programme will address three thematic areas, namely, poverty reduction, managing globalization and addressing emerging social issues. The overall strategy will be pursued through seven interdependent and complementary subprogrammes under the three thematic areas, namely:

Poverty reduction:

Subprogramme 1. Poverty and development; and Subprogramme 2. Statistics;

Managing globalization:

Subprogramme 3. Trade and investment; Subprogramme 4. Transport and tourism; Subprogramme 5. Environment and sustainable development; and Subprogramme 6. Information, communications and space technology;

Addressing emerging social issues:

Subprogramme 7. Emerging social issues.

It should be noted that under the thematic area of poverty reduction, the policy (poverty and development policy analysis) and operational (poverty reduction practices) areas have been merged into one subprogramme on "Poverty and development". This is to ensure greater programme coherence between the policy and operational work of the Commission. It is also in line with the directive of the Secretary-General on the second wave of the reform of the United Nations, which calls for the structural reorganization of programmes.

The Commission is requested to review and endorse the revisions proposed to the plan by the secretariat. The recommendations of the Commission will be further reviewed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination, at its forty-second session, to be held in New York in June 2002, prior to consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2002.

The Commission is also requested to endorse the secretariat's proposal to realign the programme of work for the biennium 2002-2003 in keeping with the new programme structure set in the revisions to the medium-term plan.

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Introduction

1. The present document contains the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 in annex I. The medium-term plan is a translation of legislative mandates into programmes. Its objectives and strategies are derived from the policy orientations and goals set by the intergovernmental organs. In this respect, the medium-term plan constitutes the principal policy directive of the United Nations.

2. The preparation, format and content of the medium-term plan and revisions to it are governed by the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2000/8).

3. Regulation 4.13 provides, inter alia, that the medium-term plan shall be revised as necessary every two years to incorporate required programme changes and that the proposed revisions shall be as detailed as required to incorporate the programme implications of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the intergovernmental organs and international conferences subsequent to the adoption of the plan.

4. At its fifty-sixth session, held at Bangkok in June 2000, the Commission endorsed the draft medium-term plan of ESCAP for the period 2002-2005 (E/ESCAP/1185/Rev.1), which had been developed on the basis of mandates of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission, as well as the legislative committees. It was adopted, within the framework of the medium-term plan of the United Nations, by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/234 of 23 December 2000. The full text of the medium-term plan of ESCAP, as adopted by the General Assembly, appears as annex II to the present document.

5. In adopting resolution 53/1 of 30 April 1997, which set out the framework for the seven subprogrammes in programme 15 of the current medium-term plan, the Commission decided to review its conference structure, including its thematic priorities and subsidiary structure, no later than at its fifty-eighth session. Pursuant to that decision of the Commission as well as the new regional and global mandates that have emerged subsequent to the adoption of the medium-term plan by the General Assembly in 2000, the secretariat initiated efforts to revitalize ESCAP to bring about, among others, a clearly focused and effective programme that reflects the priority needs of the members and associate members of the Commission and, at the same time, reflects the millennium development goals as contained in the Millennium Declaration.

6. At the fifty-seventh session of the Commission, in April 2001, the Ministerial Round Table expressed its support for the secretariat's efforts to revitalize ESCAP and also suggested that it should clearly define ideas for the reform of ESCAP and submit them to the members and associate members for consideration during an intergovernmental meeting to be held prior to the fifty-eighth session of

the Commission. In that connection, the secretariat formulated a concept paper which outlined (a) the three themes of ESCAP, namely, poverty reduction, managing globalization and addressing emerging social issues, and (b) a new programme framework and focus areas for ESCAP. The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, at its retreat in November 2001 and at an informal working group meeting in January 2002, expressed general support for the new programme framework and focus areas.

7. The Intergovernmental Meeting to Review the Conference Structure of the Commission, including Its Thematic Priorities and Subsidiary Structure, held at Bangkok from 26 to 28 March 2002, endorsed the three themes and the general thrust and focus areas of the programme in line with the three themes. In that connection, the Intergovernmental Meeting also endorsed the following programme areas: poverty and development policy analysis; statistics; poverty reduction practices; international trade, industry and investment; transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism; environment and sustainable development; information, communications and space technology; and emerging social issues.

8. Having reviewed the programmatic implications and taking into consideration the directive of the Secretary-General on the second wave of the reform of the United Nations, which calls for the structural reorganization of programmes, the secretariat proposes further rationalization of the programme by merging subprogramme 1 on poverty and development policy analysis and subprogramme 3 on poverty reduction practices into one subprogramme entitled "Poverty and development". This merger will promote greater coherence between the policy and operational work of the Commission in poverty reduction.

The revised programme structure therefore comprises:

Theme: Poverty reduction

Subprogramme 1. Poverty and development

Subprogramme 2. Statistics

Theme: Managing globalization

Subprogramme 3. Trade and investment

Subprogramme 4. Transport and tourism

Subprogramme 5. Environment and sustainable development

Subprogramme 6. Information, communications and space technology

Theme: Addressing emerging social issues

Subprogramme 7. Emerging social issues.

9. The revised medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 will serve as a basis for the preparation of the programme budget for 2004-2005.

ACTION REQUIRED BY THE COMMISSION

10. The Commission is requested to review and endorse the revisions to the medium-term plan proposed by the secretariat, and the results of the Commission's deliberations under item 5 (a), "Implementation of Commission resolution 53/1 on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission", will be reflected as appropriate in the medium-term plan.

11. The proposed revisions to the medium-term plan, after endorsement by the Commission, will be subject to further consideration by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-second session, in June 2002, prior to consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, in the fourth quarter of 2002.

12. Upon the Commission's endorsement of the revisions to the medium-term plan, it will be necessary for the secretariat to put the new programme structure in place without further delay. In this connection, the Commission is also requested to endorse the secretariat's proposal to realign the programme of work for the biennium 2002-2003 in keeping with the new programme structure.

ANNEXES

Annex I

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2002-2005

Programme 15 Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

Overall orientation

15.1 The overall purpose of the programme is to promote the economic and social development of the members and associate members of the Commission. Specifically, it will aim to enhance the capacity of the members and associate members to design and implement policies and strategies that are pro-poor, allow them to maximize the benefits from globalization and promote equal opportunities for the productive participation of all social groups and overall improvement of the quality of life. This will be pursued by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in cooperation and collaboration with global, regional, subregional and national parties involved with development activities in the region, including civil society and the private sector, thereby fostering synergies and avoiding duplication.

15.2 The mandate for the programme derives from Economic and Social Council resolutions 37 (IV) of 28 March 1947 and 414 (XIII) of 20 September 1951, by which ESCAP was established. The mandate has been further elaborated in various resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission, including Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, which designated ESCAP to serve as the main general economic and social development centre within the United Nations system for Asia and the Pacific and as an executing agency for intersectoral, subregional, regional and interregional projects. The Assembly's adoption of the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 and the road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration provide further direction to the programme.

15.3 The programme objective will be pursued in line with the three key themes of poverty reduction, managing globalization and addressing emerging social issues. Poverty is the leading development challenge facing the members and associate members in Asia and the Pacific, with two thirds of the world's poor living in the region. The urgent need for effective action aimed at poverty reduction is reflected in the millennium development goals, which call for the proportion of people living in extreme poverty to be halved by the year 2015. Poverty is multidimensional and dynamic with complex and interlinked issues requiring an integrated focus on economic, social and environmental areas. At the same time, the ongoing process of globalization has profound and still unfolding implications for economic and social development in the region. The challenge is how to strengthen the capacity of the members and associate members to cope with the process of

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globalization, i.e., the formulation and implementation of effective policies to maximize the benefits from the opportunities offered by globalization while minimizing the inevitable costs. The members and associate members also face new and continuing challenges from global and regional development trends that impact deeply on individuals, families and communities. Many in the region face barriers to equal participation and full enjoyment of the right to development because of gender, age, disability, income or other factors. There are other threats to “human security” relating to the rise in HIV/AIDS infection and human trafficking and other crimes. Further new regional challenges arise from the rapidly ageing populations and international migration, which impact on overall socio-economic development.

15.4 The overall strategy in meeting the programme objective is contained in seven interdependent and complementary subprogrammes clustered under the three key themes as follows:

Poverty reduction: Subprogramme 1. Poverty and development; and Subprogramme 2. Statistics;

Managing globalization: Subprogramme 3. Trade and investment; Subprogramme 4. Transport and tourism; Subprogramme 5. Environment and sustainable development; and Subprogramme 6. Information, communications and space technology;

Addressing emerging social issues: Subprogramme 7. Emerging social issues.

The programme will provide a forum for intergovernmental consultations to identify emerging issues of concern for the economic and social development of the region and formulate appropriate responses to the challenges arising from those issues in close cooperation with the United Nations development system operating in the region. The forum will also facilitate the formulation of regional positions for global conferences and the monitoring of and reporting on the progress in implementing global agreements at the regional level. The implementation strategy will include a balance between normative and operational work, with a particular focus on the follow-up to the achievements in relation to the relevant millennium development goals, emphasis on policy-oriented advisory services and sharing of best practices in the region. The programme will concentrate on larger-size technical cooperation projects which could make a substantial contribution to development efforts.

15.5 In line with global priorities, the programme will focus on the special needs of the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition to accelerate their integration into the regional and global economies. Gender equality and mainstreaming and the rights and needs of marginalized social groups, especially the poor, women, youth, people with disabilities and older persons, and people living with HIV/AIDS, will be promoted to develop a caring society.

15.6 In pursuit of its objectives, the programme will continue to collaborate with the Bretton Woods institutions, the Asian Development Bank and the subregional organizations in Asia and the Pacific. The programme will also promote close cooperation and coordination with other United Nations bodies and specialized agencies in undertaking regional activities through the Regional Coordination Meeting and its thematic working groups.

Subprogramme 1. Poverty and development

Objective

15.7 The objectives of this subprogramme are to support and build the capacity of ESCAP members and associate members in identifying and analysing opportunities for and constraints to poverty reduction and in designing and implementing policies and programmes to reduce poverty in accordance with the millennium development goals. In addition, the subprogramme will be guided by the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries as well as the Monterrey Consensus.

Strategy

15.8 The subprogramme will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Conduct multidisciplinary research on pro-poor policies and strategies, including the nexus between poverty and population and the environment, with a special focus on the macro-socio-economic and institutional aspects of poverty reduction, as well as monitor global and regional economic trends and issues that impact on poverty;

(b) Identify, analyse, document and disseminate best practices in poverty reduction in urban and rural areas, test those practices through pilot projects and advise and build the capacity of the members and associate members in the region for their adaptation and replication;

(c) Work with regional networks of institutions and organizations concerned with poverty alleviation and establish regional poverty alleviation forums where stakeholders discuss and review pro-poor policies and practices and share experiences.

15.9 In pursuing this strategy, ESCAP will focus in particular on considering economic prospects and issues related to poverty levels, particularly as a thrust in the annual *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific*, strengthening the economic and social position of the poor, enhancing their participation in decision-making, promoting information and communications technology (ICT) for poverty reduction, securing sustainable access to natural resources by the poor and reducing the impact of natural disasters on the poor. It will pay special attention to poverty reduction in the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition.

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The millennium development goal pertaining to improving the lives of slum dwellers will also be addressed.

Expected accomplishments

15.10 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) the development of ESCAP into a think tank with a thorough understanding of poverty levels and effective poverty reduction policies and programmes in the region; (b) increased capacity of ESCAP members and associate members to design and implement pro-poor policies and programmes and best practices in poverty reduction; and (c) the identification of poverty trends, emerging issues in poverty reduction and effective policy responses.

Indicators of achievement

15.11 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) the extent of the advisory role played by ESCAP in the design and implementation of pro-poor policies and programmes through technical cooperation and the use of its studies; (b) the number of pro-poor policies and programmes designed by ESCAP members and associate members in response to the relevant millennium development goals; and (c) the number of best practices in poverty reduction identified, tested through pilot projects and adapted and replicated in the region.

Subprogramme 2. Statistics

Objective

15.12 The objective of this subprogramme is to support ESCAP members and associate members in improving their statistical capabilities for informed decision-making in a wide range of areas, with a special focus on strengthening capacities to generate poverty data and measure progress towards the millennium development goals.

Strategy

15.13 The subprogramme will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Contribute to the development of common methodologies and harmonized approaches for the intercountry comparison of poverty levels as well as for measuring and monitoring poverty;

(b) Contribute to the improvement of the capacity of national statistical systems, particularly in priority areas determined by the members and associate members, for the purposes of informed planning, policy formulation, decision-making and monitoring of progress. To this end, the use of improved methodology for data collection, processing and analysis and the greater utilization of statistics will be promoted;

(c) Collect and disseminate statistical data on the countries and areas of the region, taking into account national, regional and global demands. Coordinate international requests to reduce the response burden on the members and associate members and promote data-sharing through electronic technology. Special attention will be paid to improving the accessibility and international comparability of the data collected;

(d) Strengthen the involvement of the members and associate members of the region in the global statistical system. In line with the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission, ESCAP will initiate and coordinate at the regional level the development, revision, testing and implementation of selected international statistical standards and, where necessary, their adaptation to meet the conditions and needs of the members and associate members of the region;

(e) Enhance the role of ICT in statistical offices and promote its application to assist the members and associate members in measuring the knowledge-based economy and managing globalization;

(f) Strengthen the network of regional statistical institutions that will provide the basic data for monitoring poverty reduction policies and strategies and other relevant millennium development goals.

15.14 This strategy will be achieved through the organization of intergovernmental and expert group meetings; the collection, analysis and dissemination of data and information on economic, social and environment statistics and poverty indicators; the promotion of improved coordination of the statistical work in the region; and the provision of advisory services for capacity-building in the fields of statistics and poverty indicators. The provision of training and training materials will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, a regional institution subsidiary to ESCAP.

Expected accomplishments

15.15 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) significant improvements for most ESCAP members and associate members in the reliability and comparability of estimates of poverty incidence and poverty-related development indicators; (b) increased capacity in the region, especially in least developed, landlocked and island developing countries, to identify, collect, process, analyse, utilize and disseminate data needed for national economic and social development, including the capacity to support analysis of gender issues; (c) improved coordination, collaboration and sharing of information, increased use of common statistical standards in the region and improved availability of comparable statistical data on the countries and areas of the region; and (d) more systematic information technology planning by statistical offices and adoption of coherent policies in this field.

Indicators of achievement

15.16 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) an increase in the number of members and associate members producing poverty statistics of reasonable quality; (b) the milestones achieved by members and associate members implementing the 1993 System of National Accounts; (c) the number of members and associate members subscribing to the Special Data Dissemination Standard and adhering to the General Data Dissemination System; (d) the number of members and associate members with evidence-based policies on gender issues and on poverty; (e) the number of participants, especially from least developed, landlocked and island developing countries, indicating that meetings and training by ESCAP made a significant contribution to their capacity to identify, collect, process, analyse, utilize and disseminate data needed for national economic and social development; (f) improved availability of comparable statistical data on countries and areas of the region; (g) the number of members and associate members and national statistical services adopting information technology plans and strategies; and (h) the number of national statistical and information technology-related web sites in the region.

Subprogramme 3. Trade and investment

Objective

15.17 The objective of this subprogramme is to enhance the capacity of the human resources and institutions of ESCAP members and associate members to integrate effectively into the world economy through sustained trade and investment.

Strategy

15.18 The subprogramme will pursue the following strategy:

- (a) Focus on effective integration into the global and regional trading systems, trade efficiency and competitiveness, and investment promotion and enterprise development;
- (b) Play a proactive role in promoting policy dialogues and operational activities, including training, advisory services and regional and intersubregional networking;
- (c) Adopt innovative and pragmatic approaches to capacity-building of both human resources and institutions of ESCAP members and associate members for their effective integration into the international and regional economies, focusing on trade and investment;
- (d) Support networking of research and training institutions in the region.

This strategy will be pursued through close collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Expected accomplishments

15.19 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) improved understanding by national policy makers of multilateral trade agreements and their implications; (b) enhanced understanding of national policy makers with regard to becoming members of WTO; (c) increased participation of developing members and associate members in regional trading agreements, in particular, the Bangkok Agreement; (d) enhanced knowledge of national policy makers with regard to increasing trade efficiency by reducing procedural and administrative barriers to trade and simplifying and harmonizing trade documentation; (e) better awareness by central and local officials of the impediments and other issues related to investment attraction, facilitation and implementation at the central and local levels in the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition; and (f) enhanced capacity of national institutions to assist small and medium-sized enterprises of developing members and associate members, in particular, the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition, in increasing their export competitiveness.

Indicators of achievement

15.20 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) an increase in the number of multilateral agreements and a better reflection of the interests of developing members and associate members; (b) an increase in the number of new accessions to WTO from the region; (c) an increase in the number of new members of the Bangkok Agreement; (d) an increase in the number of members and associate members introducing new trade efficiency measures; (e) an increase in the number of least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and countries with economies in transition introducing new or modified legislation/regulations/policies reflecting the concerns of local and central government officials and the business community with regard to investment attraction, facilitation and implementation measures; and (f) an increase in the number of small and medium-sized enterprises expressing their satisfaction with the support they received from the ESCAP-assisted institutions of members and associate members, in particular, the institutions in the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition.

Subprogramme 4. Transport and tourism

Objective

15.21 The objective of this subprogramme is to serve as a catalyst for action to formulate and implement national, regional and interregional transport initiatives so as to improve efficient access to regional and global markets, and to promote sustainable tourism development.

Strategy

15.22 The subprogramme will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Coordinate and facilitate the development of regional and interregional transport linkages that will enhance the ability of ESCAP members and associate members to compete in regional and global markets;

(b) Play a proactive role in promoting the development of national and regional transport systems through both international policy dialogues and operational activities and regional and intersubregional networking;

(c) Use innovative and pragmatic approaches to strengthen institutional capacity at the national level to formulate and implement sustainable transport policies and planning, taking into account economic, social and environmental considerations;

(d) Promote sustainable tourism development by strengthening policy development capabilities and enhancing regional cooperation, especially networking of tourism training institutions.

15.23 This strategy will be pursued through the implementation of the Seoul Declaration on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme (2002-2006) of the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific (1997-2006), and the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Asian and Pacific Region (1999-2005). It will be achieved through the organization of intergovernmental and expert group meetings; the collection, analysis and dissemination of data and information on transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism to enhance awareness of critical regional, interregional and global issues and sustainable strategies for development; the promotion of regional and interregional cooperation in addressing common issues and problems; and the development and delivery of training materials and the provision of advisory services for capacity-building in the fields of transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism.

Expected accomplishments

15.24 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) expanded geographic coverage and capacity of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway routes, the introduction and upgrading of standards for trunk transport infrastructure linkages and improved integration of transport networks to serve regional and global markets; (b) enhanced participation by stakeholders in the transport policy, planning and development processes, including economic, social and environmental considerations; (c) identification and removal of specific infrastructural, regulatory, procedural and documentary bottlenecks in the transport process inhibiting the seamless movement of goods, people and services; (d) strengthened capacities of tourism planners and institutions in promoting sustainable development

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of tourism; and (e) increased cooperation among tourism agencies and organizations and educational and training institutes in the region.

Indicators of achievement

15.25 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) the formulation of an intergovernmental agreement on the Asian Highway and the number of members and associate members acceding to that agreement; operationalization of container block trains along selected corridors within the Trans-Asian Railway system; and plans to develop intermodal logistics centres; (b) the number of agencies in ESCAP members and associate members taking follow-up action to facilitate participation of stakeholders in the transport development process, including the results of social and environmental impact assessments; (c) policies and measures introduced by members and associate members following recommendations by ESCAP for the removal of physical and non-physical bottlenecks in the transport process; (d) the enumeration of follow-up actions taken by members and associate members on the recommendations of ESCAP in relation to policy formulation and planning in the tourism sector, and the number of members and associate members participating in the Network of Asia-Pacific Education and Training Institutes in Tourism; and (e) follow-up actions by members and associate members arising out of advisory services, group training and joint meetings.

Subprogramme 5. Environment and sustainable development

Objective

15.26 The objective of this subprogramme is to strengthen the national capacity of ESCAP members and associate members in designing and implementing environmental and sustainable development policies and strategies that would enable them to maximize the benefits from globalization.

Strategy

15.27 The subprogramme will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Play a proactive role in promoting policy dialogues and operational activities, including training, advisory services and networking, as well as support regional and subregional environmental cooperation;

(b) Use innovative and pragmatic approaches to capacity-building of both human resources and institutions of ESCAP members and associate members for their sustainable development, focusing on the environmental impact of globalization and liberalization;

(c) Support networking and research and training institutions in the region.

15.28 This strategy will be pursued to contribute to the achievement of the millennium development goals related to sustainable development and access to safe drinking water as well as to follow up on the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002. The strategy will also involve regular monitoring of environmental trends and the status of regional implementation of global environmental agreements; the organization of intergovernmental and expert group meetings; and close collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme.

Expected accomplishments

15.29 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) enhanced participation in and improved national capabilities for negotiation of and effective compliance with major multilateral environmental agreements; (b) strengthened national and local capacities in the monitoring and assessment of environment and development trends; (c) increased participatory planning and replication of best practices in environmental management; (d) enhanced national capacities to formulate and implement policies and plans for sustainable energy development; (e) improved national capabilities in renewable energy development, energy efficiency improvement and transboundary energy cooperation; (f) strengthened national capacity for strategic planning and management of water resources, improved access to safe drinking water and enhanced public awareness of water conservation; and (g) increased participatory planning and management for natural disaster mitigation and preparedness and intensified cooperation at the national and regional levels to reduce the number and effects of natural disasters.

Indicators of achievement

15.30 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) the number of policies and measures introduced by members and associate members to implement, comply with and enforce multilateral environmental agreements; (b) the number of national and local assessment reports relating to environmental trends; (c) an increase in the number of members and associate members participating in networks dealing with environmental management, including urban environmental management; (d) an increase in the number of members and associate members taking steps to incorporate strategic planning and management into their national energy policies and plans; (e) an increase in the number of national renewable energy plans introduced or improved, energy efficiency policies and measures introduced in energy intensive establishments and evidence of enhanced subregional energy cooperation; (f) an increase in the number of policies and measures adopted to enhance strategic planning and management of water resources, including policies for improved access to safe drinking water, and to increase the number of public awareness campaigns on water resources conservation; and (g) an increase in the number of national and subregional action plans for natural disaster mitigation and preparedness.

Subprogramme 6. Information, communications and space technology

Objective

15.31 The objective of this subprogramme is to assist ESCAP members and associate members in building capacities to create an enabling environment for information, communications and space technology development, transfer and application.

Strategy

15.32 The subprogramme will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Focus on the development of legal and regulatory frameworks and competition policies related to investment and the provision of information, communications and space technology infrastructure and services;

(b) Support national efforts for the application of ICT in various economic and social sectors, particularly for strengthening the competitiveness of products and services;

(c) Promote satellite-based ICT applications, in particular, integrated remote sensing and satellite communications for remote and rural areas, distance education and sustainable development planning;

(d) Promote the use of information, communications and space technology applications, through, inter alia, facilitating adaptation to local conditions or transfer of best practices.

15.33 This strategy will be pursued through the implementation of the Delhi Declaration on Space Technology Applications in Asia and the Pacific for Improved Quality of Life in the New Millennium and the Strategy and Action Plan on Space Technology Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific for the New Millennium. The strategy will also be pursued through the organization of intergovernmental and expert group meetings, the undertaking of research and studies, the implementation of operational activities, including training and pilot projects, the provision of advisory services and the promotion of regional and intersubregional networking.

Expected accomplishments

15.34 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) improved national ICT policy and regulatory frameworks and strengthened institutional capacity to facilitate national ICT development; (b) enhanced regional cooperation in ICT applications to support national efforts to strengthen the competitiveness of products and services; (c) enhanced regional cooperation in space technology applications to support national disaster management efforts; (d) enhanced regional cooperation in the application of information and space technologies to support national efforts towards poverty reduction; and (e) enhanced national capacities to utilize information and space technologies for environment protection and sustainable natural resources management.

Indicators of achievement

15.35 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) the number of members and associate members that received assistance from ESCAP and new initiatives taken by them to improve their ICT policies and institutional framework; (b) the numbers of national ICT training centres upgraded and TCDC activities organized with the assistance of ESCAP; (c) the establishment of a regional cooperative mechanism on space technology applications to support national efforts in disaster management; (d) the number of pilot projects on the application of information and space technologies implemented with the assistance of ESCAP to support national efforts aimed at poverty reduction; and (e) an increase in the number of TCDC activities organized by ESCAP in utilizing information and space technologies for environmental protection and sustainable natural resources management.

Subprogramme 7. Emerging social issues

Objective

15.36 The objective of this subprogramme is to provide policy support and technical assistance to ESCAP members and associate members in developing and promoting the implementation of policies and programmes to address persistent and emerging social issues, in their evolving manifestations. These issues include:

(a) Promoting the equal participation and human security of socially vulnerable groups (women, youth, people with disabilities, older persons and people living with HIV/AIDS) in the context of rapid socio-economic and demographic change;

(b) Promoting multisectoral responses to address health and development issues, particularly focusing on the socio-economic implications of HIV/AIDS and drug abuse.

Strategy

15.37 The subprogramme will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Advocate the prioritization of emerging social issues in national policies and programmes as well as budgetary allocations;

(b) Promote multisectoral partnerships among national and local governments, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, the private sector and civil society for more effective responses to address persistent and emerging social issues;

(c) Strengthen national institutions to more effectively undertake policy analysis of emerging social issues as mentioned above, including those arising from changing population trends and dynamics;

(d) Document and promote the adaptation of good practices in addressing emerging social issues in diverse policy and implementation environments;

(e) Strengthen the capability of national/local personnel in the planning and delivery of health and social services for socially vulnerable groups ;

(f) Strengthen the mainstreaming of gender dimensions, HIV/AIDS-related issues, disability concerns and ageing-related issues in national policies and programmes.

15.38 In pursuing the strategy, emphasis will be placed on promoting regional cooperation towards fulfilling the millennium development goals as they pertain to the empowerment of women, combating the spread of HIV/AIDS and fighting drug abuse and transnational crime, including the trafficking in human beings focusing on youth. The subprogramme will also address issues related to the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons and the changing demographic dynamics, including the increasing trend towards population ageing and mobility. This will be achieved through close collaboration with Governments and multi-stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society organizations; intergovernmental and expert group meetings; analysis and dissemination of data and information to enhance awareness of critical social issues and appropriate multisectoral responses; and national capacity-building through training and advisory services.

Expected accomplishments

15.39 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) higher priority accorded by national and local-level policy-makers and programme managers to emerging social issues as defined above; (b) enhanced capacity of national institutions to undertake policies to address emerging social issues; (c) good practices in addressing emerging social issues disseminated to facilitate their adaptation by Governments and civil society in diverse environments; (d) higher capability of national/local personnel to plan and deliver more effective health and social services for socially vulnerable groups; (e) development and implementation of stronger multisectoral programmes/projects by national and local governments, United Nations bodies and agencies, and civil society actors to address emerging social issues; and (f) commitments by Governments to further mainstream gender dimensions, HIV/AIDS-related issues and disability concerns in national policies and programmes.

Indicators of achievement

15.40 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) adoption of and/or strengthened multisectoral policies and approaches by relevant national ministries and organizations to address emerging social issues; (b) establishment of and/or strengthened multisectoral coordination mechanisms at the national and local levels to address emerging social issues; (c) the number of national institutions receiving ESCAP assistance in undertaking policy analysis of emerging social issues; (d) feedback from Governments and civil society on the relevance of the good practices disseminated by ESCAP for

local and/or national adaptation; (e) implementation of post-training and/or planning of specific actions in applying the knowledge gained by national-/local-level personnel who have participated in ESCAP training and policy seminars to improve the effectiveness of health and social services for vulnerable groups; (f) the level of collaboration among national and local governments, United Nations bodies and agencies, and civil society actors (including representatives of vulnerable groups) in consultation mechanisms to more effectively plan programmes/projects to address emerging social issues; and (g) issuance of directives by Governments to support the mainstreaming of gender dimensions, HIV/AIDS-related issues and disability concerns in national policies and programmes.

Annex II

MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2002-2005

Programme 15

Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific

Overall orientation

15.1 The overall purpose of the programme is to promote the economic and social development of members and associate members in Asia and the Pacific. Specifically, it would assist them to respond more effectively and efficiently to the rapidly changing situation in the region and thus contribute to sustained economic growth and sustainable and equitable development. The programme will reinforce national capacities to take advantage of the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization, liberalization and information technology. This will be pursued by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre, in cooperation with the ESCAP regional institutions.

15.2 The mandate for the programme derives from Economic and Social Council resolutions 37 (IV) of 28 March 1947 and 414 (XIII) of 20 September 1951, by which ESCAP was established, and has been further elaborated in a number of relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission, in particular, Assembly resolutions 53/183 on implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, 54/23 on implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, 54/141 on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform of Action, 54/209 on follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), 54/218 on implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, 54/224 on implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/55 on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits.

15.3 The Commission's overall strategy for the period 2002-2005 in meeting the programme's objectives is contained in seven interdependent and complementary subprogrammes. This strategy will concentrate on accelerating the process of recovery from the economic and financial crisis (which started in 1997 and gripped some of the economies in the region), and in preventing similar occurrences in the future. Emphasis will be placed on three major themes: (a) the promotion of regional economic cooperation; (b) the alleviation of poverty in rural and urban areas; and (c) the protection of the environment and improvement in natural resources management. It will also focus on the development of infrastructure and information systems.

15.4 The programme would include analytical work on emerging trends and issues having an impact on economic and social development; identification of suitable people-centred policy responses; facilitation of dialogue and the sharing of information and experience, particularly on the best practices in the region; and provision of technical assistance, which would focus on the provision of policy advice, the strengthening of institutional capacity and the development of human resources.

15.5 Special attention will be given to accelerating integration of the least developed countries, the landlocked, island developing and transit developing countries, and the countries with economies in transition into the regional and global economies. Gender equality and mainstreaming and the rights and needs of marginalized social groups will be promoted in the development of a caring society.

15.6 In the pursuit of its objectives, the ESCAP secretariat will continue to collaborate with the Bretton Woods institutions, the Asian Development Bank and the subregional organizations in Asia and the Pacific. As the United Nations system's main entity in Asia and the Pacific devoted to general economic and social development, it will promote close cooperation and coordination with the other United Nations bodies and specialized agencies in regional activities.

Subprogramme 1 Regional economic cooperation

Objective

15.7 The objective of this subprogramme is to support economic cooperation, which has a vital role to play in reducing economic asymmetries and in assisting developing countries, especially the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition, in their efforts to become effectively integrated into the regional and global economies.

Strategy

15.8 The substantive responsibility for this subprogramme lies with the International Trade and Industry Division, which will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Strengthen the institutional and human resource capacity of developing countries to respond effectively to challenges and opportunities emerging from the globalizing trade and investment environment as well as to developments in information technology, and facilitate integration into the multilateral trading system on a fair and equitable basis;

(b) Assist developing countries in industrial restructuring and technological capacity-building through, inter alia, the diversification of industry, the strengthening of national technology capability and the enhancement of the role of the private sector;

(c) Create sustainable comparative advantage and promote trade efficiency and electronic commerce through, for example, the appropriate use of information technology;

(d) Strengthen policy and institutional support for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, including entrepreneurship development, with particular attention to women entrepreneurs;

(e) Strengthen market access opportunities and networks of institutional support services, including regional information services, so as to enhance the flow of trade, investment and technology within and among regions and subregions.

15.9 This strategy will be achieved through the organization of intergovernmental meetings at the regional level; the dissemination of data and information; the undertaking of research and analytical studies; the organization of expert group meetings, workshops, seminars and

training programmes addressing critical issues, such as skills development; and the promotion of economic cooperation, including cooperation among subregions, with emphasis on the least developed countries, the island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition.

Expected accomplishments

15.10 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) the improved capacity of Governments to implement policies and programmes for trade promotion, increased investment, industrial diversification and technological upgrading; (b) greater participation in and preparedness for adoption of World Trade Organization and other multilateral trade and investment regulations; and (c) improved national capacity for trade and inter-industry complementarities through cooperative measures.

Indicators of achievement

15.11 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) enumeration of the countries in the region undertaking policy reorientation and institutional capacity-building and strengthening for increased inter- and intraregional trade flow, investment, technology and industrial growth; (b) increased use of e-commerce and information technology for trade facilitation and industrial promotion; (c) positive results of greater regional and global integration of the trade and industrial activities of the least developed countries as well as those of the island developing countries and the economies in transition; and (d) positive evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of ESCAP outputs and services by the users, including Governments.

Subprogramme 2 Development research and policy analysis

Objective

15.12 The objective is to focus research and analysis on the determinants and prospects of economic recovery and durable growth in the ESCAP region, especially on new challenges and opportunities for the economies in the ESCAP region arising from the globalization and liberalization processes as well as developments in information technology.

Strategy

15.13 The substantive responsibility for this subprogramme lies with the Development Research and Policy Analysis Division and the ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre, which will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Contribute to the strengthening of the regional economy by sharing the best practices, operational experience and concrete achievements with respect to the process and implementation of economic reforms, stabilization policies and structural adjustment programmes in the countries of the ESCAP region;

(b) Institute a mechanism to monitor and to keep under surveillance the economic and financial situation of the countries of the region to provide information to members and associate members of ESCAP of impending crises in the region;

(c) Undertake in-depth research on effective, development-oriented and durable solutions to the challenges arising from globalization, particularly in the areas of trade, information technology, intellectual property rights and biotechnology and on options conducive to sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in the economies of members and associate members of ESCAP;

(d) Follow-up on the global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s and the outcome of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; continue to monitor and review, in a coordinated manner, the concerns and needs of the least developed countries, the island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition in the ESCAP region so as to enable them to participate more fully in and better benefit from the process of globalization and liberalization, as well as developments in information technology; and support the management of structural adjustment and policy reform in the disadvantaged economies by providing appropriate policy advice and technical assistance;

(e) Explore ways to reduce and prevent deterioration in the socio-economic conditions and circumstances of the disadvantaged economies in the ESCAP region, such as the least developed countries, the island developing countries and the countries with economies in transition. A number of important parameters and

forces in the growth and development of those countries may be identified, assessed and brought to the attention of the concerned Governments and their international economic partners and development partners;

(f) Undertake a systematic, comprehensive and integrated analysis of development patterns and prospects in the region, through in-depth research on regional needs and perspectives in development as regards macroeconomic policy, management and governance, and provide related technical assistance and advisory services on macroeconomic policy and the management of economic reform. In this connection, emphasis will be placed on analytical work on economic and financial monitoring and surveillance in the region, in close consultation with international and financial institutions, in order to respond in a timely way to new challenges arising from globalization.

Expected accomplishments

15.14 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) policy reforms in the countries of the region for dealing with the implications of global developments; (b) greater regional cooperation in macroeconomic policy formulation (through an enhanced appreciation of the spillover efforts of domestic policy responses and strengthened national capacity in the design and implementation of macroeconomic policies aimed at stabilization and sustainable economic growth with equity); and (c) strengthened national capacity for the effective articulation of the concerns of the disadvantaged economies of the region in international forums.

Indicators of achievement

15.15 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) the extent to which appropriate macroeconomic policies advocated by ESCAP were incorporated at the national or regional levels; (b) the extent to which relevant policy-oriented research and studies on macroeconomic issues were used by Governments, regional organizations and research institutions; (c) the increased sharing of experiences, including those related to monitoring and surveillance of key economic indicators that can signal early warning of an impending crisis; and (d) a positive evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of ESCAP outputs and services by the users, including Governments.

Subprogramme 3 Social development

Objective

15.16 The objective of this subprogramme is to accelerate the attainment by member countries of the goals and targets of poverty alleviation, employment expansion and social integration (in pursuance of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and its review outcome, as well as the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region), including the implementation of global and regional plans of action related to women, youth, human resources development, disabled persons and older persons; and to promote effective partnerships with both Governments and civil society.

Strategy

15.17 The substantive responsibility for this subprogramme rests with the Social Development Division, which will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Accelerate the formulation and implementation of effective social policy and programme initiatives to ensure a caring society for all and to promote the right to and full participation of disadvantaged groups, with greater focus on people living with disabilities and including older persons, in development. This will be reflected in: strengthened national capabilities in social development planning; strengthened local, national and regional institutions and mechanisms to support coherent and collaborative action; improved mobilization and utilization of resources for social development programmes; the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, including the poor, people with disabilities, children and older persons, through the equalization of opportunities, the elimination of discrimination, and improved access to social services and productive assets, such as credit and skills development; and the breaking down of barriers to mobility by improving access to the physical environment, infrastructure and information technology;

(b) Enhance the productivity and quality of human resources through the formulation and implementation of human resources development policies and programmes, with special focus on education and skills training, health promotion and income-generation/employment creation, for the poor and other key target groups, such as youth. This will be undertaken through the provision of training (for national personnel from both the public and non-governmental organization (NGO) sectors) on human development values and tools for the effective planning and delivery of social and health services, as well as income-generation schemes for the poor; promotion of integrated health services for young persons focusing on reproductive health, substance abuse prevention and HIV/AIDS prevention; and government-NGO cooperation in the delivery of non-formal education services, including adult education, literacy promotion and the development of information, education and communication material for out-of-school youth, children and other marginalized social groups;

(c) Promote gender equality through gender mainstreaming, advancing the economic, social and political status of women and protecting the rights of women. This will be undertaken by empowering women to meet the challenges of the gender impact of global economic, social and technological changes and demographic processes on such issues as work and employment and social security, especially for poor women; promoting the role of women in transformative leadership at the local and national levels; promoting and protecting the human rights of women, including integrated approaches to combating violence against women; and strengthening mechanisms to mainstream gender into the public policy agenda;

(d) The above will be achieved through the promotion of wider information exchange through intergovernmental and expert group meetings, technical publications and increased use of media and information technology; the provision of support for national institution-building initiatives, including human resources development through group training and advisory services; and the strengthening of regional networks and cooperation, especially with other United Nations and subregional intergovernmental bodies.

Expected accomplishments

15.18 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) enhanced national mechanisms for social development policy and programme implementation; (b) enhanced capability of national personnel to plan and implement social policy, human resources development and women in development programmes; (c) more responsive health and social services for key target groups, such as the poor, women, youth, children, disabled persons and older persons, the empowerment of those groups and their enhanced participation in national development processes; (d) more gender-sensitive programmes and increased understanding of critical issues on the empowerment of women, including the impact of globalization and of measures to integrate women into the globalization process and increased capacity to exercise women's rights as human rights; and (e) more effective coordination and networking among Governments, United Nations agencies and members of civil society.

Indicators of achievement

15.19 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) an increase in the number of Governments conducting national reviews and participating in regional reviews of global and regional plans of action related to social development, human resources development and women in development; (b) the enumeration of plans, policies and best practices advocated by ESCAP adopted and/or adapted at the national, subregional and regional levels in the fields of social policy, human resources development and women in development; (c) the positive evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of ESCAP outputs and services by the users, including Governments, NGOs and the public; and (d) enhanced flow of information and coordination with government agencies, NGOs and other United Nations agencies.

Subprogramme 4 Population and rural and urban development

Objective

15.20 The objective is to identify and create a better understanding of economic and social issues in the areas of population and rural and urban development that are directly related to the eradication of poverty; to increase awareness of the critical issues in the areas of population and rural and urban development among policy makers, civil society and individuals; and to

develop appropriate strategies and policies in the areas of population and rural and urban development to improve the quality of life of the poor, with special attention to the needs of the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries.

Strategy

15.21 The substantive responsibility for this subprogramme lies with the Population and Rural and Urban Development Division, which will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Increase understanding of the complex interrelationships involved in population and rural and urban development, with special emphasis on the poor, population and reproductive health dynamics, gender issues, migration, employment and production, and the environment;

(b) Strengthen the technical, managerial and organizational capacity of Governments at all levels to formulate integrated population, rural and urban development policies and programmes for eradicating poverty and improving the quality of life, taking into account the regional implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo in 1994, the recommendations arising from the special session of the General Assembly on the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in 1999, and the recommendations emanating from the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, scheduled for 2002;

(c) Strengthen national efforts and capabilities for the empowerment of the rural poor in planning and implementing sustainable agricultural development and the eradication of rural poverty;

(d) Strengthen the capacity of Governments and regional and international associations of local authorities, NGOs, the private sector, academic institutions and other regional or subregional groupings to develop regional plans of action and activities in the area of human settlements that address priority issues specific to the region, in particular within the context of globalization and its manifestation in the financial, social, economic, cultural and political spheres, and within the framework of the Habitat Agenda endorsed by the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul in 1996, and the outcome of its review;

(e) Increase and strengthen civil society partnerships with broad participation by promoting participatory approaches at the local, community and higher levels in dealing with population issues and rural and urban development;

(f) Improve the processing, management, communication and dissemination of population and rural and urban development data and information, with a view to promoting advocacy and affirmative action within civil society and for the formulation of effective poverty alleviation policies;

(g) Promote and improve plant nutrition management, linking closely research, rural extension, training and information networks.

15.22 The above goals will be achieved through the organization of intergovernmental meetings, including the Fifth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, to be held in 2002; the dissemination of data and information on population and rural and urban development through information networking, support for regional networks of local authorities and NGOs, and publications; the conduct of in-country and regional training and the provision of advisory services for capacity-building; and the conduct of policy analyses and research both at the macro and micro levels in the fields of population and rural and urban development.

Expected accomplishments

15.23 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) greater incorporation of population and rural and urban development issues into national development policies and plans; (b) more effective implementation of reproductive health programmes; (c) strengthened local and national capacity to formulate and implement effective human settlements programmes; (d) improved skill in the field of information management, information technology and communication relating to population and rural and urban development; (e) development of relevant and adequately focused poverty alleviation programmes; and (f) improved governance based on effective participation and cooperation between different sectors of civil society.

Indicators of achievement

15.24 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) enumeration of the plans, policies, and programmes advocated by ESCAP adopted in accordance with the recommendations of global conferences, at the national, subregional and regional levels; (b) the number of Governments

using guidelines and/or manuals and training materials for national capacity-building purposes; (c) the number of countries carrying out policy research and analysis in the ESCAP intercountry framework; and (d) positive evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of ESCAP outputs and services by the users, including Governments.

Subprogramme 5 Environment and natural resources development

Objective

15.25 The objective is to strengthen the national capacity of members and associate members to achieve sustainable development, as well as regional and subregional cooperation on protection of the environment and development and management of natural resources, taking into account the recommendations of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session, held in June 1997, the outcome of the 10-year review of Agenda 21, scheduled to be held in 2002, and the priorities given by members and associate members of ESCAP at intergovernmental legislative meetings.

Strategy

15.26 The substantive responsibility for this subprogramme lies with the Environment and Natural Resources Development Division, which will pursue the following strategy:

(a) In the area of environment, coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005, and other recommendations of the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2000; review the regional implementation of relevant international conventions; promote the integration of environmental considerations into economic and social planning; develop and implement strategic environmental plans and sustainable development indicators; and promote the increased involvement of groups such as the private sector and NGOs in achieving sustainable development goals;

(b) In the area of energy resources, strengthen national capacity in sustainable development and energy management through appropriate policy and planning, energy

conservation and efficiency and enhanced use of new and renewable sources of energy;

(c) In the area of water resources, strengthen national capacity to formulate policies and implement programmes on the integrated development, management, assessment and protection of water resources and on innovative approaches to demand management and efficient use of water;

(d) In the area of mineral resources, promote environmentally sound policies and regulations for the development and management of mineral resources, including those relating to investment promotion, and strengthen institutional capacity for the assessment, planning and development of mineral resources using innovative methodologies and the latest technologies;

(e) In the area of space technology applications, follow up on the recommendations of the Second Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in 1999, including the implementation of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development, phase II; this involves the promotion of integrated uses of remote sensing, geographic information systems (GIS) and other space information technologies for applications in natural resources management, environmental monitoring, natural disaster management and development planning, and the promotion of regional cooperation in space technology applications through the strengthening of the three-tier network;

(f) In the area of natural disaster reduction and mitigation, strengthen levels of preparedness and prevention of water-related natural disasters; promote the application of geologic aspects in land use and urban planning, particularly for geologic natural disaster reduction; and promote the integrated use of space technology for effective disaster management and monitoring.

15.27 The above goals will be achieved through the promotion of wider information exchange through intergovernmental and expert group meetings, technical publications and increased use of media and information technology; support for national institution-building initiatives, including human resources development through group training and advisory services; and the strengthening of regional networks and cooperation, especially with other United Nations and subregional intergovernmental bodies.

Expected accomplishments

15.28 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) strengthened national capacity in the formulation of policies and planning relating to the sustainable development and management of environment, energy, water and mineral resources, space technology applications and natural disaster mitigation; and (b) close regional and subregional cooperation among countries in addressing common issues relating to sustainable development and management in the above fields.

Indicators of achievement

15.29 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) a positive evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of ESCAP outputs and services by the users, including Governments; (b) an enumeration of countries that have adopted and used guidelines and training materials provided by ESCAP for national planning, development and management of the environment, energy, water and mineral resources, space technology applications and disaster mitigation; (c) an assessment of enhanced government participation in formulating, updating and implementing regional plans of action and other regional agreements and/or the number of conventions and other international instruments ratified in the above fields, and the adoption of national policy and programme measures based on agreed regional and global plans; and (d) an increased number and greater scope of regional and subregional programmes and collaborative efforts for addressing common issues of concern relating to the above fields.

Subprogramme 6 Transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure development

Objective

15.30 The objective of this subprogramme is to develop sustainable, efficient, environmentally sound and socially acceptable transport, communications, tourism and infrastructure within the framework of the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific (1997-2006) and the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Asian and Pacific Region (1999-2005).

Strategy

15.31 The substantive responsibility for this subprogramme lies with the Transport,

Communications, Tourism and Infrastructure Development Division, and the strategy will be to assist countries of the region:

(a) To develop and operationalize an integrated transport network to support mobility, trade and tourism through the completion of the missing links and upgrading of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway, and through improvements in shipping and intermodal connections, including ports;

(b) To upgrade transport efficiency through the identification and removal of physical and non-physical impediments and by strengthening human resources capabilities to address transport logistics, facilitation, commercialization and globalization issues more effectively;

(c) To achieve sustainable growth in tourism by strengthening policy development capabilities, including those related to environmental issues, and initiating activities to facilitate tourism travel and infrastructure investment and strengthen regional cooperation through, for example, the Network of Asia-Pacific Education and Training Institutes in Tourism;

(d) To support the development of safe and sustainable transport by assisting countries to develop and implement transport safety plans, rules and regulations, by adopting an integrated and interactive approach to urban transport planning and by mitigating the impact of transport on the environment;

(e) To integrate social concerns into transport, tourism and infrastructure development policies through, for example, people-centred and participatory approaches.

15.32 This will be achieved through the organization of intergovernmental and expert group meetings; the collection, analysis and dissemination of data and information on transport, communications and tourism to enhance awareness of critical regional issues and sustainable strategies for development; the promotion of regional and subregional cooperation in addressing common issues and problems, including resource constraints; the development and delivery of training materials and the provision of advisory services for capacity-building in the fields of transport, communications and tourism; and collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies, regional associations and NGOs, including the private sector.

Expected accomplishments

15.33 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) substantial completion of the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific (1997-2006) and of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Asian and Pacific Region (1999-2005); and (b) improved capacity in the public and private sectors to develop appropriate policies and strategies and achieve greater integration and operational efficiency.

Indicators of achievement

15.34 The indicators of achievement would include: (a) the number of transport, communications and tourism plans and policies adopted following intergovernmental and expert group meetings at the national, subregional or regional level; (b) a positive evaluation of the implementation of the New Delhi Action Plan and the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development; (c) the operationalization of selected international corridors within the Trans-Asian Railway system with links to maritime and other transport modes; (d) the upgrading and operationalization of selected Asian highway routes; (e) the identification and removal of major impediments to the flow of transport; (f) the establishment of regular dialogue between key public and private sector players to incorporate environmental and social concerns in transport; and (g) a positive evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of ESCAP outputs and services by the users, including Governments.

Subprogramme 7 Statistics

Objective

15.35 The objective is to improve the statistical capabilities of the countries/areas of the region for informed decision-making and to promote their use of information technology in the public sector, and to make comparable statistical information on the region widely and promptly available.

Strategy

15.36 Substantive responsibility for this subprogramme lies with the Statistics Division, which will pursue the following strategy:

(a) Contribute to the improvement of the capacity of national statistical systems, particularly in priority areas, for the purposes of informed planning, policy formulation, decision-making and monitoring of progress. Special efforts will be made to improve the statistical capability of the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries, as well as the countries with economies in transition, to identify, collect, process, analyse and utilize data needed for their economic and social development, thereby strengthening their information and statistical base, including through networking of national, subregional and regional information systems;

(b) Collect and disseminate statistical data on the countries of the region, taking into account user demands. The focus would be on greater use of electronic technology in the acquisition and provision of data and information and on reducing the response burden of countries. Special attention will be paid to improving the accessibility and the international comparability of the data disseminated;

(c) Strengthen the involvement of the countries of the region in the development of international standards, the use of improved methodology for data collection, processing and analysis and the greater utilization of statistics. In line with the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission, the ESCAP secretariat will initiate and coordinate at the regional level the development, revision, testing and implementation of selected international statistical standards and, where necessary, their adaptation to meet the conditions and needs of the countries of the region;

(d) Enhance understanding of the role of information technology and promote the applications of that technology, as well as information resource management in the region, especially in the public sector.

Expected accomplishments

15.37 Expected accomplishments would include: (a) increased capacity in the region to identify, collect, process, analyse and utilize data needed for national economic and social development; (b) improved coordination, collaboration and sharing of information on statistical development and statistical standards in the region; and (c) more systematic information technology planning and adoption of more coherent policies in this field.

Indicators of achievement

15.38 Indicators of achievement would include: (a) an increase in the number of countries providing statistical data required for inclusion in the statistical publications of the secretariat; (b) an increase in the availability of and access to reliable and comparable national economic and social data for users; (c) increased participation in the development and adoption of statistical standards; (d) the adoption by Governments of policies on key issues affecting national statistical services and information technology planning; and (e) a positive evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of ESCAP outputs and services by the users, including Governments.