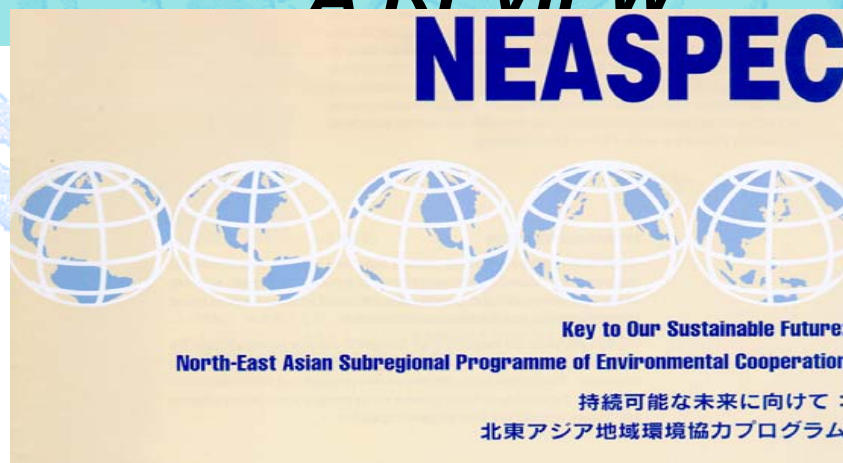


**THE INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL
MECHANISMS OF NORTH-EAST ASIAN
SUBREGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION (NEASPEC)
A REVIEW**



Adoption of the NEASPEC Framework

Seoul 8 - 11 February 1993

- 1st Meeting of Senior officials on Environmental Cooperation in Northeast Asia (SOM 1)
- Requested ESCAP, UNEP, UNDP and ADB to continue to provide professional and secretariat support.

Beijing, 28-29 November 1994

- 2nd Meeting of Senior Officials (SOM 2)
- Drafting of Framework for subregional environmental cooperation in NE Asia.

Ulaanbaatar, 17-20 September 1996

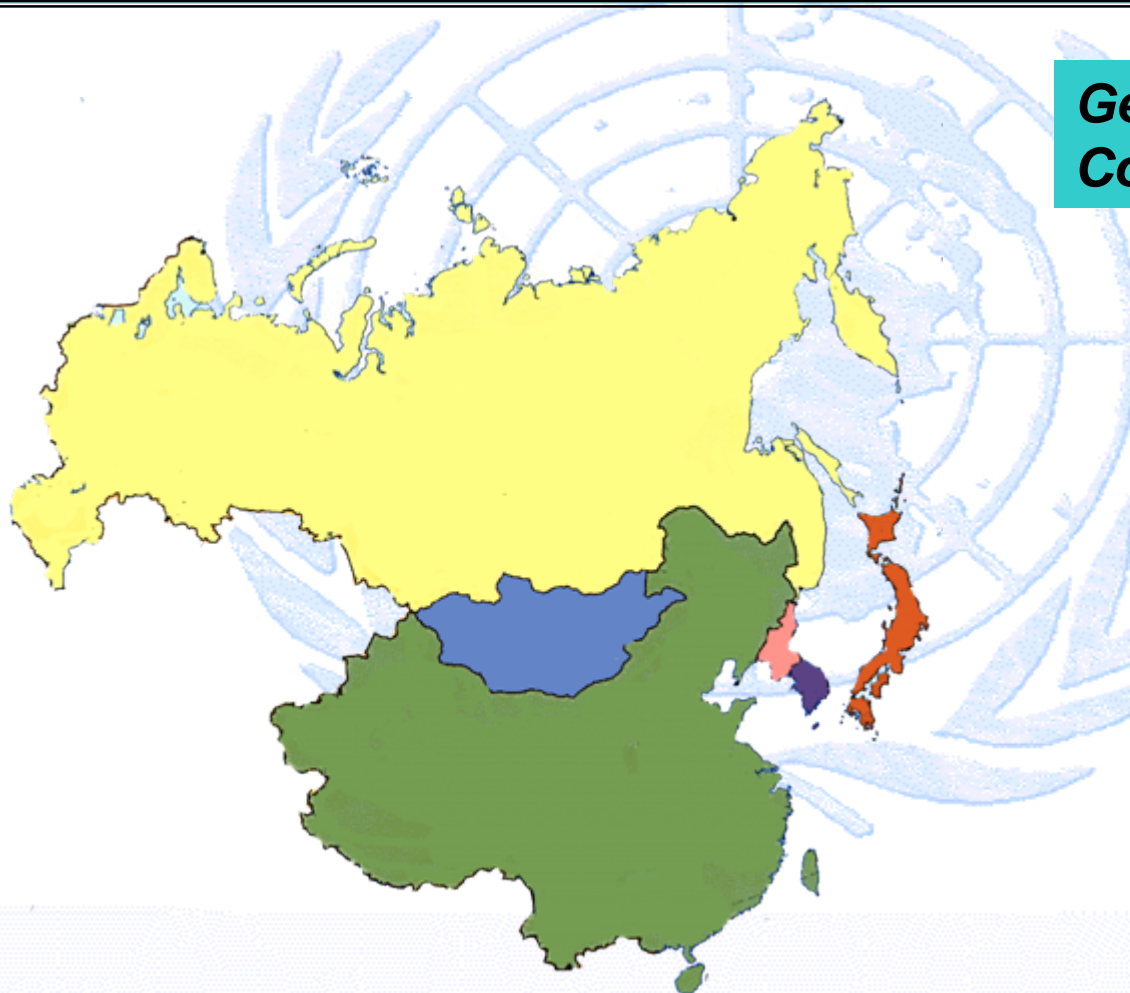
- 3rd Meeting of Senior Officials (SOM 3)
- Adoption of **Framework for NEASPEC.**

Components of the NEASPEC Framework

In General

- To achieve environmentally sound and sustainable development as a regional follow-up to UNCED
- Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 to continue to provide general policy guidance.

Components of the NEASPEC Framework



Geographical Coverage

- China
- DPR Korea
- Japan
- Mongolia
- Republic of Korea
- Russian Federation

SOM 4 – Moscow

(13-16 January 1998)

Options Proposed:

- Continue the existing framework;
- Establish Northeast Asian Centre for Environmental Cooperation as an independent subregional institution;
- Promote an umbrella approach to institutional and financial arrangements involving all stakeholders;
- Establish a Trust Fund

SOM 4- Moscow

Decisions:

The existing framework was practical and feasible and should continue with the support provided by the cooperating agencies such as ADB, UNDP and the World Bank, together with the secretariat support provided by the ESCAP.

SOM 5 - Kobe

(24-26 February 1999)

Institutional Mechanism Proposed:

- Policy making structure
- Secretariat
- Programme planning and Implementation
- Programme Cooperation/Coordination Mechanism
- Linkages with other relevant subregional initiatives/projects

SOM 5 - Kobe

Financial Mechanism Proposed:

- **Proposed Northeast Asia Environmental Cooperation Fund (NEAECF), from contributions through participating governments.**
- **3 alternatives to determine levels of voluntary funding:**
 - **Alternative I: All participating governments contribute according to UN scale of assessment**
 - **Alternative II: A fixed percentage of the NEAECF should be covered by participating governments in equal shares. The remainder contributed according to UN assessment scale.**
 - **Alternative III: All participating governments contribute on a voluntary basis.**

SOM 5 - Kobe

Decisions:

- **SOM to continue to be the governing body for policy decisions**
- **Participation at SOM should be at senior level**
- **Policy guidance through consultation with governments**
- **ESCAP requested to consult partner agencies and donor countries regarding the extent of financial support which could be available**
- **Overall consideration was that NEASPEC should continue with the current Framework**

SOM 5 - Kobe

Recommendations for Future Action

- **Continuation of NEASPEC should be on a project funding basis with ESCAP providing Secretariat support in Cooperation with UNEP, ADB, UNDP and the World Bank.**
- **Review of the suggestion made at SOM 5 to establish a core fund for operational activities of NEASPEC**

SOM-6 Seoul

(9-10 March 2000)

Proposals:

- **Develop the current Framework into a comprehensive programme, including a decision made on a Secretariat and a core fund based on voluntary contributions;**
- **Elevate the level of representation of SOM to be senior in the real sense;**
- **Implement the agreed projects along the line of step-by-step and practical approach;**

SOM 6 - Seoul

Decisions:

- **Adopt the *Vision Statement for Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia*;**
- **Periodically review the environmental conditions and trends to identify additional priority areas for cooperation ;**
- **Strive to develop the current Framework into a comprehensive Programme preferably by SOM 8;**
- **Develop NEASPEC website for the dissemination of its activities;**
- **Establish the NEASPEC Core Fund**

SOM 7 - Beijing

(27 July 2001)

Proposals:

- **Participating governments sending experts on secondment to assist the ESCAP secretariat to support and strengthen NEASPEC activities, given the fact that the interim secretariat is understaffed for all the activity implementation;**
- **A permanent Secretariat established to strengthen the institutional mechanism of NEASPEC;**
- **A NEASPEC Fund, comprising three accounts, being established by 2003-4;**
- **A meeting at the ministerial level being convened in 2005;**
- **Expert Working Groups being established in the identified areas for project proposal development, etc..**

SOM 7 - Beijing

Decisions:

- After the NRL expert sent by Japan in 2001, other participating countries were encouraged to send at least two experts to ESCAP secretariat;
- It was premature to establish an independent Secretariat;
- SOM should continue to provide guidance for NEASPEC; A ministerial meeting could be held back to back with MCED 2005;
- ESCAP secretariat was requested to administer the Core Fund in accordance with the UN rules and regulations;
- Contribution to the Core fund *must not* be based on predetermined assessments of scales, given the different development levels of the participating countries;

SOM 8 – Ulaanbaatar

(20 June 2002)

Proposals:

- **Closer coordination and information exchange among regional initiatives within the existing institutional framework;**
- **Bottom-up and top-down linkages in addressing transboundary issues through participatory approach;**
- **A cost-effective mechanism for information exchange among various initiatives in the subregion through the Internet;**
- **Greater public awareness raising;**
- **A comprehensive strategic environmental action plan;**
- **Continuing to pursue practical orientation and an output-based approach to guide activities of NEASPEC;**
- **A ministerial meeting held back to back with MCED once every five years**

SOM-8 Ulaanbaatar

Decisions:

- **ESCAP again requested to continue its secretariat functions;**
- **A Ministerial Conference of NEASPEC could be arranged back to back with MCED-2005;**
- **Core fund might be used on an emergency basis to avoid any disruptions in the project implementation;**
- **Continued voluntary contribution to the Core Fund on the part of the member countries**

SOM 9 - Moscow

(2-4 March 2004)

Proposals:

- **Korea representative expressed the willingness to host the independent secretariat in ROK;**
- **Sound material cycle Society highlighted by Japan, among others, was brought to the attention to the participants of SOM 9;**
- **China expressed its commitment on sustainable growth**

SOM 9 – Moscow

Decisions:

- **Continuation of SOM to guide the environmental cooperation in North-east Asia;**
- **A meeting of Ministers at their convenience during the ESCAP MCED for promoting the NEASPEC programme;**
- **NEASPEC Core Fund would continue to be voluntary**
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SOM 10 – Okinawa

(26 November 2004)

Recommendations for Future Action

- Welcomed the recommendation made by ROK to invite the Ministers of NEASPEC for an informal gathering during MCED 2005;
- Endorsed the Project Concept Paper on Mitigation of Transboundary Air Pollution (a new phase) from Coal-fired Power Plants in North-East Asia
- Approved the project proposal and the proposed budget for Nature Conservation, making Core Fund available for its implementation;
- Reflected upon the overwhelming development trend in NEA and proposed a new paradigm of 'Green Growth', with a new project orientation of NEASPEC—eco-efficiency to respond to the call of environmentally sustainable economic growth in NEA

SOM 11 - Seoul

(25-26 October 2005)

Proposals:

- **Minister of ROK proposed the participants to elaborate NEASPEC ministerial meeting and a programme secretariat as a way to strengthen its institutional mechanism and activities;**
- **Japanese delegate principally welcomed the institutional evolution of NEASPEC;**
- **Mongolia made reservation about the proposal for the ministerial meeting;**
- **Russian Federation expressed the support for holding a regular ministerial meeting;**
- **China recognized the importance of NEASPEC while proposed that a long-term plan on the financial and institutional mechanisms of NEASPEC would be needed before launching regular ministerial meeting;**

SOM 11- Seoul

Recommendations for Future Action

- **Requesting ESCAP secretariat to prepare a paper presenting possible institutional options for the future of NEASPEC specifying the structure of governing and operational bodies, the scope of activities and coordination mechanisms with other relevant subregional initiatives on environmental cooperation, and financial mechanisms, for the consideration of SOM 12, to be held in 2006.**
- **Member countries were expected to express their views on the possibility of occasional ministerial gatherings on an informal basis in the margin of other ministerial forums.**