

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

THE FOURTEENTH SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING OF NEASPEC
Moscow, 8-9 April 2009

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Meeting exchanged information on national initiatives relevant to NEASPEC and views on the significance of NEASPEC as a key vehicle for subregional environmental cooperation. The Meeting received the recognition of member countries' about the progress of NEASPEC and at the same time the importance of strengthening its activity and coordination among member countries.

2. **Project on Mitigation of Transboundary Air Pollution from Coal-fired Power Plants:** The Meeting acknowledged the expectation that the project should start as early as possible, before the expiration of the project approval, and agreed to reformulate the current approach and scope of the project while the major framework such as the title will be maintained in order to ensure the availability of current funding of US\$900,000. The Meeting requested member countries to nominate one contact point to facilitate further consultations among member countries for the project reformulation, and the secretariat to take the interests of all member countries into account in the reformulation process. In this regard, the Meeting also noted the proposals presented by the delegations of China and the Russian Federation, in addition to general endorsement on the co-benefits approach.

3. **Project on Nature Conservation in Transboundary Areas:** The Meeting noted multilateral and bilateral initiatives being carried out on the relevant subjects among member countries. In view of significance of transboundary cooperation on nature conservation, the Meeting approved the proposal of a NEASPEC project on nature conservation in transboundary areas and received the expression of member countries' readiness to contribute to the project. The Meeting requested the secretariat to expand the geographical scope of the project in order to include the tripartite border area of China,

Mongolia and Russian Federation. Thus, the Meeting requested the secretariat to undertake further consultations among member countries on the final arrangement of the project through the group of contact persons to be nominated by member governments.

4. **Project on the Mitigation of Dust and Sandstorms (DSS):** The Meeting noted the relevance of the proposed project on mitigation of dust and sandstorms, and particularly recognized that the proposed activities are reasonable and achievable. Thus, the Meeting approved the project and received the expression of member countries for providing additional technical supports to the project implementation, and requested to make further communications with member countries regarding such supports.

5. **Eco-efficiency Partnership:** The Meeting recognized the considerable relevance of the proposed Eco-Efficiency Partnership to the ongoing national initiatives for improving energy and resource efficiency, and received concrete proposals from member countries for their plan to contribute to each component of the Eco-efficiency Partnership. In particular, the Meeting noted a proposal of the delegation of the Russian Federation for potential areas and modalities of the government's contribution to each component, and a proposal of the Republic of Korea (ROK) to hold an expert group meeting under the component of Public-Private-Civil Society Partnership in conjunction with the Low Carbon, Green Growth Convention in October 2009.

6. **Issues Concerning Institutional Arrangement:** The Meeting received a briefing of the secretariat on the current process of the establishment of ESCAP Subregional Office in North-East Asia. As the establishment of the Subregional Office is directly relevant to the secretariat arrangement, the Meeting reviewed the progress without any substantive discussions on the subject.

7. **Core Fund:** The Meeting approved the report on the status of the Core Fund and received the confirmation of China and the Republic of Korea for annual contributions to the Fund in 2009. The Meeting also noted the significance of all member countries' contributions to the Core Fund.

8. The Meeting received the proposal of the Government of Japan for hosting the

15th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of NEASPEC. The venue, exact dates and the provisional agenda will be decided through further consultations and announced in due course.

9. The Meeting expressed sincere gratitude to the Government of Russian Federation for generously hosting the Meeting and for its warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. The Meeting also expressed gratitude to the secretariat for the arrangement of the SOM.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 14th SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING

10. The 14th SOM of NEASPEC was held on 8-9 April 2009 in Moscow, the Russian Federation. It was organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and generously hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation.

A. Attendance

11. The Meeting was attended by representatives of China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Russian Federation.

B. Opening session

12. The Senior Officials Meeting was opened by Mr. Masakazu Ichimura, the Chief, Environment and Development Policy Section, Environment and Development Division of UNESCAP. At the outset, Mr. Ichimura expressed his sincere appreciation to the Government of the Russian Federation for generously hosting this important meeting and excellent arrangements, and welcomed delegates and experts from the member countries. He highlighted the significance of four major agendas in scaling up the contribution of NEASPEC to subregional environmental challenges and expressed his anticipation for constructive discussions and decisions. In particular, he put an emphasis on the need of

increased ownership of member countries over NEASPEC, and appreciated the proactive roles of member countries in developing new projects.

13. A welcoming remark was addressed by Mr. Stanislav Ananiev, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation. After extending his gratitude to all delegates, he underscored the significance of multilateral cooperation for tackling transboundary environmental issues and in this regard expressed his appreciation to ESCAP for the continuous contribution to NEASPEC. He noted that NEASPEC has reached positive results including nature conservation strategy and new projects on DSS and Eco-efficiency Partnership. He emphasized the need to increase the efficiency of NEASPEC operation and practical outcome of projects, and assured the contribution of the Russian Federation to a new project on nature conservation.

C. Election of officers

14. The Meeting elected officers as follows: Mr. Amirkhan Amirkhanov (the Russian Federation) as the Chair, Choikhand Janchivlamdan (Mongolia) as the Vice Chair and Mr. Kaoru Kobayashi (Japan) as the Rapporteur.

D. Adoption of the agenda

15. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:
1. Opening of the meeting
 2. Election of officers
 3. Adoption of agenda
 4. Environment and development policies and issues of NEASPEC
 5. Review of programme planning and implementation
 - (a) Nature Conservation in Transboundary Areas
 - (b) Mitigation of Transboundary Air Pollution from Coal-Fired Power Plants in North-East Asia.
 - (c) Mitigation of Dust and Sandstorms
 - (d) Eco-efficiency Partnership in North-East Asia
 6. Consideration of new NEASPEC project proposals
 7. Review of issues concerning the institutional arrangement of NEASPEC

8. Review of the Core Fund.
9. Venue, date and provisional agenda of the 15th SOM.
10. Other matter
11. Adoption of the conclusion and recommendation of the meeting

**E. Environment and development policies and issues of the North-East Asian
Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC)
(Item 4 of the agenda)**

16. The representative of Japan, Mr. Kaoru KOBAYASHI, Director, Environmental Cooperation Office, Global Environment Bureau, Ministry of the Environment, expressed his appreciation to the host government and the secretariat for the excellent arrangement of the Meeting. With regard to regional and global environmental challenges, he introduced four major policies of Japan on low-carbon society, clean air initiative, sound material society and transboundary air pollution. He also noted the link between biodiversity and climate change, and expressed his wish for cooperation of member countries for the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in October 2010 in Japan.

17. The representative of China, Mr. Weiqiang SHI, Counsellor, Department of International Organizations and Conferences, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, highlighted the progress and role of NEASPEC by noting that it is the only multilateral mechanism comprising all North-East Asian countries and facilitates practical cooperation with incremental approach. In the context of strengthened programme implementation, he proposed strengthening the communication between the secretariat and the member countries through diplomatic channel, and increasing voluntary contribution of member countries to the Core Fund. He also presented policies of China for conserving resources and protecting environment through reducing energy intensity of economy and allocating substantial financial resources under economic stimulus plan for greening economy.

18. The representative of ROK, Mr. Kyung-Soo Kim, Deputy Director General, International Economic Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, highlighted the significance of the Vision Statement adopted by the 6th SOM in 2000 and the progress

of NEASPEC in participation and contribution of member countries, while noting the need to produce more concrete action and outcome of NEASPEC in order to maintain its unique role among various multilateral initiatives. He also noted that the proposed Eco-efficiency Partnership of NEASPEC is in line with policies of the ROK on low carbon, green growth.

19. The representative of Mongolia, Ms. Choikhand JANCHIVLAM DAN, Director, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Nature, Environment and Tourism, presented the national development strategy adopted in December 2008, and highlighted national challenges in harnessing renewable energy resources. She expressed her anticipation about new projects on nature conservation in transboundary areas, and dust and sandstorms. She also shared information on the plan of hosting the North-East Asian Summit on Climate Change in September 2009 in Mongolia and requested supports of the NEASPEC member countries.

20. The representative of the DPRK, Hek Chkhor KIM, Minister – Counsellor, Embassy of the DPRK in Moscow, expressed his appreciation to the participants for sharing fruitful information on environmental policies, and anticipation for successful conclusion of the Meeting.

F. Presentations and Discussions on Substantive Agenda Items (Item 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the agenda)

21. The Meeting had presentations from the secretariat on Agenda Item (5) Review of programme planning and implementation; Agenda Item (6) Consideration of new NEASPEC proposals; Agenda Item (7) Review of issues concerning the institutional arrangement of NEASPEC; and Agenda Item (8) Review of the Core Fund. The Meeting subsequently had considerable discussions after presentation on each agenda item. The conclusions and recommendations of discussions are included in the conclusion of the Meeting. Concerning the institutional mechanism, the delegation of the ROK requested for noting that the delegation made an enquiry about the legal arrangement between ESCAP and the independent secretariat of NEASPEC while accepting the conclusion of the Meeting.

22. Regarding the agenda item 8, representatives of China and the ROK announced the plan of national contributions, US\$50,000 and US\$100,000, respectively, to the Core Fund in 2009. The representative of Japan expressed his caution about the allocation of the Core Fund to the project on nature conservation in transboundary areas while accepting the consensus of other member countries on the project.

**G. Venue, date and provisional agenda of the Fifteenth SOM
(Agenda Item 9)**

23. The Meeting discussed the venue, date and agenda of the 15th SOM. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to the Government of Japan for generously offering to host the next Meeting to be held April or May 2010. The proposed dates and venue, and provisional agenda will be announced by the secretariat in consultation with the host government in due course.

**H. Other Matters
(Item 10 of the agenda)**

24. The Meeting expressed deep appreciation to the Government of the Russian Federation for generously hosting the 14th SOM and for its warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements of the Meeting.

**I. Adoption of the Report
(Item 11 of the agenda)**

25. The Meeting adopted the conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting on 9 April 2009. The Report of the Meeting was finalized and adopted through circulation among the member countries after the SOM.