

FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY

ENR/SO/ECNA(4)/Rep.  
24 February 1998

ENGLISH ONLY

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

**REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS ON  
ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION IN NORTH-EAST ASIA**

**Moscow, 13-16 January 1998**



**I. RECOMMENDATIONS AND MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION  
OF THE COMMISSION AND THE GOVERNING BODIES OF  
ALL COLLABORATING AGENCIES**

1 The Meeting attached great importance to the results of the nineteenth Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, since it took stock of the commitments made at the Rio Summit and adopted a comprehensive document on the programme for the further implementation of Agenda 21. The Special Session also recognized the need to strengthen regional and subregional cooperation to address environmental problems. The Meeting recommended that strengthening the activities of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation in full conformity with the objective of the Special Session would contribute to the effective implementation of its result.

2 The Meeting noted that environmental cooperation in North-East Asia would benefit greatly from the commitments that the leaders of the participating countries had made at the nineteenth Special Session, held in June 1997. It further observed that the decisions reached at that session would provide opportunities and possible initiatives to strengthen further environmental cooperation in North-East Asia.

3 The Meeting also recommended that the Framework for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation, together with the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Special Session should continue to provide policy guidance for enhancing subregional cooperation.

4 The Meeting decided to continue the consideration of institutional and financial aspects of the subregional cooperation for which it adopted a unanimous resolution indicating that a consensus on the modalities of the trust fund would be arrived at, possibly at its sixth session.

5 The Meeting noted with satisfaction the resolution adopted by ESCAP on subregional environmental cooperation in North-East Asia and the decision adopted by the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council at its nineteenth session on technical support to North-East Asian subregional cooperation. It recommended that the ESCAP secretariat, together with the cooperating agencies such as United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank, should continue to provide the secretariat, technical, administrative and financial support to the subregional cooperation.

6 The Meeting endorsed the following four projects and requested the ESCAP secretariat to seek funding support for their implementation:

Project 1: Pollution reduction in coal-fired power plants

Project 2: Environmental monitoring, data collection, comparability and analysis

Project 3: Efficiency improvement of electrostatic precipitators in existing power plants

Project 4: Demonstration of dry sorbent duct injection flue gas desulphurization technology

7 The Meeting recommended that the participating governments which were members of the governing bodies of the collaborating agencies such as UNDP, UNEP, World Bank and ADB should

inform those bodies on the progress made on subregional cooperation and also request them to provide substantial funding support for the subregional programme and projects. The respective government might wish to report the action taken in that regard at the Fifth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia.

8 The Meeting also requested that participating governments who were the members of the governing body of the Global Environment Facility might request the governing body to provide funding support for the North-East Asian subregional biodiversity project.

9 The Meeting noted with appreciation the offer of the Government of Japan to host the Fifth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia. The Meeting also agreed on a tentative agenda for the meeting.

## II. PROCEEDINGS

### A. Policy guidance on subregional cooperation and possible areas of subregional follow-up of the outcome of the nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly

(Item 4 of the agenda)

10 The Meeting took note of document ENR/SO/ECNA(4)/1.

11 The secretariat, introducing this item, indicated that while uneven progress had been recorded in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the global level, the environmental cooperation in North-East Asia could benefit immensely from the deliberation of the Special Session of the General Assembly and the commitment expressed by the leaders of the participating North-East Asian countries. The issues needing attention at the subregional level could be the strengthening of cooperation in energy and air pollution (particularly phasing out the leaded gasoline), biodiversity, transboundary aspects of environmental pollution, integration of economic, social and environmental objectives through a broad package of policy instruments, and science, technology and environmental awareness as a means of capacity-building.

12 The Meeting noted that, despite serious efforts by the countries and the implementation of several legal frameworks such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Desertification,

<sup>1</sup> the seriousness of most of the global problems continued to exacerbate instead of abating. In that connection, national efforts would need to be supplemented by subregional efforts for environmental amelioration to achieve substantial results.

/...

---

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.

13 The Meeting recognized that the activities of the subregional environmental cooperation in North-East Asia had raised public awareness of the importance of environmental protection among the participating countries and helped them in enhancing national capacities in the identified priority areas to cope with the challenges through assessment, policy-making, implementation and surveillance. The Meeting therefore stressed the need to enhance further subregional environmental cooperation in North-East Asia.

14 The Meeting recommended that a subregional environmental information system should be set up urgently and national capacities strengthened for the monitoring and surveillance of environmental pollutants.

15 The Meeting noted that there had been considerable progress in the area of clean coal technology through demonstration and on-site workshops and expert group meetings. However, there was a need to achieve similar progress in the areas of biodiversity management and introduce new technologies on renewable energy to reduce air pollution.

16 The Meeting recommended that the ESCAP should cooperate with and supplement the efforts of UNDP in the Tumen River Area Development Programme to ensure that environmental protection and resource management were enhanced while implementing various infrastructure development projects in that area. The Meeting noted a suggestion for the consideration of the Tumen region as a pilot area for the endorsed project on biodiversity management, which could provide an opportunity for increased subregional cooperation.

17 The Meeting recommended that, while developing projects for North-East Asian subregional environmental cooperation, the secretariat should ensure that such projects should not adversely affect funding of other similar bilateral cooperation projects. It would therefore be necessary for the ESCAP secretariat to focus in those areas which did not overlap with ongoing or proposed bilateral projects.

18 The Meeting expressed its satisfaction at the progress made in subregional cooperation in North-East Asia and indicated that the step-by-step and practical approach as proposed in the Framework adopted at Ulaanbaatar in 1996 had proved quite significant in strengthening subregional cooperation. It therefore recommended that a similar approach might be continued for further enhanced efforts on subregional cooperation.

19 The Meeting noted the absence of the collaborating agencies, namely UNDP, ADB and the World Bank, and expressed the hope that they would participate at the next meeting of senior officials.

**B. Framework for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation:  
review of the implementation of the Framework, including  
the implementation of the approved priority projects**

(Item 5 (a) of the agenda)

20 The secretariat introduced document ENR/SO/ECNA(4)/2 on the status of implementation of the Framework for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation that was adopted at the Third Meeting of Senior Officials in September 1996, the status of implementation and the achievement of the projects approved by the senior officials and later funded by the donors, and the status of the projects promoted for funding support. In addition, the attention of the Meeting was drawn to the report of the Mid-term Review Meeting on Technical Assistance for Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia, held at Bangkok on 20 and 21 October 1997 and document ENR/SO/ECNA(4)/2/Add.1 containing five project proposals submitted for endorsement by the senior officials.

21 The Meeting requested the Government of Japan to consider hosting a demonstration workshop in Japan as an activity under project 1. The Meeting was also pleased to note the offer of the representative of Japan at the mid-term review of the ADB/ESCAP project, held on 20 and 21 October 1997, to host a joint workshop on emission inventory development in relation to project 2 on environmental monitoring, data collection, comparability and analysis (formerly subproject 3).

22 The Meeting expressed deep appreciation to ADB for funding three approved projects together with ESCAP. The implementation of those projects had brought about tangible results in sharing practical experiences, raising energy efficiency, reducing air pollution and contributing to capacity-building for sustainable energy use and management. The financial support provided by the Republic of Korea and Japan, together with the hosting of various events of the projects by the participating countries, contributed to the success resulting in subregional benefits.

23 The Meeting considered the report of the mid-term review of the ADB/ESCAP project under implementation and reviewed the following five project proposals submitted for endorsement by the senior officials:

- Project 1: Pollution reduction in coal-fired power plants
- Project 2: Environmental monitoring, data collection, comparability and analysis
- Project 3: Efficiency improvement of electrostatic precipitators in existing power plants
- Project 4: Demonstration of dry sorbent duct injection flue gas desulphurization technology
- Project 5: Flue gas desulphurization technological information exchange project.

24 It decided to endorse projects 1-4 after incorporating the comments and amendments provided at the Meeting. In the meantime, the Meeting requested the ESCAP secretariat to prepare tentative cost estimates of those projects for consideration by various donors. It noted that DALENERGO, Vladivostok, had expressed interest in participating in all the projects relating to energy and environment.

25 The Meeting requested special consideration by ADB to provide financing support for the approved projects.

26 The Meeting thanked the representative of UNEP for offering to take steps to transmit the approved project proposals to different units at Headquarters for possible collaboration and support, including project funding. It requested him to inform the ESCAP secretariat of the outcome of those efforts, so that the information might be transmitted to the participating countries or presented to the next meeting of senior officials.

**C. Framework for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of  
Environmental Cooperation: institutional aspects and  
the feasibility of establishing a trust fund**

(Item 5 (b) of the agenda)

27 The Meeting considered document ENR/SO/ECNA(4)/3 and expressed the view that the document required further improvement for facilitating the deliberations by the senior officials on institutional and financial arrangements of the Programme. The subsequent discussion of the Meeting focused on the three options for institutional and financial arrangements mentioned in the document.

28 The Meeting felt that option one, that is, existing arrangements as elaborated in the Framework, was the most practical at that stage and would lend itself to the step-by-step approach.

29 The Meeting also felt that the option two was unrealistic at that stage as it required the establishment of an overambitious mechanism to implement the Programme. The Meeting felt likewise about option three, as it would have to count on the participation and cooperation of several entities, including non-governmental organizations, which were beyond the concept of the Framework.

30 The representative of the ESCAP secretariat stated that ESCAP faced several constraints in providing secretariat support, as indicated in option one, in view of the recent reduction of the regular budget resources caused by the ongoing United Nations reform.

31 As regards the financial arrangements of the Programme, there was a general sentiment that it would be difficult for the present session of the Senior Officials Meeting to decide on the establishment of a trust fund. Therefore, the Meeting felt that it should consider the issues relating to the establishment of a trust fund, including the feasibility of seeking financial contributions from donors outside the region as well as a time schedule towards reaching an agreement on the matter.

32 The Meeting held the view that the existing arrangements provided by the Framework were practical and feasible and should continue with the support provided by the cooperating agencies such as ADB, UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank, together with the secretariat support provided by the ESCAP. The Meeting, however, recognized the shortcomings of the present arrangement in terms of limitation of funds resulting in delayed implementation of endorsed projects and the constraints faced by ESCAP.

33 The Meeting also observed the need for the involvement of the funding agencies and

development banks to provide increased support for regional and subregional activities in line with the commitments of those organizations made at the nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly.

34 The deliberations on financial issues ranged from the appropriate time for decisions on the financial arrangements, which included a trust fund, the need for further elaboration on the objectives and modalities with identification of sources of fundings, and the use of existing funds. The Meeting felt the need for a paper on the institutional and financial matters which could help the senior officials to carry out more focused discussion at their subsequent meetings. The secretariat therefore urged the delegates to provide clear guidance on the contents of the paper to be prepared for consideration at the next Meeting of Senior Officials. The secretariat also stated that the cofinancing support required for the projects as conditions for obtaining funds from donors such as ADB and the funding needs for organizing the Meeting of Senior Officials were the immediate financial needs that the Senior Officials should address through a trust fund or other arrangements. The Meeting unanimously adopted a resolution proposing future action for institutional and financial arrangements to support the Framework (see annex).

**D. Venue, date and provisional agenda of the Fifth Meeting of Senior Officials  
on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia**

(Item 6 of the agenda)

35 The Meeting welcomed the offer of the Government of Japan to host the Fifth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia in Japan. The provisional agenda of the Fifth Meeting, as considered by the Meeting, was as follows:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Policy guidance on North-East Asian subregional environmental cooperation for the twenty-first century in the light of the outcome of the nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly, held in June 1997.
5. Project review:
  - (a) Ongoing projects;
  - (b) New projects.
6. Implementation of the Framework:
  - (a) Institutional and financial mechanisms;
  - (b) Other issues.
7. Venue, date and provisional agenda of the Sixth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia.
8. Other matters.

9. Adoption of the report.

### **III. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING**

36 The Fourth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia, organized by ESCAP in cooperation with UNEP, UNDP, ADB, and the World Bank, was held at Moscow from 13 to 16 January 1998.

#### **A. Attendance**

37 The Meeting was attended by senior officials from the following members of ESCAP: China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea and Russian Federation.

38 UNEP was also represented at the Meeting.

39 Wesley K. Foell, President, and Collin W. Green, Senior Environmental and Energy Specialist of Resource Management Associates of Madison, Inc. attended as consultants.

#### **B. Opening statements**

40 His Excellency Mr Victor Danilov-Daniljan, Chairman, State Committee of the Russian Federation on Environmental Protection delivered the inaugural address. The message of the Executive Secretary of ESCAP was read by the Director, Environment and Natural Resources Management Division of ESCAP. The representative of UNEP also made a statement.

#### **C. Election of officers**

41 H.E. Mr Alexander Solovianov (Russian Federation) was elected Chairperson. Five Vice-Chairpersons were elected: Zhong Shukong (China), Kim Tae Song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), Masayuki Goto (Japan), Davaa Basandorj (Mongolia), Seok-Young Choi (Republic of Korea). Seok-Young Choi (Republic of Korea) was also elected Rapporteur.

#### **D. Adoption of the agenda**

42 The Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Policy guidance on subregional cooperation and possible areas of subregional follow-up of the outcome of the nineteenth Special Session of the General Assembly.
5. Framework for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation:
  - (a) Review of the implementation of the Framework, including the implementation of the approved priority projects;
  - (b) Institutional aspects and the feasibility of establishing a trust fund.
6. Venue, date and provisional agenda of the Fifth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the report.

#### **IV. OTHER MATTERS**

(Item 7 of the agenda)

43 The Meeting expressed its gratitude to the Government of the Russian Federation for the excellent host facilities and expressed special thanks to the All-Russian Institute of Nature Protection for assistance in organizing the Meeting and the Yury Gagarin Centre at Star City for the excellent demonstration of their facilities. It also thanked ESCAP, UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank and ADB for their existing and potential support for regional environmental cooperation in North-East Asia.

#### **V. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

(Item 8 of the agenda)

44. The report was unanimously adopted on 16 January 1998.

*Annex*

**RESOLUTION**

Based on the Framework for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation adopted by the Third Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia, held in Ulaanbaatar from 17 to 20 September 1996, and welcomed by the Commission at its fifty-third session held in April 1997, the Fourth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia,

1. *Agrees* to further elaborate issues relating to institutional and financial arrangements for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme of Environmental Cooperation, as appropriate;
2. *Agrees* in this regard to make efforts towards financial arrangements, including a trust fund, and to reach a consensus on the modalities of the trust fund, possibly at its Sixth Meeting, which may include: (a) voluntary contributions from the participating parties in cash or in kind or both, (b) collaborating agencies on a project-funding basis, (c) contributions from bilateral and multilateral donors, (d) the private sector on a project-funding basis, (e) other contributions;
3. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare a paper on these issues for discussion at the Fifth Meeting of Senior Officials on Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia;
4. *Requests* the participating countries, bilateral and multilateral donors and cooperating agencies such as the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank to increase their contributions to the programme;
5. *Requests* ESCAP to cooperate with the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, etc., and continue to provide secretariat, technical, financial and other support;
6. *Requests* relevant private sectors, local governments, non-governmental organizations and other interested groups to support the programme on a project-funding basis.

. . . . .