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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Subcommittee on Environment and Sustainable Development

First session  
29 September-1 October 2004  
Bangkok

**ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

1. *Opening of the session*

The programme for the opening of the session will be announced in due course.

2. *Election of officers*

A chairperson, two vice-chairpersons and a rapporteur will be elected for the session.

3. *Adoption of the agenda*

The provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/SESD/L.1) will be considered and adopted by the Subcommittee, subject to such changes as deemed necessary.

4. *Multi-stakeholder partnerships in promoting sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific*

At its first session, the Committee on Managing Globalization stressed the importance of regional implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It also recommended that the secretariat should continue its efforts, among others, to promote multi-stakeholder involvement. Such involvement will enhance ownership, transparency and accountability of activities/projects/programmes designed to achieve sustainable development goals. Under this agenda item, the Subcommittee will have in-depth deliberations and identify options and possible measures to encourage enhanced involvement of multiple stakeholders in designing and implementing initiatives and operational activities to promote sustainable development. Members are requested to guide the secretariat by providing their comments and suggestions in response to the section on issues for the consideration of the Subcommittee under the relevant topics:

(a) Recommending priority activities for the secretariat to promote stakeholder involvement in its future work to widen access to energy services in rural areas;

(b) Assigning priority areas for future work on multi-stakeholder involvement in water resources management for sustainable development, in particular related to integrated water resources management, public awareness of water conservation, public-private partnerships for providing water services, water contamination and water-related disaster management;

(c) Identifying measures to further improve stakeholder involvement in developing and formulating measures to mitigate the impacts of dust and sandstorms.

Members may also wish to circulate country papers to share their efforts and experiences in enhancing multi-stakeholder involvement in promoting sustainable development, in particular in implementing operational projects on energy and water resources as well as environmental protection. To stimulate discussions, the secretariat will prepare three background documents highlighting major issues and concerns where multi-stakeholder participation could facilitate sustainable development. The documents will also include the lessons learned or expected from relevant projects designed and being implemented by the secretariat. The Subcommittee may also wish to advise the secretariat on issues to be included in the secretariat's programme of work.

*(a) Energy services for sustainable development in rural areas*

Lack of access to basic energy services is a major cause of poverty and environmental and health problems in rural areas. Efforts to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development in rural areas should include providing access to adequate and affordable energy services to improve the lives of the people and agricultural productivity. Document E/ESCAP/SES/L.1 discusses issues related to various aspects of energy services for sustainable development in rural areas, focusing on integrated planning and involvement of multiple stakeholders. An integrated approach to energy and rural development policies and programmes is considered to be an effective means of achieving sustainable development and poverty reduction. Stakeholder involvement and facilitation of information exchange among stakeholders as well as the establishment of public-private partnerships may play a significant role in widening access to energy services and capacity-building on integration of energy and rural development issues. The document will provide information on and share the

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lessons learned in the implementation of relevant projects or activities by ESCAP. The outcome of the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Energy Services for Sustainable Development in Rural Areas to be held from 27 to 29 September 2004 will be presented to the Subcommittee.

*(b) Water resources management for sustainable development*

In order to assist the countries concerned in achieving the water-related goals in the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, with special reference to the targets related to integrated water resources management, water-use efficiency and water-related disaster mitigation and preparedness, ESCAP has undertaken a number of relevant activities in support of national initiatives of countries in the region to meet these targets. Document E/ESCAP/SES/L.2 highlights the issues involved in improving access to basic water services and the linkages with poverty eradication, improving human health and livelihoods. It elaborates on the outcome and impacts of the activities contributing towards the preparation of integrated water resources management plans carried out under the water component of the ongoing Development Account project on strategic planning of natural resources and environmental management and within the recently completed project on the rational and efficient use of water and energy resources in Central Asia. The document also focuses on the results of activities aimed at capacity-building in the promotion of water conservation, in particular the preparation of water-use efficiency plans and the strengthening of regional cooperation and stakeholder involvement in water-related disaster mitigation and preparedness.

*(c) Prevention and control of dust and sandstorms*

Dust and sandstorms are serious environmental phenomena caused by land degradation, desertification and climate change. They are transboundary in nature and cause severe socio-economic, health and environmental impacts across the countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The major sources of such storms in the region are believed to be the desert and semi-desert areas of North-East Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and South Asia, including Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. A multi-stakeholder partnership is needed to control the problem effectively. Such a partnership has been developed in North-East Asia to address the long-range transboundary environmental problems caused by these storms. Under this partnership effort, the Asian  
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Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Environment Programme, the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and ESCAP are jointly implementing an ADB/Global Environment Facility-funded medium-size project on prevention and control of dust and sandstorms in North-East Asia with the active participation of four countries. The success of the project will provide a model for potential larger-size projects throughout the region. Document E/ESCAP/SESD/4 describes the impacts of the storms in the region and elaborates on rehabilitative measures and approaches with the focus on multi-stakeholder partnerships to prevent and control them.

5. *Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2005: status of preparation and strategies*

Ministerial conferences on environment and development in Asia and the Pacific have been held every five years since 1985. The fifth Conference will be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea and is scheduled to take place from 24 to 29 March 2005. In view of the unprecedented and continuing challenges to sustainable development posed by globalization, the 2005 Conference will be of critical importance in reviewing the course for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific. Document E/ESCAP/SESD/5 reviews the preparations and plans for this important Conference. It starts with a review of the implementation of World Summit outcomes and identifies and describes the key milestones in the preparatory process at the subregional and regional levels. It also provides brief highlights on the associated events to be held in conjunction with the Conference, identifies the key partners in the organization of the Conference and outlines the main substantive inputs and documents. It informs the Subcommittee of the expected outcomes of the Conference. Guidance will be sought from the Subcommittee on both the substantive and organizational aspects of the Conference. In particular, the participants may wish to review initiatives at the regional and subregional levels for submission to the Conference that the secretariat should follow-up in the form of initiatives.

6. *Programme matters*

(a) *Review of programme performance for 2002-2003*

Document E/ESCAP/SESD/3 presents a summary of programme performance for the subprogramme on environment and sustainable development for 2002-2003. This is the first results-oriented performance report and highlights programme achievements in the biennium 2002-2003. The Subcommittee is invited to review the document and take note of the results achieved.

(b) *Priority areas for inclusion in the programme of work for 2006-2007*

Document E/ESCAP/SESD/6, containing the draft strategic framework for the subprogramme on environment and sustainable development for the period 2006-2007, is presented for the Subcommittee's review. The document includes the biennial programme plan, focusing on the objectives and expected accomplishments of the subprogramme on environment and sustainable development. The Committee on Managing Globalization at its first session reviewed and endorsed the draft medium-term plan for the subprogramme on environment and sustainable development. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 58/269, the strategic framework for the biennium 2006-2007, incorporating the biennial programme plan, replaces the current four-year medium-term plan. The strategic framework and biennial programme plan were endorsed by the Commission at its sixtieth session in April 2004. The Subcommittee is invited to review the document and provide suggestions on priority areas, focusing on outputs and activities that could contribute to the expected accomplishments and strategic direction included in the plan.

7. *Other matters*

The Subcommittee may raise any other matters not covered under the items mentioned above.

8. *Adoption of the report*

The Subcommittee will adopt its report for submission to the Committee on Managing Globalization at its second session in 2005.