



Concept Note for the Meeting of NEASPEC Focal Points

16 October 2015, NEASPEC Secretariat Office (Incheon, Republic of Korea)

- 1993**
NEASPEC Establishment
- NEASPEC started as a collective response of North-East Asian countries to the call of Agenda 21, adopted by United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, to strengthen subregional and regional cooperation to implement identified actions.
- 1996**
NEASPEC Goals
- The Framework of NEASPEC was adopted by the 3rd Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in 1996 and defined the goal of NEASPEC as follow:
- The principal objective of the Programme is to promote subregional environmental cooperation and sustainable development efforts for enhancement of quality of life and well-being of present and future generations in line with the spirit of UNCED.*
- The Framework also suggested *a step-by-step and practical approach* towards developing and consolidating programmatic areas of NEASPEC over time.
- 2010**
Permanent Secretariat at ESCAP-ENEA
- Since then, NEASPEC has taken steps to realize the objective by adopting an approach that continually expanded the scope and increased the involvement of wider stakeholders for joint actions. In this course of the progress, NEASPEC during 2010-2011 had a major milestone in its institutional arrangement and programmes by bringing the secretariat to North-East Asia with the launch of ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office and subsequently changing the status of the secretariat from interim to permanent.
- 2011**
Analytical Study
- With this new arrangement, SOM-16 in 2011 requested the Secretariat to carry out an analytical study of similar subregional programmes and entities with a view of benefitting from their experience as member States wished to deepen and broaden NEASPEC's engagement.
- 2012**
Study proposed long-term Strategic Plan
- The analytical study, "*North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities*" carried out by an external consultant and presented to SOM-17 in 2012, proposed a number of recommendations including the formulation of a long-term (five-year or ten-year) Strategic Plan to provide a roadmap for NEASPEC's future activities. The Meeting took note of the need of developing the plan as a way to support member States to share a long-term view on the direction of NEASPEC and to enhance the efficiency of NEASPEC.

2014**Strategic Plan
Outline**

In this regard, the Secretariat prepared an outline of the strategic plan for the review and decision by the SOM-19 in 2014. The outline firstly indicated the need to:

- a) **Strengthen modalities and current programme areas** in connection with growing urgency to address environmental issues;
- b) **Broaden the scope** of NEASPEC beyond environmental cooperation to serve as a subregional platform for **regional and global processes on sustainable development**; and
- c) **Strengthen the link with other subregional and regional initiatives** as well as Sustainable Development Goals, and identify areas of complementarity.

To enable the role of NEASPEC in these areas, the outline elaborated a draft set of vision/ strategic priorities, examples of specific goals and targets for each programmatic area, and the need for strengthening institutional arrangement.

The SOM-19 supported the development of the plan while emphasizing a number of points including the consideration of the subregion's uniqueness and NEASPEC's comparative advantages; the focus on practical and action-oriented activities, and the current programmatic areas with a view of properly addressing persistent challenges; and the need to avoid duplication and strengthening partnership with relevant mechanisms. The Meeting also requested the Secretariat to prepare and circulate a questionnaire on the plan to the member governments, and continue to communicate with member States on the development of the Plan before the next SOM.

2015**Consultation on
Draft Strategic
Plan 2016-2020**

Against this background, the national focal point meeting is proposed to review and discuss the draft strategic plan in preparation for member States to fully share their views to finalize and adopt the plan at the SOM-20 to be held in February 2016.

- **Date:** 16 October 2015 (Friday)
- **Venue:** NEASPEC Secretariat Office (UNESCAP ENEA), Incheon, ROK
- **Goals:** Review the secretariat draft of the NEASPEC Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and finalize a draft for the submission to the SOM-20
- **Participants:** National focal points and experts

[See next page for tentative programme]

Programme

09:00 – 09:30	Registration
09:30 – 10:00	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Welcoming and opening remarks</i> • <i>Introduction of participants</i>
10:00 – 12:00	Session 1: Strategic Plan – goals and approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strategic Plan: Overview (Presentation by the Secretariat)</i> • <i>Comments and discussions by National Focal Points</i>
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:30	Session 2: Strategy for Priority Programme Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Transboundary Air Pollution</i> • <i>Nature Conservation</i> • <i>Marine Protected Areas</i> • <i>Low Carbon Cities</i> • <i>Desertification and Land Degradation</i> <p>- Presentation by the Secretariat; and comments and discussions by National Focal Points</p>
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee/tea break
15:45 – 16:45	Session 2: continued
16:45 – 17:30	Session 3: Strengthening Institutional Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strengthening Institutional Support (Presentation by the Secretariat)</i>
17:30 – 18:00	Other matters and wrap-up of the meeting