



17 December 2010

English only

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Intergovernmental Consultation Meeting of the ESCAP Subregional Office
for East and North-East Asia

Incheon, Republic of Korea
22-23 November 2010

INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATION MEETING OF THE ESCAP SUBREGIONAL OFFICE FOR EAST AND NORTH-EAST ASIA

REPORT

A. Introduction

1. The Intergovernmental Consultation Meeting of the Subregional Office for East and North East Asia (SRO-ENEA) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was held at the Sheraton Songdo Hotel, Incheon, Republic of Korea, from 22 to 23 November 2010. The meeting incorporated two round table discussions titled i) "*Towards a People-Centered Development Agenda*" and ii) "*Subregional Cooperation for Sustainable Development*". The meeting comprised four sessions dedicated to the emerging economic and social development issues in East and North-East Asia (ENEA) and one side event on the Subregional Knowledge Sharing Platform. The first issue of the periodic newsletter of the Office entitled "ESCAP connecting the subregion" and subtitled "Towards a people-centered sustainable development agenda" was launched during the side event.
2. The Provisional Programme of the meeting is attached (Annex I).

B. Participants

3. The meeting was attended by the official representatives of the following member States: China, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation.
4. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the substantive divisions and regional institutes of ESCAP and its Subregional Office for North and Central Asia.

5. The UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Mongolia and a representative of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) attended the meeting as well.
6. Civil society organizations were represented by experts from academic institutions and non-governmental organizations based in the member States of the subregion, as follows: the Global Green Growth Institute (Republic of Korea), the Global Environmental Institute (China), World Resources Institute China (China), Foundation "Bureau of Economic Analysis" (Russian Federation), Seikei University (Japan), Tokyo Woman's Christian University (Japan), Yonsei University (Republic of Korea), Far Eastern National University (Russian Federation), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Russia (Russian Federation), Scientific Public Coordination Center "Living Water" (Russian Federation), and Good Neighbors International (Republic of Korea).
7. The List of the Participants is attached (Annex II).

C. Opening Session

8. The Head of the Subregional Office, Mr. Peter Van Laere, delivered welcoming remarks on behalf of Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP. In her address, the Executive Secretary warmly welcomed all delegates to the first Consultation Meeting of the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia and expressed her hope that the discussions to take place during the meeting would contribute to further development of the priority areas of the Subregional Office and its program of work.
9. The Mayor of Incheon Metropolitan City, Mr. Young-gil Song and the Director-General of the International Economic Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Korea, Mr. Kyungsoo Kim, delivered their welcoming remarks.
10. H.E. Mr. Han Seungsoo, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea and Chair of the Board of the Global Green Growth Institute, delivered his key note address. Mr. Han welcomed the establishment of the new ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia and underscored the role of the Office in promoting the paradigm shift from traditional growth towards a low carbon, quality-oriented growth in the subregion. Mr. Han suggested that the Office could act as a focal point for further cooperation between the Republic of Korea and ESCAP on the outcome of the Seoul Summit of the Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (G-20) outlined in the Seoul Development Consensus for Shared Growth. He further emphasized the role of the Office in strengthening South-South cooperation to share the benefits of socio-economic development in East and North-East Asia with the entire world.

D. Outcomes of the meeting

(i) Statements of the member States

11. The delegation of **China** welcomed the organization of the Consultation Meeting and expressed its full support for the work of the SRO-ENEA, as well as its intention to play an active role in various cooperation programmes within the subregion. China

also stated its expectation that SRO-ENEA would strengthen cooperation towards poverty reduction and achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the subregion, and bring subregion's concerns to the global discussion on sustainable development towards the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (Rio+20) by consolidating the subregional inputs for the conference. China also highlighted the development disparity within a country as well as within the subregion, and emphasized that subregional cooperation would be needed for a more balanced development. As for the modality of SRO-ENEA's work, China recommended that SRO-ENEA keeps close contact with member States in the subregion and informs them of its activities, in conformity with the rules and procedure of the UN and ESCAP.

12. The delegation of **Japan** welcomed the convening of the Consultation Meeting, and referred to the 66th Commission Session in reiterating that the SRO-ENEA should avoid duplication and ensure transparency and accountability in the operations of the Subregional Office to be undertaken in the member States covered by the Office, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Japan also recommended that SRO collaborate with relevant institutes in order to create synergy. Lastly, during interventions, the Japanese delegation expressed its endorsement for SRO-ENEA to address gender issues in the subregion.
13. The delegation of **the Russian Federation** expressed its appreciation for the convening of the Meeting, and expressed that as economic powerhouse for the Asia-Pacific region, the countries in the subregion should promote financial stability. With regards to the work of the SRO-ENEA, the Russian delegation reiterated that SRO-ENEA should help to better address the demands of the subregional member States in ESCAP's activities. The Russian delegation also endorsed that SRO-ENEA should strengthen capacity building of subregional member States through knowledge sharing of policies and best practices in socio-economic and sustainable development. In addition, the Russian Federation expressed its expectation that SRO-ENEA's activities would promote modernization and integration of Siberia and the Russian Far East to the economic development of the Asia-Pacific region. During an intervention concerning sustainable development and climate change, the Russian Federation emphasized that the SRO-ENEA should avoid possible duplication of activities undertaken by other UN bodies, in particular the work accomplished by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It also expressed its wish that SRO-ENEA would follow-up on the proposal of the Russian Federation for developing a regional system of air pollution monitoring under the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC).
14. The delegation of **the Republic of Korea** referred to the key note address delivered by the former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea H.E. Mr. Han Seungsoo at the opening session of the meeting as the statement of the national delegation.
15. The national delegation of **Mongolia** reiterated that poverty reduction and gender issues, especially in the context of achieving MDGs, remained major concerns for Mongolia, and called on UN entities, including SRO-ENEA and other member States of the subregion for continued assistance.

(ii) Opportunities for inter-divisional collaboration

16. In the priority area of sustainable development, the participants of the meeting suggested collaboration of SRO-ENEA with ESCAP Divisions and Regional Institutes to implement subregional initiatives, i.e. North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) and Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia (ECNEA), support regional cooperation initiatives including Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth, Astana Green Bridge and Low Carbon Green Growth Roadmap and facilitate regional collaboration for eco-innovation and green technologies transfer.
17. Regarding the priority area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Disaster Risk Reduction, the participants of the meeting recommended SRO-ENEA to undertake activities to improve disaster risk preparedness in the subregion through information sharing and analysis, including analytical study on statistical risk profile of ENEA countries. Other recommended areas included providing technical assistance for member States such as advisory services, and developing a regional cooperation mechanism on disaster monitoring and early warning on drought, flood and other disasters.
18. The participants of the Meeting agreed on the importance of MDGs as international development goals and called for continued collaborative efforts towards achieving them in the subregion, pertaining especially to poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS and gender which is one of the priority areas of the SRO-ENEA. In addition, ageing was highlighted as a particularly relevant challenge for the subregion.
19. In the area of infrastructure, trade, and transport the participants of the Meeting recommended SRO-ENEA to enhance trade and transport facilitation for the subregional economies, especially on transit corridors between Mongolia-China and Mongolia-Russian Federation. It was also suggested that UN TIR Convention could be used as a possible tool for trade and transport facilitation within the subregion and beyond.
20. The participants of the Meeting suggested specific activities for inter-divisional cooperation of SRO-ENEA in its priority areas to be included in the Capacity Development project document for implementation in 2011-2013.

(iii) Opportunities for collaboration with civil society partners.

21. On *Environment*, representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) suggested a number of possible areas for cooperation within the scope of NEASPEC and the broader context of environment and sustainable development. The highlighted areas of work included monitoring of transboundary waters and assessment of water related ecosystems and promotion of establishment of transboundary protected areas in the subregion. The participants also underscored the potential role of SRO-ENEA in facilitating educational and training programs in the subregion with participation of different target groups, including schoolchildren and students. In addition, representatives of CSOs reiterated the possibility for SRO-ENEA to act as a knowledge hub for the subregion on environmental issues, which should include providing showcases of successful policies in mitigation of climate change and

mainstreaming of sustainable development and green growth and establishing and maintaining close contacts with existing multilateral environmental fora - globally and at the subregional level.

22. On setting an *All-Inclusive Development Agenda* for the subregion, representatives of CSOs suggested that SRO-ENEA may address rural poverty, HIV/AIDS, and translate gender mainstreaming into action. In particular, it was recommended to make sustainable agricultural technology accessible to the rural population and support marketing of products in order to improve rural income and livelihood. In relation to HIV/AIDS, it was recommended to empower young people in protecting themselves, ensure that people have access to anti-retroviral treatment, and combat stigma and discrimination. With regards to gender equality, recommendations included promoting gender-sensitive research on differential impact of policy on men and women, and promoting capacity building of women's economic potential.
23. On *Subregional Cooperation*, representatives of CSOs suggested to conduct a review of the existing programmes and projects in the East and North-East Asia subregion in the area of infrastructure, trade and transport in order to improve cooperation and coordination among member States and, if possible, integrating them to better address the needs of the subregion on a more cost-effective basis. It was suggested that the Office could conduct research on existing programmes and projects of regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region or its subregions such as Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific island States to either replicate them in ENEA or incorporate parts of them into subregional cooperation. It was felt that new initiatives for subregional cooperation would be needed in response to changes taking place in the economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions of development.

E. Summary of proceedings and proposed activities for 2011-2013

24. During the wrap up session, Mr. Peter Van Laere, Head of SRO-ENEA, presented a summary of the meeting's proceedings. He reiterated that in terms of the modality of the SRO-ENEA's work, there would be no duplication with mandates and programmes of divisions at ESCAP Headquarters and with other UN agencies; there would be an effort instead to create complementarity and synergies with national institutions, civil society, academia, and research institutes; the Office would ensure transparency and accountability in all its proceedings and keep close contact with member States. Furthermore, the work of the SRO-ENEA on sustainable socio-

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