Report on the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2017

Bangkok, Thailand
28 – 31 March 2017

Report of the Secretariat

Quality Council of India at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2017
organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand
28 to 31 March 2017
Represented and reported by Rudraneel Chattopadhyay (Project Associate, QCI)

1. Introduction
1.1. Quality Council of India (QCI) was nominated by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, to attend the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in Bangkok, Thailand from 29 to 31 March 2017, as part of the Indian Delegation [which also included representation from NITI Aayog (Dr. Ashok Kumar Jain) and the Indian Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand (Shri Anil Singh)].
1.2. In this note, the proceedings of the meeting and the roundtables significant to India’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the work of QCI in that regard are highlighted. In addition to that, QCI had also secured a booth at the Pavilion of Partnerships for Sustainable Development to showcase the India National Platform on Private Sustainability Standards; this will also be addressed in this note.
1.3. QCI’s intent on participating in this Forum stemmed from the connect that it has with sustainability through its numerous projects and initiatives in this domain which have an impact on sustainable development in India and are driving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the country. These include, among many, the India National Platform on Private Sustainability Standards, the ZED scheme, the Ready-Mix Concrete certification scheme, the Lead Safe Paints certification scheme, the Yoga certification scheme, and the SMART NSDC project.
1.4. As an autonomous national accreditation body with the ultimate mandate of spreading awareness about quality, developing quality consciousness amongst people, and imbibing quality in products, processes, and systems, QCI’s projects and initiatives have always focused on sustainability parameters which cover the social, economic and environmental aspects of the products, processes and systems under consideration. This has enabled assesses and recipients of certifications and accreditations from QCI integrate sustainability in their DNA. QCI has been implementing this by following international standards such as ISO and Codex and oftentimes has created its own standards in line with international standards.

2. About APFSD 2017

2.1. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is a regional preparatory meeting for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development which is being convened under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council in July 2017. The HLPF is the United Nations central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. It provides for the full and effective participation of all States Members of the United Nations and States members of specialized agencies.

2.2. Pursuant to ESCAP resolution 72/6 Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, Governments and other stakeholders convened at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development on the theme of “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific”.

2.3. As an inclusive regional intergovernmental forum, APFSD 2017 engaged member States, United Nations and other institutions, and major groups and other stakeholders in dialogue on (1) Regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including in depth review of the theme and SDGs: 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14 and 17, the cluster of goals to be discussed by the High-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in 2017; and (2) Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific, including the consideration of a draft regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, with a view to strengthening implementation efforts.

2.4. The event was preceded by a civil society forum, capacity building workshop for countries submitting Voluntary National Reports to the HLPF, and other events.

3. Meetings of the Forum

3.1. The Forum was attended by more than 500 participants, including representatives of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations bodies, international organizations, civil society organizations, and other entities.

3.2. The following ESCAP members attended the meetings of the Forum: Afghanistan; Armenia; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Fiji; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; Nepal; Pakistan;
Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Turkey; Turkmenistan; United States of America; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam. A representative of Switzerland attended as an observer.

3.3. The Tentative Programme of the Forum, Information for Participants, and the Agenda of the Forum are attached as Annexures 1, 2 & 3 of this report, and all the preparatory documents are attached as Annexures 4 to 9.

3.4. QCI’s interest, as part of the national delegation, was four-pronged: (i) to maintain trade and businesses as drivers of SDGs; (ii) to promulgate a change in approach towards sustainability standards and to explore how standardization can help achieve SDGs; (iii) to observe how projects and initiatives of QCI could help in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG); (iv) to see how the learnings from this Forum can be brought before and applied in the Indian PSS Platform; and, to develop associations with participating stakeholders – member States from Asia and the Pacific, CSOs, UN bodies and personnel working therein – in order to explore possible collaborations and work around sustainable development that QCI and the Indian PSS Platform can pursue.

3.5. In line with this, QCI participated in the Forum with the intent of bringing forth the linkages between SDGs and trade and to enable the participants of the Forum to see trade, industries, and businesses as indispensable methods/stakeholders in furthering the 2030 Agenda. QCI also found it essential to voice that the member States must mainstream SDGs in their trade and commerce policies (among others), and that corporates, producers, traders, industries, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) must take it from there to imbibe sustainability in the DNA of their businesses.

3.6. “Sustainable Development Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation” which was being reviewed in this Forum, was therefore, of key interest to QCI, and accordingly, it engaged most in the matters concerning this SDG in the proceedings of the Forum. Its key contributions included furthering integration of sustainability and the SDGs with trade, production, industrialization and innovation through various stakeholders.

3.7. The Forum also had a Mayor’s Panel on localizing the SDGs which fell under Agenda Item 3(a) of the Forum’s Agenda. This Panel focused on addressing key issues surrounding the implementation of SDGs at the ground level through sustainable cities, proactive and innovative governmental initiatives, and through trade policies. The agenda of this Panel was in line with our interests at the Forum; stakeholder statements in the Panel brought out key issues in addressing ground-level implantation of the SDGs, data gap in records, and problems of varied stakeholder interests when carrying out actions, especially to do with crosscutting goals and targets.
3.8. QCI took this opportunity to share with the Panel and stakeholders of this meeting its experiences in India when it comes to furthering environmental responsibility, quality awareness, and stakeholder engagement. QCI made a country statement in this Panel on behalf of India. Text of this statement is attached as Annexure 10. The statement can be found listed on www.unescap.org/events/apfsd4 and it was live streamed on ESCAP’s Official YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/2iHazEC3k_k?t=46m.

4. **Roundtables on Review of SDGs**

4.1. The Forum also had several simultaneous Roundtables for the review of SDGs which are being taken up at the HLPF this year. The Cluster of Goals being reviewed in this Forum are attached as Annexure 11, the Concept Note for the Roundtables on the review of SDGs is attached as Annexure 12, and the Conference Paper highlighting the outcomes of the Roundtables is Annexure 13.

4.2. QCI participated in the Roundtable on SDG 9 and provided inputs on how a cautious change in approach towards sustainability standards may help in having them as drivers of the SDG Agenda in respective national contexts.

4.3. The roundtable was co-organized by UNIDO, UNFCCC, UN-HABITAT and ESCAP. An opening presentation and remarks were delivered by Mr. S. Hansen, UNIDO Regional Director. Ms. Sooksiri Chamsuk, Programme Officer, UNIDO moderated the session. The following discussants were on the panel: H.E. Mr. Theng Pagnathun Director-General of Planning, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia; Mr. Lal Shankar Ghimire, Joint Secretary/Division Chief, Economic Management Division, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Nepal; Mr. Peter Decorte, Chief Executive Officer, Tong Siang Co, Ltd, Thailand; and Mr. Gomer Padong, Philippine Social Enterprise Network. A statement on behalf of civil society was delivered by Mr. Julius Cainglet, Federation of Free Workers – International Trade Union Confederation (FFW-ITUC).

4.4. The report of the roundtable was delivered in plenary by Ms. Molruedee Puangngern, Director, International Agreement Group, International Affairs
Division, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand, as Rapporteur.

4.5. Overview of issues in the roundtable were as follows:

4.5.1. The roundtable on SDG9 discussed how to ensure more sustainable and inclusive industrialization, develop sustainable and resilient infrastructure, enhance innovation and technological capacities of domestic industrial sectors for this aim.

4.5.2. The region has made progress in a number of areas, including expanding infrastructure services in energy, ICT and mobile communications, transport, water and sanitation. The share of manufacturing in total employment and as share of GDP has grown strongly, and expenditures on R&D in the region now represent over 42% of the global. However, this hides large disparities between countries, with large and widening gaps for manufacturing value added per capita, a widening digital divide, and with most R&D and innovation coming from a handful of countries. The progress has also brought additional challenges, both environmental and social.

4.6. Some key recommendations for governments/policy-makers/UN (which are of interest to QCI and the Indian PSS Platform) that emerged out of the roundtable are as follows:

4.6.1. Addressing systemic challenges that are barriers to further progress:

4.6.1.1. Governments need to put in place policies to adjust the cost of low-carbon technologies through shifting subsidies and taxes to favour clean and energy efficient technology.

4.6.1.2. Curricula in schools and universities should be adjusted to integrate sustainable development in coursework and education plan, in particular for engineering and management studies. The role of universities in contextualizing and localizing R&D was highlighted.

4.6.1.3. Governments should provide increased support to MSME development, including access to credits/finance, more enabling regulations, and support the integration of MSME into global supply chains.

4.6.1.4. Governments also need to incentivize and embed ‘impact investing’ and sustainable development thinking within the DNA of the private sector, and promote indigenous grass-roots innovations and knowledge systems in addressing SDGs.

4.6.2. Priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation efforts – including through attention to key leverage points:

4.6.2.1. Government need to set standards that can help identify high sustainability impact innovations and technology early on. UN can help in creating capacity within governments.

4.6.3. Promoting innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level:

4.6.3.1. Promoting ICT R&D in education and research to develop and utilize digital innovations are essential to ensure that everyone can reap the benefits of ICT, including localizing content and applications to address local SDG challenges.

4.6.3.2. The need to promoting the use of private and voluntary sustainability standards through

Roundtable on SDG 9 - Focus group on innovation
appropriate enabling policy frameworks and national platforms was also stressed.

4.6.4. Areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of these goals and challenges:

4.6.4.1. UN can help countries develop regional technology facilitation mechanisms and strong national innovation systems based on diverse sources of knowledge.

4.6.4.2. UN can support and facilitate collaboration on conducting technology foresight studies to scan the horizon to assess sustainable development impact of emerging technologies.

4.6.4.3. Regional collaboration on energy-efficient technologies; information sharing, trainings and knowledge exchange between countries.

4.6.4.4. There is need for concerted efforts and regional cooperation, taking a multi-stakeholder approach including the private sector and universities, to promote innovation and broadband connectivity, share best practices and resources, and ultimately enable everyone in the Asia-Pacific region to reap the benefits of ICT.

5. Pavilion of Partnerships

5.1. The objective of this year’s Pavilion was to provide additional informal space for member states, including those preparing voluntary national reviews, civil society, UN agencies and other stakeholders to share good practices for integrated and inclusive approaches for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development, including with a focus on the cluster of SDGs (1,2,3,5,9,14 and 17) to be reviewed in-depth at the 2017 High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

The Concept Note for the Pavilion of Partnerships is attached as Annexure 14.

5.2. Participants in the Pavilion of Partnerships for Sustainable Development (Member states, partners and stakeholders) were welcome to share their knowledge products, and preferably audio-visual materials and other non-traditional means of information sharing and interactive engagement of audiences in addition to posters, hand-outs, leaflets, booklets, publications) at designated booths in the exhibition area, as well as during side events and networking sessions taking place during the APFSD, 2017.

5.3. Networking sessions, including Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) presentations, learning café, market place sessions and others were hosted to allow stakeholders and policy makers attending the APFSD-2017 to share and promote pertinent issues in a non-formal setting.

5.4. QCI had secured a booth at the Pavilion for QCI to disseminate information on the work it is doing in the area of private sustainability standards/Indian PSS Platform, ZED, Yoga, and other voluntary certification schemes. This booth, later, expanded as a space for India, which saw the NITI Aayog and RIS India joining in with us to showcase their work in SDGs as well.
5.5. The Pavilion enabled us to meet numerous representatives of member States, UN agencies, stakeholders, CSOs etc. who were interested in the work of QCI and the Indian PSS Platform, and are willing to engage in establishing similar setups back in their national contexts. We also learnt about new technologies being developed by organizations to address the SDG Agenda in the world, ensure robust reporting process, and iron out data related issues.

6. VNR Learning Café

6.1. In preparation for the panel discussions in the plenary on the next day, representatives of the VNR participating countries were invited to join a VNR Learning Café. Experts had an informal opportunity for exchange of experiences and discuss ideas on processes and tools for follow-up and review, including stakeholders involved and the role of regional networks. The VNR Learning Café was set up at the Engagement Space of the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable
Development which was designated to facilitate informal peer-learning experiences throughout the duration of the 4th session of the APFSD. The target participants consisted of technical-level professionals, institutional actors, academia representatives, scientists, as well as contributors from civil society. The Concept Note for the VNR Learning Café is attached as Annexure 15.

6.2. QCI contributed to the VNR Café in helping them understand about successful multi-stakeholder initiatives and the government’s involvement in the process through examples of sustainability standards such as trustea etc.

7.1. The Draft Report of the Forum is attached as Annexure 16.

8. Action items for QCI and the Indian PSS Platform

8.1. In light of above, following are the action points for QCI and the Indian PSS Platform from this Forum:

8.1.1. Stakeholder engagement
8.1.2. Mapping of various PSS with SDGs and targets; identify cross-cutting goals and targets in the Indian context
8.1.3. Help establish PSS Platforms / ZED-like schemes in the following countries:

8.1.3.1. Pakistan
8.1.3.2. Thailand
8.1.3.3. Bangladesh
8.1.3.4. Fiji
8.1.3.5. Samoa
8.1.3.6. Bhutan
8.1.3.7. Cambodia
8.1.3.8. Georgia
8.1.4. Keep informing UNESCAP about our work at the Indian PSS Platform; increase expert engagement
8.1.5. Explore further research projects with UN agencies such as UNIDO, UNCTAD etc.
8.1.6. Data requirement for tracking implementation of SDGs and therefore need for uniform format of reporting (such as GRI)
8.1.7. Organize more side events with private organizations or independently for increasing awareness on achieving SDGs through standardization and PSS
8.1.8. Identify interlinkages with MSMEs and PSS
8.1.9. Pursue Yoga project opportunity in Thailand – stakeholders are interested
8.1.10. Reach out to Indian embassies abroad in order to organize multilateral events and to increase collaboration with UN agencies based out of those countries
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Fourth Session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
Bangkok, 29-31 March 2017

Tentative programme

Day 1: Wednesday, 29 March 2017

08:00-09:00 Registration

09:00-09:40 Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Forum
Opening
Address by the Chair
H.E. Mr. Gamini Jayawickrama Perera, Chair of the Third APFSD,
Minister of Sustainable Development and Wildlife, Sri Lanka
Welcome
Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations
and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Ministerial Keynote
H.E. Mr. Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thailand

Remarks
H.E. Mr. Nabeel Munir, Vice-President of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
Mr. Amit Timilsina, youth representative.
Ms. Helen Hakena, civil society representative

09:40-09:50 Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda

09:50-10:05 Break, photo session and Pavilion of Partnerships for Sustainable Development
Agenda Item 2: Regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Agenda Item 2 (a): Global to regional context of follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implications for the Asia-Pacific region

Agenda Item 2(b): Assessment of progress in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level

10:05-10:30 Perspectives on achieving the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development

A presentation will reflect on regional progress made on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Address

Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

10:30-12:00 Regional perspectives on the Theme of Fourth Session of the APFSD

A panel discussion will address regional perspectives and trends in relation to the theme of the APFSD as presented in E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/1

Moderator: Ms. Andie Fong Toy, Deputy Secretary General (Economic Governance & Security), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Keynote Panel:

Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Mr. Bambang Susantono, Vice-President for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development, Asian Development Bank

Mr. Haoliang Xu, Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Development Programme

Panelists:

1) H.E. Dr. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, Minister of Planning and Development of Pakistan
2) H.E. Ms. Rosemarie G. Edillon, Undersecretary, National Development Office – Planning and Policy, Philippines
3) H.E. Mr. Semi Koroilavesau, Minister of Fisheries, Fiji
4) H.E. Ms. Zhyldyz Polotova, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Development, Kyrgyzstan
5) Mr. Deepak Nikarthil, Asia Dalit Rights Forum

12:00-12:15 Launch of the Asia Pacific SDG Partnership

12:15-13:15 Lunch (Ministerial lunch)
Agenda Item 2: Regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (ctd)

Agenda Item 2(b): Assessment of progress in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level (ctd)

13:15-15:30 In-depth review of the cluster of goals
Parallel roundtables on the cluster of goals will be organized for in-depth discussion on each Goal to be addressed in the forthcoming High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, including Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages), Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation) and Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development).

Parallel roundtables
Roundtable 1: Goal 1, Roundtable 2: Goal 2, Roundtable 3: Goal 3, Roundtable 4: Goal 5 Roundtable 5: Goal 9, Roundtable 6: Goal 14

15:30-17:00 Break and Networking Sessions at Pavilion of Partnerships for Sustainable Development. Roundtables reports will be consolidated for next plenary Session 3 (ctd)

17:00-18:30 In-depth review of the cluster of goals (continued)
A panel will share key recommendations from the 6 parallel roundtables.

Moderator:
Mr. Kazuhiko Takemoto, Director of the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)

Panelists:
Representatives from the Roundtables

Day 2: Thursday, 30 March 2017

Agenda Item 2: Regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (ctd)

Agenda Item 2(c): National progress and achievements with respect to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

09:00-10:45 National progress and achievements on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Asia-Pacific countries participating in voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2016 and 2017, will be invited to highlight national perspectives on progress and
achievements with regard to the 2030 Agenda and will exchange views on how the APFSD should be positioned to provide regional inputs to the deliberations of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

**Moderator:** H.E. Mr. Nabeel Munir, Vice-President of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

**Panelists:**
1) Ms. Peseta Noumea Simi, CEO Foreign Affairs & Trade, Samoa  
2) Mr. Mikheil Patashuri, Counselor, Division of Multilateral and Regional Economic Cooperation, Department of International Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Georgia  
3) Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, Chief Coordinator for SDGs in the PMs office, Bangladesh  
4) Mr. Pichit Boonsud, Director of Development Affairs Division, International Organizations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand

**Discussants**
Ms. Denise K.H. Yoon, representative of the Korean Civil Society Network on SDGs(KCSN) and Director of the Korea Institute Center for Sustainable Development (KICSD)

**Agenda Item 3:** Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region  
**Agenda Item 3(a) Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region**

**10:45-12:30 High-Level Panel Discussion on “Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls: A pathway to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals”**

This session will feature a High-Level Panel Discussion on “Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls: A pathway to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals”

**Opening remarks:** Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP  
**Moderator:** Dr. Sharman Stone, Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls

**Panelists:**
1) Professor Maithree Wickramasinghe, Founding Director, Centre for Gender Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka  
2) H.E. Dr. Patricia B. Licuanan, Chairperson, Commission on Higher Education, Philippines  
3) Ms. Erna Witoelar, Founder, KEHATI (Indonesian Biodiversity Foundation)  
4) Ms. Andie Fong Toy, Deputy Secretary General (Economic Governance & Security), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat  
5) Dr. Heisoo Shin Member, UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Representative, Korea Center for United Nations Human Rights Policy
10:45-12:00  Mayors’ Panel: Experiences and lessons on localizing SDGs
This session will host a Mayors’ Panel Discussion on perspectives of local governments in eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity

Moderator: Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Panelists:
1) Mr. Tauia Viance Taoaba, Deputy Chairman of KiLGA and Mayor of Betio Town Council, Kiribati Local Government Association
2) Ms. Stephany Uy-Tan, Mayor of Catbalogan City, Philippines
3) Mr. Li Congjia, Deputy Mayor, Qinzhou Municipality, Quangxi, China
4) Dr. B K Tiwari, Development Commissioner of Kathmandu Valley Development Authority (KVDA)

12:00-13:30  Lunch and side events

Agenda Item 3: Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region (ctd)

Agenda Item 3(a) Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region (ctd)

13:30-15:00  Strengthening the Delivery of the Means of Implementation

Moderator: H.E. Dr. Min Bahadur Shrestha, Vice Chairman, National Planning Commission, Nepal

Panelists:
1) H.E. Mr. Arjuna Sujeewa Senasinghe, State Minister of International Trade, Sri Lanka
2) Mr. Sefuiva Reupena Muagututia, Chief Statistician, Samoa
3) Mr. Asif Ibrahim, Vice Chairman, Newage Group of Industries, EBAC Executive Director
4) Mr. Astera Primanto Bhakti, Head of financial education and training agency, Ministry of Finance, Indonesia (tbc)
5) Mr. Choiten Wangchuk, Director General, Department of Industry, Bhutan
6) Ms. Ranja Sengupta, Senior Researcher, Third World Network

Agenda Item 3: Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region (ctd)

Agenda Item 3(b) Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

Agenda Item 3(c) Form and function of the Forum
15:00-17:00 Regional Road Map and the terms of reference of the APFSD for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

The draft regional road map and the terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as presented in E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/7 will be reviewed with a view to its adoption as a key outcome of the Forum.

Member States, major groups and other stakeholders and representatives of the international community will be invited to share their perspectives on the draft.

Introduction by the secretariat

Review and adoption of the road map and of the terms of reference of the APFSD

17:00-17:10 Agenda Item 4: Other matters

Day 3: Friday, 31 March 2017

9:00-9:30 Special event: ASEAN and UN cooperation on the complementarities between the ASEAN Vision Community 2025 and 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development

9:30-12:30 Side events/Networking sessions at Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development

10:30-12:00 Launch of World Water Development Report 2017

12:30-14:30 Lunch break

14:30-15:00 Draft report and Chairs’ Summary will be circulated by the secretariat for review by delegations

15:00-16:00 Agenda item 5: Review and adoption of the draft report of the Forum

16:00-16:30 Agenda Item 6: Closing of the Forum
Information for Participants*

I. General

1. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2017 is scheduled to be held at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), in Bangkok, from 29 to 31 March 2017.

2. The opening of the session will take place at 0900 hours on Wednesday, 29 March 2017 in Conference Room 2, 2nd floor of UNCC. All subsequent meetings will be held from 0900 to 1200 hours and 1400 to 1700 hours.

II. Registration and identification badges

3. In order to enable more effective access control and speed up the screening by security personnel, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) uses photo badges for meeting participants, who are requested to register and obtain meeting badges with photo at the registration counter, located on the ground floor, UNCC, from 0800 to 0900 hours on the opening day of the event. Participants who are not able to register during the time indicated above are requested to do so upon their arrival at UNCC before going to the conference room. Only the names of duly-registered participants will be included in the list of participants.

Online registration

4. Participants are requested to register online at http://meetings.unescap.org/events/apfsd2017/ well in advance, but no later than 24 March 2017, to facilitate smooth coordination of the issuance of photo badges and compilation of the list of participants. Participants are encouraged to submit their photo in advance in order to speed up the registration process. Furthermore, please note that prior online registration is mandatory in line with the standard United Nations security procedures to facilitate security clearance.

5. For identification and security reasons, all participants are requested to wear their meeting badges at all times during meetings, social functions.

* This document is being issued without formal editing.
and while in the United Nations complex. The loss of a meeting badge should be communicated to the Conference Management Unit located on the ground floor of UNCC behind the registration counter, so that a new one can be issued immediately.

III. Related events

6. The Forum will be preceded by related events for which separate registration and application will be required. Please consult the meeting website and separately issued information notes, for information regarding these events, ensure that you are properly registered for those of interest, and also that your travel itinerary and conditions for participation are clear. These events include the Asia-Pacific Civil Society Forum on Sustainable Development, 26-28 March 2017, venue to be determined, Bangkok. For details, please see www.unescap.org/events/apcsfsd4.

- Pavilion of Partnerships for Sustainable Development  The objective of this year’s Pavilion is to provide additional informal space for member states, including those preparing voluntary national reviews, civil society, UN agencies and other stakeholders to share good practices for integrated and inclusive approaches for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including with a focus on the cluster of SDGs (1,2,3,5,9,14 and 17) to be reviewed in-depth at the 2017 high-level political forum on sustainable development. For more details, please see http://www.unescap.org/events/apfsd4.

IV. Visa requirements

7. Please see the annex for lists of countries and territories entitled for visa exemption and visa on arrival. For those countries which are not entitled to visa exemption or visa on arrival, please contact the Thai Embassy/Consulate responsible for consular affairs for your country.

V. Weather

8. The weather in Bangkok is usually warm and humid. Light tropical clothing would be appropriate. The conference rooms where the meetings are to be held are air-conditioned and the temperature is maintained in the range of 23-24 degrees Celsius (73-75 degrees Fahrenheit).

VI. Electric Plug and Socket

9. The electric power in Thailand is 220V running at 50Hz and the plug types used are either type A, type B, or type C. A hybrid socket is almost universally found, which accepts a combination of the above plug types. Delegates are strongly encouraged to carry their own adapters for use with laptops and other electrical appliances as the secretariat will not be able to provide these. In case of need, adapters can be purchased from shops in the city dealing in electronic and electrical items.

VII. Health and vaccination

10. Upon arrival at the port of entry in Thailand, participants who are nationals of or have traveled from/through countries listed below which have been declared yellow fever infected areas must provide an International Health Certificate proving that they have received a valid yellow fever vaccination at the Health Control Office upon arrival before proceeding to immigration. A valid vaccination certificate means that the vaccine was administered at least 10 days prior to travel to the affected country. The International Health Certificate must also be submitted together with the visa application form.

11. The countries/areas listed below have been declared yellow fever infected areas:

1. Angola 24. Guyana
4. Bolivia 27. Mali
5. Brazil 28. Mauritania
8. Cameroon 31. Panama
10. Chad 33. Peru
11. Colombia 34. Rwanda
12. Congo 35. Sao Tome and Principe
13. Cote d’Ivoire 36. Senegal
15. Ecuador 38. Somalia
17. Ethiopia 40. Suriname
18. French Guiana 41. Tanzania
19. Gabon 42. Togo
20. Gambia 43. Trinidad and Tobago
21. Ghana 44. Uganda
22. Guinea 45. Venezuela
23. Guinea-Bissau

12. Thailand is currently experiencing ongoing transmission of the mosquito-borne Zika virus. All travelers are advised to protect themselves from mosquito bites while in Thailand. Given possible transmission of the
disease to unborn babies, pregnant women or women seeking pregnancy should consider postponing travel to Thailand or talk to their doctor about the implications of traveling to Thailand during this time.

13. In addition to above, Medical Services Division at Headquarters advises that pregnant United Nations Personnel should not undertake duty travel or be relocated to countries/areas where local transmission of Zika virus is known to occur. Women who are seeking pregnancy should obtain individual advice from their medical practitioner on risk management regarding their plans to travel into a Zika-affected area.

14. First-aid and emergency medical service is available during weekdays at the Medical Centre, which is located on the ground floor of UNCC. The ESCAP Medical Officer and Nurse are available from 0730 to 1545 hours, with the exception of lunch time from 1200 to 1245 hours. Appointments may be made through extensions 1352 or 1761.

15. Delegates are strongly encouraged to subscribe to a travel or health insurance which is valid in Thailand, in order to cover any medical bills or hospitalization fees.

16. The United Nations buildings are smoke-free areas. Smoking is permitted only in the designated areas outside of the buildings.

VIII. Accessibility support for persons with disabilities

17. In order to enhance accessibility to UNCC for persons with diverse disabilities, whether visual, physical, cognitive brain lesions, hearing or speech impairments, a set of assistive devices will be available upon request in a designated area at the Accessibility Centre, 1st floor, UNCC. For more information, please contact the secretariat in advance at email escap-conference-management@un.org or call +66.2.2881601.

IX. Foreign currency declaration

18. Any person who brings or takes an aggregate amount of foreign currency exceeding US$ 20,000 or its equivalent into or out of Thailand shall declare such amount of foreign currency to a customs official. Failure to make such a declaration or making any false declaration to a customs official is a criminal offence.

19. Currency exchange facilities are available at hotels and all over Bangkok. Such services are also available at the Siam Commercial Bank, United Nations Branch, which is located on the 1st floor of the Service Building (telephone extension 2168). The Bank is open from 0830 to 1530 hours, with no lunch break, from Monday to Friday.

X. Hotel accommodation

20. The following hotels, located relatively close to ESCAP, have been designated as recommended hotels for which the room rates indicated below are inclusive of service charge and value added tax.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and address</th>
<th>Driving distance to UNCC (min.)</th>
<th>Located near BTS or MRT line</th>
<th>Shuttle service to and from ESCAP</th>
<th>Hotel Airport Pick Up Service Available</th>
<th>Room type</th>
<th>Daily room rates (Baht)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**Amari Watergate *******</td>
<td>20-35</td>
<td>15 min. walk to Ratchathewi BTS Station</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Deluxe</td>
<td>3,000 <strong>bc</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>847 Petchburi Road, Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000 Baht (One way)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3,200 <strong>bc</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.6539000 ext. 5107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Need advance booking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.6539045</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:nannaphat.j@amari.com">nannaphat.j@amari.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.amari.com/watergate/">http://www.amari.com/watergate/</a></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person: Ms. Nannaphat Jiemrugeekul</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>**Hotel Dé Moc ***</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>1,400 <strong>bc</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>78 Pratipatpatai Road, Bangkok</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Need advance booking</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>1,600 <strong>bc</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.6292100-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(One way transfer from hotel to UNCC)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1,800 <strong>bc</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.2801299</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:rsvn@buddyhotelsresorts.com">rsvn@buddyhotelsresorts.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Contact person: Mr. Sonthi Saiklai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>**Novou City Hotel ****</td>
<td>5-10</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>1,600 <strong>bc</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Samsen 2, Samsen Road, Banglumphu, Pranakorn, Bangkok 10200</td>
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<td>Need advance booking</td>
<td>Deluxe</td>
<td>1,900 <strong>bc</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2,100 <strong>bc</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.2821243</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,400 <strong>bc</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:adam@nouvocityhotel.com">adam@nouvocityhotel.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact person: Mr. Adam Phadungsilp</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Novotel Fenix Ploenchit *****</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>2 min. walk to Phloenchit BTS Station</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>2,900 ****</td>
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<tr>
<td>566 Ploenchit Road, Lumpini, Pathum Wan, Bangkok 10330</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Deluxe</td>
<td>2,900 ****</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.3056000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1,600 Baht (One way)</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.3056020</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(One way)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:H7176-sl7@accor.com">H7176-sl7@accor.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Need advance booking</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact person: Ms. Nalinthicha Waraphut</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>**Pullman Bangkok Kingpower *****</td>
<td>20-35</td>
<td>5 min. walk to Victory Monument BTS Station</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>3,055 <strong>bc</strong></td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Need advance booking</td>
<td>Deluxe</td>
<td>3,376 <strong>c</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.6809813</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,850 Baht (One way)</td>
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<td>3,590 <strong>c</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.6809998</td>
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<td>(One way)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:ssm@pullmanbangkokkingpower.com">ssm@pullmanbangkokkingpower.com</a></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Room type</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>23 Phra Arthit Road Bangkok</td>
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<td>Riva</td>
<td>3,829 a/c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.6335000</td>
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<td>Deluxe</td>
<td>4,072 a/c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.6335050</td>
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<td>Premium</td>
<td>4,537 a/c</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@rivasuryabangkok.com">info@rivasuryabangkok.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Princess Larn Luang Hotel ****</td>
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<td>Superior</td>
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<td>Deluxe</td>
<td>3,400 b/c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.2801314</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Siam @ Siam Design Hotel ****</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>E-mail: <a href="http://www.siamatsiam.com">http://www.siamatsiam.com</a></td>
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<td>The Sukosol ****</td>
<td>15-30</td>
<td>5 min. walk to Phaya Thai BTS Station &amp; Airport Rail Link</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.2470123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trang Hotel ***</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>1,400 a/b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99/1 Wisutkasat Road, Bangkok</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Superior Premium</td>
<td>1,600 a/b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.2822141-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deluxe</td>
<td>1,800 a/b</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: +66.2.2803610</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>VIE Hotel Bangkok, MGallery by Sofitel ****</td>
<td>20-35</td>
<td>1 min. walk to Ratchathewi BTS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>2,996 a/e</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Name and address</td>
<td>Driving distance to UNCC (min.)</td>
<td>Located near BTS or MRT line</td>
<td>Shuttle service to and from ESCAP</td>
<td>Hotel Airport Pick Up Service Available</td>
<td>Room type</td>
<td>Daily room rates (Baht)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tel: +66.2.3093939 Fax: +66.2.3093838 E-mail: <a href="mailto:waranya.t@viehotelbangkok.com">waranya.t@viehotelbangkok.com</a> Website: <a href="http://www.viehotelbangkok.com">http://www.viehotelbangkok.com</a> Contact person: Ms. Waranya Thamprapasasdon</td>
<td>Station</td>
<td>(One way)</td>
<td>(One way)</td>
<td>Need advance booking</td>
<td>Need advance booking</td>
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**Notes:**

*a.* Inclusive of daily American breakfast, service charge and value added tax.

*b.* Complimentary transport services provided according to fixed schedules, from the hotel to UNCC in the morning and back to the hotel in the evening. Hotel Dé Moc has one way transfer from hotel to UNCC.

*c.* Free Internet Access.

21. Unless otherwise advised, participants are requested to book directly with the hotel of their choice, and settle directly with the respective hotels all personal accounts, including room charges and other expenses, such as for local and long-distance telephone calls, internet use, business centre use, laundry, room and hotel transportation services, mini-bar items, as well as restaurant and bar services.

22. Rooms are available to participants on a first-come, first-served basis. Any cancellations, postponements or other changes should be notified to the hotel at least 48 hours in advance. Rooms not occupied in accordance with the latest advice will be held for 24 hours at the participant’s expense and then released.

23. The rates provided in the table are as of December 2015 and subject to change without notice. Please confirm the room rates with the hotel directly.

### XI. Transport from and to the airport

24. Participants should make their own transportation arrangements from Suvarnabhumi International Airport to their respective hotels. Limousine, metered-taxi and bus services are readily available at the airport. Detailed information about Suvarnabhumi International Airport can be found at www.suvarnabhumiairport.com.

25. To avail themselves of the airport limousines service, it is strongly recommended that participants contact only the authorized staff at the counters located in the airport arrival zone. These officials will issue a ticket for the assignment of a limousine for transporting passengers to the desired destination, upon request. The airport limousine service counters are located on the second floor at Baggage Claim and Arrival Hall exits, channels A, B and C. For public taxi, participants are advised to proceed to the first floor of the Passenger Terminal, between exit doors 4 and 7, outdoor area, where they will find automatic dispensing machines from which they can collect a queuing ticket for a public taxi. In addition to toll
fees, there is a 50 baht surcharge to be added to the meter charge from airport to the city.

XII. Transport to attend meetings

26. Most hotels indicated in paragraph 20 provide complimentary transport, according to fixed schedules, to and from UNCC. Otherwise, participants must make their own transport arrangements in order to attend meetings.

XIII. Internet services

27. Free wireless Internet access is available in all conference and meeting rooms and in the public areas of UNCC. Password is not required.

XIV. Catering services

28. Catering services are available at the cafeteria, which is located on the 1st floor of UNCC, from 1100 to 1400 hours. Rajapruek Lounge, on the ground floor of UNCC, is open from 0700 to 1700 hours from Monday to Thursday, and from 0700 to 1900 hours on Friday. The canteen, on the ground floor of the Service Building, is open from 0700 to 1300 hours. In addition, the Coffee Corner, which serves sandwiches, pastries, coffee, tea and soft drinks, is located on the 1st floor, UNCC and is open from 0700 to 1700 hours.

XV. Communications

29. For information concerning the substantive preparations for the meeting, please visit www.unescap.org/events/apfsd4 for further information, please feel free to contact the secretariat at escap-apfsd@un.org or the following members of the secretariat:

For substantive preparation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall APFSD</th>
<th>Ms. Katinka Weinberger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chief, Environment and Development Policy Section (EDPS), EDD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<th>Travel arrangements (sponsor participants/speakers)</th>
<th>Ms. Chanerin Maneechansook</th>
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<th>Interagency collaboration and side events/ pavilion</th>
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XVI. Meeting documents and language

30. Participants are requested to bring with them copies of the meeting documents distributed by the ESCAP secretariat to their Governments/Agencies/Organizations prior to the session.

31. As part of the current efforts of the United Nations towards reducing paper, printed copies of official documents will be available on demand. Delegates requiring hard copies can make their request at the Document Distribution Counter, located next to Conference Room 2 on the 2nd floor of the United Nations Conference Centre. Limited numbers of printed copies will be available to other meeting participants. All documents can be found on the website: www.unescap.org/events/apfsd4/.

32. Meeting rooms and public areas will be equipped with Wi-Fi connections and power sources. Touch screens will also be available close to the conference room and registration counter for participants to view information such as list of participants, programme, side events, etc.

33. A limited number of laptops and tablets are available for loan to government delegations on a first-come, first served basis. Kindly note that a photo ID is required to borrow the devices.

XVII. Library facilities

34. ESCAP Library facilities are available on the 1st floor, Service Building from 0730 to 1600 hours, Monday to Friday. For details on the use of the ESCAP Library facilities, please consult the staff on duty at the Library or call extensions 1329 and 1360. Further information about the ESCAP Library can be found at www.unescap.org/unis/library.

XVIII. Banking facilities

35. Banking services are available at the Siam Commercial Bank, United Nations Branch, located on the 1st floor of the Service Building, from 0830 to 1530 hours during weekdays (telephone extension 2168).

XIX. Postal services

36. Postal services are available at the Post Office, United Nations Branch, located on the ground floor of UNCC. The post office is open from 0800 to 1600 hours, Monday to Friday and can be contacted at extensions 1260 and 2911.
XX. Souvenir shop

37. The souvenir shop is located on the 1st floor of UNCC.

XXI. Travel agent

38. The American Express Travel office is located at the 4th floor, Service Building. It is open from 0800 to 1700 hours on weekdays and can be contacted at extensions 2820, 2821, 2822 and 2823.

XXII. Daily subsistence allowance (only if applicable)

39. Participants whose travel is sponsored by ESCAP will be provided with a daily subsistence allowance at prevailing United Nations rates in local currency. In order to facilitate the payment of subsistence allowance, eligible participants are requested to submit copies of their passport, boarding pass(es), the arrival/departure form together with their air tickets to the secretariat staff in the conference room.

40. Participants who are unable to stay for the duration of the meeting are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible after arrival, so that the subsistence allowance can be adjusted accordingly.

XXIII. Financial and administrative arrangements (only if applicable)

41. In those cases where the participation costs are borne by ESCAP, the secretariat will provide only travel and daily subsistence allowance as expressed and will not assume responsibility for any other expenditure, including the following:

   (a) All expenses in the home country incidental to travel abroad, including expenditure for visa, medical examination, inoculations and other such miscellaneous items and internal travel to and from the airport of arrival and departure in the home country;

   (b) Salary and related allowances for the participants during the period of the meeting;

   (c) Costs incurred by participants in respect of travel insurance, accident insurance, medical bills or hospitalization fees in connection with attending the meeting;

   (d) Compensation in the event of death or disability of participants in connection with attending the meeting;

   (e) Any loss of or damage to personal property of participants while attending the meeting or losses or damages claimed by third parties as a result of any negligence on the part of the participants;

   (f) Any other expenses of a personal nature, not directly related to the purpose of the meeting.
Annex

Visa requirements

Participants are REQUIRED to obtain an appropriate entry visa from the Thai Embassy or Consulate before entering to Thailand, EXCEPT for nationals of countries listed below.

List of countries and territories entitled for visa exemption and visa on arrival

For Ordinary passport

A. Visa exemption for a maximum of 14 days

1. Cambodia
2. Myanmar (international airports only)

B. Visa exemption for a maximum of 30 days

1. Australia
2. Austria
3. Bahrain
4. Belgium
5. Brunei Darussalam
6. Canada
7. Czechia
8. Denmark
9. Estonia
10. Finland
11. France
12. Germany
13. Greece
14. Hong Kong, China
15. Hungary
16. Iceland
17. Indonesia
18. Ireland
19. Israel
20. Italy
21. Japan
22. Kuwait
23. Lao People’s Democratic Republic
24. Liechtenstein
25. Luxembourg
26. Macao, China
27. Malaysia
28. Monaco
29. Mongolia
30. Netherlands
31. New Zealand
32. Norway
33. Oman
34. Philippines
35. Poland
36. Portugal
37. Qatar
38. Russian Federation
39. Singapore
40. Slovakia
41. Slovenia
42. South Africa
43. Spain
44. Sweden
45. Switzerland
46. Turkey
47. United Arab Emirates
48. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
49. United States of America
50. Viet Nam

C. Visa exemption for a maximum of 90 days

1. Argentina
2. Brazil
3. Chile
4. Peru
5. Republic of Korea
For Diplomatic / Official Passport

### A. Visa exemption for a maximum of 30 days

1. Brunei Darussalam
2. Cambodia
3. China
4. Ecuador
5. Hong Kong, China
6. Indonesia
7. Lao People’s Democratic Republic
8. Macao, China
9. Mongolia
10. Myanmar
11. Oman
12. Pakistan (diplomatic passport only)
13. Singapore
14. Viet Nam

### B. Visa exemption for a maximum of 90 days

1. Albania
2. Argentina
3. Austria
4. Belarus
5. Belgium
6. Bhutan
7. Brazil
8. Chile
9. Colombia
10. Costa Rica
11. Croatia
12. Czechia
13. Estonia (diplomatic passport only)
14. France (diplomatic passport only)
15. Germany
16. Hungary
17. India
18. Israel
19. Italy
20. Japan
21. Liechtenstein
22. Luxembourg
23. Malaysia
24. Mexico
25. Montenegro
26. Morocco
27. Nepal
28. Netherlands
29. Panama
30. Peru
31. Philippines
32. Poland
33. Republic of Korea
34. Romania
35. Russian Federation
36. Slovakia
37. South Africa
38. Spain (diplomatic passport only)
39. Sri Lanka
40. Switzerland
41. Tajikistan
42. Tunisia
43. Turkey
44. Ukraine
45. Uruguay

### C. Visa on arrival for a maximum of 15 days

1. Andorra
2. Bhutan
3. Bulgaria
4. China
5. Cyprus
6. Ethiopia
7. Fiji
8. India
9. Kazakhstan
10. Latvia
11. Lithuania
12. Maldives
13. Malta
14. Mauritius
15. Papua New Guinea
16. Romania
17. San Marino
18. Saudi Arabia
19. Taiwan Province of China
20. Ukraine
21. Uzbekistan

Updated as of 26 December 2016 by the Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.
1. Participants holding a United Nations Laissez-Passer (UNLP) travelling on official business to Thailand are REQUIRED to obtain appropriate visa before entering.

2. To apply for an appropriate entry visa to Thailand, participants are required to contact the respective Thai Embassy/Consulate for accurate information regarding to their visa application procedures and required documents. The list of Thai Embassies/Consulates can be found at www.thaiembassy.org.

3. Participants who may wish to apply for a visa outside of their country of residence or reside in a country where there is no Thai Embassy/Consulate should check the location where it is possible for them to apply for a Thai visa. Please note that certain nationalities, for security reasons, are not allowed to apply for a visa elsewhere except at the Thai Embassy/Consulate which is holding jurisdiction over the territory. For more information, please consult with your meeting organizer.

4. Participants who may need further assistance from ESCAP on their visa application should contact their meeting organizer in order to coordinate with the Visa and Shipment Unit, Division of Administration, ESCAP, for necessary action.

5. Participants who wish to apply for visa on arrival at Suvarnabhumi International Airport or at Don Mueang International Airport should follow the requirements below:

   (a) The applicant must be in possession of a passport, with a validity of at least six months, and a valid return ticket with date of departure within 15 days of the date of entry;

   (b) The applicant must fill out an application form, which is available at the Visa-on-Arrival counter at Suvarnabhumi International Airport, supply one recent passport-sized photograph and pay a fee of 1,000 baht.

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NOTE: The information provided above is accurate as of January 2017. All participants are advised to consult with the Thai Embassy/Consulate in their respective countries regarding the latest applicable immigration requirements prior to their departure for Thailand.
Annotated provisional agenda

The present document contains the provisional agenda for the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (section I) and the annotations to the provisional agenda (section II).

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the Forum:
   (a) Opening statements;
   (b) Election of officers;
   (c) Adoption of the agenda.

2. Regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:
   (a) Global to regional context of follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implications for the Asia-Pacific region;
   (b) Assessment of progress in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level;
   (c) National progress and achievements with respect to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region:
   (a) Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region;
   (b) Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;
   (c) Form and function of the Forum.

4. Other matters.

5. Review and adoption of the draft report of the Forum.

II. Annotations

1. Opening of the Forum

(a) Opening statements

The Chair of the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development will open the Forum. The Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will deliver the welcome statement and provide an overview of the meeting, which will be followed by other statements by high-level representatives.

(b) Election of officers

The Forum will elect a chair, vice-chairs and a rapporteur.

(c) Adoption of the agenda

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/L.1/Rev.1)

Annotation

The Forum will consider and adopt the annotated provisional agenda, subject to such changes as may be deemed necessary.

2. Regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

(a) Global to regional context of follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implications for the Asia-Pacific region

Under this sub-item, a presentation will be given on regional progress on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(b) Assessment of progress in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level

Documentation

Thematic report: “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific” (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/1)

Annotation

A panel discussion will address regional perspectives and trends in relation to the theme of the Forum as presented in the thematic report (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/1).

Parallel round tables will be organized for in-depth discussion of each of the Goals in the cluster to be addressed in the forthcoming high-level political forum on sustainable development, including Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages), Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable development).
industrialization and foster innovation) and Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development).\(^1\)

A subsequent panel will share key recommendations from the six parallel round tables.

Member States, major groups and other stakeholders and representatives of the international community will be invited to share their perspectives on agenda items 2 (a) and 2 (b).

(c) **National progress and achievements with respect to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

**Documentation**

Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: the regional dimension (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/INF/4)

**Annotation**

Asia-Pacific countries participating in voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2016 and 2017 will be invited to highlight national perspectives on progress and achievements with regard to the 2030 Agenda and will exchange views on how the Forum should be positioned to provide regional input to the deliberations of the high-level political forum.

Member States, major groups and other stakeholders and representatives of the international community will be invited to share their perspectives.

3. **Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region**

(a) **Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region**

**Documentation**

Policy approaches to scaling social enterprise and impact investment in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/INF/5)

Leveraging trade as a means of implementation in the new global environment (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/INF/6)

**Annotation**

The deliberations under this agenda item will be supported by three panel discussions on the following subjects: tapping the Sustainable Development Goals to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; lessons learned from localizing the Sustainable Development Goals; and strengthening delivery of the means of implementation.

Member States, major groups and other stakeholders and representatives of the international community will be invited to share their perspectives.

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\(^1\) Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development) will be reviewed every year, and during the current Forum will be tackled under item 3 (a).
(b) Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

Documentation

Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/2)

Annotation

The draft regional road map will be reviewed with a view to adopting it as a key outcome of the Forum.

Member States, major groups and other stakeholders and representatives of the international community will be invited to share their perspectives on the draft road map.

(c) Form and function of the Forum

Documentation

The form and function of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/INF/7)

Annotation

The draft terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as presented in the document will be reviewed with a view to its adoption as a key outcome of the Forum.

Member States, major groups and other stakeholders and representatives of the international community will be invited to share their perspectives on the draft terms of reference.

4. Other matters

Any other matters raised by delegations and/or the secretariat will be considered under this agenda item.

5. Review and adoption of the draft report of the Forum

Documentation

Draft report (E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/L.2)

Annotation

The Forum will consider and adopt the draft report and annexed Chair’s summary, which will reflect the key points of the discussions and the recommendations on follow-up actions, and which will include the agreed road map and terms of reference of the Forum as annexes, for transmission to the high-level political forum on sustainable development at its session in July 2017.

6. Closing of the Forum

The Chair of the Forum will deliver a closing statement.
This document addresses the theme of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific”. It provides an overview of poverty and prosperity, taking a closer look at multidimensional poverty, marginalization and exclusion, as well as the implications of regional megatrends. The evolving challenges and opportunities in the development of rural and urban areas are discussed, including the provision of infrastructure, and key responses are identified. Lastly, priorities for strengthening policy coherence on poverty reduction and prosperity and areas for regional cooperation are highlighted.

I. Introduction

1. This document reflects major trends that affect the prospects for achieving the theme of this year’s high-level political forum on sustainable development, “eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”.

2. The document was prepared in order to support the regional discussions at the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, and its aim is to inform debates within the Asia-Pacific region about how to respond to the challenges of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, highlighting key developments and good practices from across the region, as well as regional cooperation opportunities.
3. An overview is provided of the challenges related to poverty and well-being in the region, and the determinants of a “changing Asia-Pacific” are outlined. Three areas are then focused on that have been selected as central to the region’s efforts to eradicate poverty and promote prosperity, to be addressed in the changing development context of Asia and the Pacific. These three areas are urbanization, rural development and infrastructure provision.

4. Insights into the opportunities for making progress on the subset of Sustainable Development Goals that are the focus of the 2017 high-level political forum on sustainable development are also offered. Opportunities for developing a coherent policy response and areas for regional cooperation are highlighted.

5. The document is based on the publication of the same theme, prepared through the partnership of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

II. Poverty eradication, prosperity and a changing development context

A. Poverty in the Asia-Pacific region: its multidimensional character and relation to inequality, marginalization and exclusion

6. The Asia-Pacific region covers 56 countries that are home to more than 60 per cent of the global population and produces almost 40 per cent of the world’s gross domestic product (GDP).

7. Economic growth has reduced poverty and improved quality of life in many countries. Investments in education, health care and infrastructure are showing returns, social protection spending as a share of government expenditure is increasing and other aspects of fiscal management are also improving.

8. The 2030 Agenda seeks a future in which all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives. However, poverty is still persistent in the region and limits the opportunities for well-being for a large number of people. According to the latest data, some 400 million people, or 10.3 per cent of the region’s population, were living in extreme poverty in Asia and the Pacific during the period 2010-2013. The highest income poverty rates are found among countries with special needs – least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific small island developing States – and lower-middle-income countries.

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1 The subset comprises Sustainable Development Goals 1 (poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health and well-being), 5 (gender equality), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 14 (life below water) and 17 (partnerships for the Goals).
2 This report covers the Asia-Pacific region, defined as the membership of ESCAP that are within the Asia-Pacific geographic region (ADB and UNDP, partners in the publication on which the present document is based, have differing regional compositions). See www.unescap.org/about/member-states.
3 Time for Equality: The Role of Social Protection in Reducing Inequalities in Asia and the Pacific (ST/ESCAP/2735).
4 ADB, Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific 2015 (Manila, 2015).
9. Income levels provide only part of the picture. A closer look at the coincidence of deprivation with respect to education, health and other aspects of living standards strengthens insight into the scale and depth of poverty on many dimensions. Based on the global multidimensional poverty index, more than one in four people in Asia-Pacific developing countries are deprived in multiple ways. In rural areas of the Asia-Pacific region, the rate doubles to two in five, and in South Asia 86.3 per cent of the multidimensionally poor live in rural areas.

10. Poverty eradication strategies need to be appropriately targeted and adapted to various situations. In some countries – as in Bangladesh, India, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nepal and Vanuatu – there are high rates of extreme income poverty and also high rates of multidimensional poverty. In others – as in Bhutan, Cambodia and Pakistan – multidimensional poverty rates are relatively high, but income poverty rates are lower by comparison. Poverty eradication strategies where multidimensional poverty is both widespread and severe – as in Afghanistan and Timor-Leste – should differ from those employed in countries such as Azerbaijan and Maldives, where multidimensional poverty, while severe, affects only a relatively small proportion of the population.

11. Access to affordable and quality health care is fundamental to poverty eradication. Strategies should be informed by an understanding of the relative importance of the specific dimensions in which deprivation – whether with respect to education, health or living standards – is experienced, as the contributions of each to multidimensional poverty differ from place to place. For example, poor health increases the risk of poverty because it leads to reduced work productivity. At the same time, a stable, affordable and nutritionally adequate supply of food is also key to healthy lives, but in Asia and the Pacific poor people spend as much as 70 per cent of their income on food.

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8 OPHI, “Multidimensional poverty index 2014: Highlights – South Asia”.


12. Poverty in the region is combined with increasing inequality, which has also a multidimensional character, encompassing inequality of outcome, inequality of opportunity and horizontal inequality, the latter of which describes the degree of inclusion of different groups in society relative to each other.

13. The combination of multidimensional poverty and inequality results in marginalization and exclusion for millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region. Conditions of marginalization and exclusion reduce access to basic services, economic resources and political participation, and are created and reinforced by economic, social, political and geographic factors. Resulting social and cultural norms can promote both informal and institutionalized discriminatory practices, policy and legislation.

14. Groups that are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion include vulnerable workers, older persons and minorities, including ethnic (including indigenous people), religious and linguistic minorities, as well as those who are discriminated against on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Persons with disabilities are largely shut out of labour markets and have very little access to education, vocational training and decent work. Persons with disabilities more often live in poor households than in non-poor households in many countries, more often live in rural areas than urban areas and are more likely to be women than men.

15. Marginalization and exclusion also have geographic dimensions. In the Pacific island developing countries, for example, access to basic social services is limited for remote populations living on outer islands.

B. Prosperity in Asia-Pacific

16. Prosperity is an important tenet of the 2030 Agenda, which links a vision of a prosperous future to sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth, respect for human rights and human dignity, harmony with nature and life fulfilment. Most measures show that income is not always the decisive factor in defining overall prosperity.

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11 Article 1 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (General Assembly resolution 47/135) contains a reference to the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities and provides that States should protect the existence of such minorities. There is no internationally agreed definition of which groups constitute minorities.


14 See General Assembly resolution 70/1.
17. Human well-being is a basic indicator of prosperity.\textsuperscript{15} Despite improvements in 20 Asia-Pacific countries, in 2014 as many as 19 Asia-Pacific countries were still below average well-being relative to other countries according to the Human Development Index, which addresses health and longevity, access to knowledge and standard of living.\textsuperscript{16} In a further 15 countries, there were declines or no change relative to other countries.

18. Insights into life satisfaction, happiness, life purpose and other non-income, non-material factors are fundamental to understanding the human experience and the overall impact of development strategies. These subjective measures of well-being show differing results, but in general only a few countries in the region show relatively high levels of subjective well-being, based on global rankings.\textsuperscript{17,18} For example, only five Asia-Pacific countries are ranked among the top 50 countries in terms of global happiness, while some 24 countries are ranked between 50th and 121st.\textsuperscript{18} Bhutan uses its own subjective well-being measure to guide its policymaking and investment, the gross national happiness index.

C. The determinants of a changing Asia-Pacific

19. Five important and interlinked megatrends may determine the future of sustainable development in the region: regional economic cooperation and integration; rural-urban transitions; demographic change; connectivity and access to information and communications technology (ICT); and increasing demand for natural resources, including, among other materials, minerals and agricultural commodities. They all present opportunities to reduce poverty and build prosperity, but there are accompanying challenges.

20. Regional economic cooperation is expanding. Political leadership is driving cooperation and investment opportunities across the region,\textsuperscript{19} economic integration is strengthening at the subregional level in some subregions, and there is increased connectivity between countries. Between 2000 and 2016, the number of legally-binding trade agreements within the region jumped from 54 to 169.\textsuperscript{20} Although economic growth and employment opportunities are created, workers’ rights can be negatively impacted,\textsuperscript{21} even though an increasing number of free trade agreements include a labour dimension.


\textsuperscript{19} See E/ESCAP/72/5.

\textsuperscript{20} ESCAP, Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Agreements Database. Available from www.unescap.org/content/aptiad (accessed 12 January 2016).

\textsuperscript{21} See A/71/385.
21. Economic growth opportunities often promote and benefit from economic rural-urban transition; that is, the growth of populations and economic activities in urban areas relative to rural areas that has characterized the development process. More than half of the region’s people will live in cities in 2018, changing economic and demographic structures, adding environmental pressures and changing vulnerabilities and risk in relation to disasters, health and food security both in cities and in rural areas.

22. The rapid trend towards ageing in developing and developed countries of the region is a challenge where there are shortcomings in social protection coverage. At the same time, the majority of Asia-Pacific nations have entered or are about to enter a period in which people of working age comprise a significant population share. Success in harnessing this demographic dividend by providing decent work opportunities to all population groups, including women, youth and other marginalized or excluded groups, will become increasingly critical to poverty reduction. International migrants for employment from Asia-Pacific countries have increased in number by almost 50 per cent between 1990 and 2013 to more than 95 million, and are mostly women. They add to the growing numbers of people who relocate from rural areas to cities, seeking employment or as a result of internal conflict, natural disaster, climate and environmental change.

23. Rapid changes in connectivity and ICT access are transforming the region. A total of 45 per cent of the region’s population now has access to mobile Internet, an increase of 250 per cent over the past five years, with an expected increase to 70 per cent by 2020. ICT is contributing to job creation and supporting entrepreneurship, and is the focus of “smart” initiatives that apply it in various sectors. However, there is also a growing digital divide, and not everyone can access the opportunities presented, particularly with respect to broadband technology.

24. Expanding production and consumption, rural-urban transitions, demographic change and technological innovation are changing lifestyles, reshaping dietary preferences and increasing the demand for raw material inputs. The region’s use of natural resources is increasing more quickly than growth in population and GDP, and is now projected to reach 80 billion tons annually by 2050.

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26 This figure covers four main types of materials: biomass, fossil fuels, metal ores/industrial minerals and construction minerals. Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2015: Facts and Trends at the Outset of the 2030 Development Agenda (ST/ESCAP/2749).
25. The demand for raw materials is met by nature, and the negative environmental burdens created by their extraction and processing are most often borne by poor people. Downstream impacts include increasing greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution and the generation of solid waste, of which plastic is an alarming and growing component. Exploitative practices and investments reduce the flow of ecosystem services, negatively impacting the health and well-being of both current and future generations, rural livelihoods and economic activities that are highly dependent on ecosystem services.

26. These megatrends affect every aspect of development and the quality of growth in the region. There are, however, three areas of development that are particularly affected by these megatrends and at the same time that determine the success of poverty eradication policies: urbanization, rural development and infrastructure.

27. Poverty in Asia-Pacific is increasing at a disproportionately higher rate in urban areas. Between 1990 and 2008, the share of urban poverty in developing countries in Asia increased from 18.3 per cent to 22.9 per cent. Cities demand more resources to cover the needs of more people that have increased consumption needs. Increased connectivity of cities and rural areas increases and diffuses the impacts of demographic change. The way that natural resources are used in both urban and rural settings affects the income and availability of opportunities for poor people. The patterns of infrastructure financing and development determine whether the infrastructure will reduce poverty or serve only the few and create more inequalities. The demographic change itself affects the financing of infrastructure and its public or private character and mix.

28. Confronting the roots of poverty, inequality, marginalization and exclusion and defining effective responses for securing prosperity in the region within this changing development context will determine success in achieving all Sustainable Development Goals. In the subsequent chapters, insights are provided into the status and challenges of and opportunities for poverty eradication and prosperity promotion in the areas of urbanization, rural development and the provision of infrastructure in the region.

III. Managing urbanization for inclusive and pro-poor outcomes

29. Urbanization is transforming Asia-Pacific economies and societies at an unprecedented pace. By 2018, more than half of the Asia-Pacific population will be living in urban areas.

29 ESCAP, ADB and UNDP, Green Growth, Resources and Resilience: Environmental Sustainability in Asia and the Pacific (ST/ESCAP/2600).
30. Urbanization trends can have far-reaching implications for both source (rural) and destination (urban/peri-urban) areas, as well as for economic activities, households and communities in both areas. Cities account for 60 to 80 per cent of global energy consumption and generate more than 70 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions. Unplanned urban sprawl, the growth in consumption and production activity and infrastructure development, among other factors, contribute to growth in emissions.

31. While urban growth has some positive impacts on poverty reduction, the benefits have not been shared equally in all countries. Many areas of high concentration of income poverty are in urban areas in middle-income countries and are deeply entrenched and reinforced with deprivation with respect to non-income dimensions. Compared to larger cities, the income poverty rate is often higher in smaller cities.  

32. Although income poverty is lower in urban areas than in rural areas, the international (income) poverty line underestimates urban poverty, and on non-income multidimensional counts, there are still a significant number of poor people in urban areas. When urban challenges such as the inadequacy of infrastructure and services are considered, the multidimensional poverty headcount ratio increases. This has important implications for targeting interventions and allocating resources.  

**Status and challenges**

33. Poor living standards are the most visible sign of multidimensional poverty in urban areas. Although the proportion of slum dwellers in urban areas across all developing regions has reduced since 1990, the number has increased in all subregions of Asia and the Pacific compared to 1990. In 2014, slums accounted for 27 per cent of the urban population in the region as a whole, and around 25 per cent in East and North-East Asia, 27 per cent in South-East Asia and 29 per cent in South and South-West Asia.

34. Migrants are disproportionately represented within some of the worst-quality informal settlements. Living in housing that is normally considered illegal, inhabitants usually have no or inadequate access to water, energy,

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transport services or other public services, including health care, emergency services, social protection and education.\textsuperscript{36}

35. In some cases, multiple types of marginalization and exclusion reinforce each other. For example, urban spaces do not evolve with gender-sensitive infrastructure in most cities in Asia and the Pacific, let alone in the low-income areas of those cities.

36. Women, and particularly migrant women, continue to face particular challenges in fighting poverty and exclusion. Women migrants experience urban poverty as a layering of vulnerabilities linked to their gender and to their status as migrants, and they generally occupy the most exploitative and poorly paid positions.

37. The high density of people, jobs and assets that makes cities so successful also makes them extremely vulnerable to a wide range of natural and man-made risks. The effects of risks are likely to be felt mostly by women and children, and by poor people in urban areas, whose informal settlements tend to be on land that is at especially high risk from extreme weather\textsuperscript{37} and closer to roads, waste dumps and other polluted and insecure areas.

38. Increasing health risks are also a threat to Asia and the Pacific. The region’s cities suffer the highest air pollution levels in the world, with as much as 80 per cent attributable to transport.\textsuperscript{38} Almost 700 million urban dwellers, mostly in slums, currently lack adequate sanitation.\textsuperscript{37} Rapid and unplanned urbanization is a key driver in the increased prevalence of communicable and non-communicable diseases.\textsuperscript{39}

\textbf{Opportunities and responses}

39. Cities can serve as drivers of economic growth and eradicate poverty when they are inclusive, sustainable and green, as well as safe.

40. Managing urbanization to ensure that it produces inclusive, pro-poor and sustainable outcomes requires a shift in the urban development paradigm. Such a shift starts with the deployment of indicators that provide information on poverty in its multiple dimensions. By using more refined and contextualized policy tools, poverty can be better understood and addressed.

41. As an example, a new multidimensional poverty index adopted by the Government of Viet Nam was piloted in Ho Chi Minh City in 2014, with subsequent expansion to other cities, to design and target social protection policy and support.\textsuperscript{40} The multidimensional poverty index is also attracting


interest as a tool for planning, targeting and allocating resources in other countries of Asia and the Pacific.

42. Risk-informed urban planning processes will also help to reduce the vulnerability of poor people in urban areas, who are often the most impacted in cities by shocks, crises and disasters. Such processes can help contribute to poverty eradication by reducing vulnerability and building resilience to risks, including those related to food security and health.

43. A specific effort is needed to respond to the plight of migrants in cities, who tend to be the poorest and most marginalized people in urban areas. Focusing on the gendered aspects of migration in the region, and on improving the well-being of women migrants in particular, can help address persistent poverty and inequality in rural and urban areas.

44. Support for women’s livelihoods in urban areas is crucial, and potentially holds widespread transformational impact. Better health care, childcare, education and other services in cities could support women’s empowerment, while also catalysing rural development through potentially increased remittances in the case of women migrants.

45. The shift in the urban development paradigm would further require a renewed look at the potential for new partnerships, and strengthened commitment to those who are most marginalized and vulnerable. Localizing agendas that have been agreed upon by world leaders to cities can facilitate the development of new partnerships and solutions, in order to re-envision urban governance and better include those that are left behind.

46. Lastly, the change in the urban development paradigm needs to include a shift away from the urban-rural dichotomy, to address urbanization so that win-win outcomes are achieved for both rural and urban areas. Policymakers should view the relationships between rural and urban areas as an ever-changing continuum in order for development efforts to be inclusive.

IV. Strengthening responses to rural poverty in the context of rural-urban transitions

47. A thriving rural sector is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 2 on agriculture and Goal 14 on the oceans. The 2030 Agenda contains commitments to developing sustainable agriculture and fisheries and supporting smallholder farmers, especially women farmers, herders and fishers in developing countries, particularly least developed countries; to increasing investment in rural infrastructure; and to supporting positive links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.

48. Rural areas, which are home to 51.8 per cent of the region’s population and the majority of poor people, and which play the role of custodian of natural resources that are critical for poverty eradication and prosperity in both rural and urban areas, face many persistent challenges.

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41 General Assembly resolution 70/1.
49. Some 39 per cent of the rural population in Asia-Pacific developing countries live in multidimensional poverty.\textsuperscript{42} Educational poverty, measured by completion of primary school, and health poverty, measured by the mortality of a child under the age of 5 in a household, are often concentrated in rural households.\textsuperscript{43} Rural poverty is also manifested in hunger and food insecurity.

50. Productivity of the agricultural sector is lower than other sectors: it accounted for only 6.9 per cent of GDP in Asia and the Pacific in 2014\textsuperscript{43} while it employed 36 per cent of the region’s workers in 2013 and over 60 per cent in least developed countries. Most of them are smallholders.

51. Governments are tasked with eradicating acute rural poverty in the face of the rising demand for ecosystem services and natural resources that poses a new challenge to rural land use. Demographic change is leading to more fragile and vulnerable rural populations, while climate change and disasters place burdens on the agricultural sector. Cross-border investments in the agricultural sector can change incentives for land use in ways that disadvantage the rural poor. National policies can play an important role in encouraging sustainable use of natural resources and ensuring that smallholders are not left behind.

**Status and challenges**

52. Rural poverty has shrunk in recent decades, mainly as a result of increased agricultural productivity. A modest increase in agricultural productivity between 2016 and 2030 is projected to lift an additional 110 million people out of poverty in Asia and the Pacific.\textsuperscript{44}

53. However, there are increasing pressures on land and rural livelihoods owing to population growth, urbanization, changing lifestyles and consumption patterns. Non-food agro-investments often outcompete those for food production and contribute to rising food prices. Cross-border investments for food production often hold little benefit for local populations,\textsuperscript{45} and are likely to accelerate with the rising demand for food and the constrained resource base.

\textsuperscript{42} This estimate is based on data from the multidimensional poverty index for 25 ESCAP countries in 2016. Alkire, “Multidimensional poverty index – summer 2016: brief methodological note and results”.


\textsuperscript{44} Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2016: Nurturing Productivity for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development (ST/ESCAP/2750).

54. The number of corporate farms is growing, while landlessness, which correlates highly with poverty and social exclusion, is on the rise, and is particularly observed in South and South-East Asia.

55. Poor people, women, indigenous peoples, older people and other vulnerable groups in rural areas can be the most impacted, as evidenced by recent examples in which land has been acquired by investors, corporate entities or Governments without public disclosure, meaningful prior consultation, consent or appropriate compensation.

56. Rural-urban migration can help to diversify incomes for rural households. However, demographic changes will lead towards an increasingly vulnerable rural population with higher proportions of older, part-time and women farmers who face risks associated with climate change, natural disasters and environmental degradation.

57. While markets provide affordable nutritious food for many, they sometimes fail to reflect the real values of agricultural products, leading to market inefficiency. Markets also fail in other ways: climate change effects that result in volatility of international commodity prices are likely to continue to impact the livelihoods of cash crop producers.

58. The rural poor will continue to face many challenges as these trends converge without specific support and a wider, strategic approach to rural-urban transition, as discussed above.

59. The needs of poor people in rural areas are diverse and include workers in plantation sites, contract farmers, individual farmers and those involved in off-farm activity. Supportive interventions must respond to this diversity.

60. The multidimensional poverty measure reveals that the securing of investments to meet the most fundamental needs remains a critical challenge, including to provide access to basic services such as clean drinking water and energy.

61. It is also critical to strengthen and protect access to natural resources as part of this transition, particularly forest resources. For example, the income derived from forests constitutes 20.1 per cent of average household income in rural areas of tropical and subtropical Asia, and reliance is higher in poor households than non-poor households.


management is key to determining the level of forest resource sustainability, forest income and food security of the rural population.⁴⁹

**Opportunities and responses**

62. The 2030 Agenda advocates sustainable management of natural resources. The challenge of strengthening the incentives framework for sustainable management of natural resources and aligning this with wider objectives for food security and poverty eradication at the national level is critical for rural livelihoods.

63. Demand-side interventions including measures such as eco-labelling and eco-certification and regulations can strengthen responses to meet the rising demand for safe and fairly produced food. However, small producers can benefit from such interventions only if they are engaged in the supply-chain governance of agro-food systems.

64. Technological and institutional innovations and partnerships should be better channelled to expand access to water, energy and food, including through decentralized infrastructure and through financing innovations that involve target communities and that represent affordable and environmentally and socially sustainable solutions.

65. Community-based management of natural resources enhances the condition and quality of natural resources and strengthens food security in rural areas. Community-based forestry management practices cover a large proportion of forest in China, India, Nepal and the Philippines, and in Papua New Guinea almost all forests are community-managed.

66. Support for farmers’ organizations can enable small farmers to better benefit from technological and market changes that are an important facet of rural-urban transitions. Such organizations may augment negotiating and bargaining power, boost political voice, reduce transaction costs such as transport and access to markets and minimize risks for those most at risk. Engaging youth through such organizations can strengthen innovation. In particular, small farmers can be empowered to participate in supply-chain management decisions.

67. Strengthening the sustainability dimensions of all investment in the rural sector is critical. Financing through innovative mechanisms, such as payments for ecosystem services or arrangements to enable urban areas to finance improvement of water efficiency in rural areas, also holds the potential to address the convergence of rural poverty, resource constraints and the need for sustainable management of natural resources.

68. These responses, together with broader partnerships to share a vision of sustainable rural communities, work to strengthen the policy response to the needs of poor people in rural areas, and small farmers in particular, as required for rural development in a changing development context.

V. Infrastructure financing and governance for poverty and prosperity

69. Significant progress has been made in expanding energy generation, ICT, transport and water and sanitation infrastructure in Asia and the Pacific. Nevertheless, the basic infrastructure needs of many poor people remain to be met, future demand for infrastructure is substantial and environmental sustainability needs to be strengthened, as embodied in the targets for Sustainable Development Goal 9.

Status and challenges

70. In 2014, approximately 348 million people\(^{50}\) in the region still lacked access to electricity: a major gap, but a substantial reduction since 2012, when the number was estimated at 426 million.\(^{51}\) In 2015, 300 million people did not have access to safe drinking water, and 1.5 billion people lacked basic sanitation.\(^{52}\) Covering these “last mile” infrastructure needs is a substantial challenge. The costs are substantial, but represent a relatively small share of total anticipated demand for infrastructure finance.

71. Furthermore, the quality of infrastructure service provided in many areas is inconsistent, and outages and disruptions are frequent. The quality of infrastructure and maintenance of assets, including to support better connectivity, need to be improved.

72. It is essential to ensure the environmental sustainability of infrastructure, so that it is compatible with social and environmental goals, limits air and water pollution and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.\(^{53}\) Infrastructure designed to respond to climate risk can support resilience to the impacts of climate change. Infrastructure assets will also be affected by climate change: for example, rising sea levels will affect road and transport infrastructure, particularly in coastal areas.\(^{54}\)

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73. Men and women use infrastructure services differently. For example, women’s use of public transport is affected by factors including safety, lighting and access to improved sanitation. Time burdens for the collection of water and fuel and for family care fall disproportionately on women where there are shortcomings in access to water, energy, sanitation and transport.  

74. There are vital linkages between infrastructure provision and social development in Asia. Indices of poverty and well-being such as the multidimensional poverty index consider access to electricity, drinking water, sanitation and cooking fuels as key factors that affect quality of life. Infrastructure also enables the provision of vital social functions such as health care and education.

75. Asian countries have invested in some of the largest volumes of clean energy at some of the lowest costs, though the share in the total energy mix remains low. Decentralized renewable energy systems are now addressing the previously unmet needs of some of the poorest people across the region, particularly in rural and geographically remote areas.

76. The costs, benefits, and implications of possible infrastructure options need robust assessment. New information on options and associated costs is not always well reflected in decision-making. A wide range of stakeholders including Governments, citizens, the private sector and local governments have a role to play. The needs of poor people may not always be the focus, and poor people may be less able to influence planning and policy processes.

77. Infrastructure represents a significant expenditure of public finance in most countries in the region. Public money has been central in financing transport and water infrastructure, and in lower-income and small island States. Managing the demand for key infrastructure and making better choices about how to use existing assets, and how to plan and provide maintenance, can improve the contribution that infrastructure assets make to sustainable development.


78. The limits to available public finance have resulted in strong interest in diversifying sources of funding for infrastructure, including through partnerships with the private sector. Structuring effective partnerships that are attractive to private actors and deliver on public interests, particularly for poor people, can be challenging.  

79. Matching available finance with project and programme goals has also proven challenging. Debt finance from banks has dominated infrastructure finance in the region, and opportunities to expand it are limited. A further impediment is the lack of well-developed bond markets. Savings in the region have grown, and deepening pools of private capital could potentially be tapped to help meet infrastructure needs. Concessional finance may be necessary to meet viability gaps and deliver infrastructure projects in key sectors where they provide vital public good or social benefit.

Opportunities and responses

80. Infrastructure can have an important impact on poverty when integrated with wider development efforts. For example, road connectivity, energy and irrigation services can increase the ease and reduce the costs of access to markets and non-farm jobs, but if extended alongside efforts to improve access to health care and education, the impacts on poverty tend to be greater.  

81. More robust planning and prioritization processes can yield substantial financial savings, and avoid wasted investment in poorly designed projects that do not meet development objectives or are not viable.  

International organizations, including development banks and expert groups, have supported better planning.

82. Opportunities to localize planning are also important. Many cities are beginning to formulate sustainable development and climate change strategies that consider financing needs, and forthcoming international policy processes can provide an additional impetus.

83. Global policy processes can support efforts to promote sustainable infrastructure planning. From 2018, for example, countries will be invited to review progress in implementing their nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement, and infrastructure choices play a central role in these strategies.

84. Government policy and regulation plays a central role in shaping outcomes, including for poverty reduction. Many countries in Asia and the Pacific have taken important steps to encourage renewable energy generation


and drive down associated costs to the point where they are competitive with conventional energy options. Continued policy and regulatory innovation to encourage sustainable infrastructure is needed.

85. Building government capacity to structure and negotiate partnerships by finding solutions that allow access to deeper technical, legal and financial skills can support appropriate engagement with private actors in sectors where there is mutual interest. The use of competitive but efficient procurement systems based on robust disclosure and regular reporting to key stakeholders can support such systems.

86. Transparency and accountability of infrastructure delivery can be improved. Data on the quality of service can help identify potential bottlenecks and areas where service needs to be improved. Systematic public reporting on issues such as system outages or disruptions can be useful to better target investment in maintenance and upgrading of existing infrastructure.

87. Through improved governance and effective approaches to both public and private finance, the region can build the sustainable infrastructure necessary for a prosperous tomorrow.

VI. Conclusions

88. Poverty and prosperity cut across all the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which looks to a future in which all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and in which progress is in harmony with nature.63

89. There is growing recognition that there are multiple dimensions of poverty beyond income that need to be understood and addressed.

90. Regional trends are changing market incentives and labour markets, and contribute to the changing relationships between Governments, the private sector and the public. Without a specific response to these changes, not all people will be able to participate in economic growth on an equal footing and fully benefit from prosperity gains.

91. Poor people face a convergence of risks related to climate change, multidimensional poverty and changing economic conditions in the context of ongoing rural-urban transitions. At the same time, vulnerable workers are more likely to be women, and women are more likely to be poor. Migrants are likely to constitute the fastest growing group of vulnerable workers.

92. To respond to the multidimensional character of poverty and to promote shared prosperity, countries and their stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region need to go beyond conventional poverty eradication options and promote coherent policy frameworks that balance responsibilities and benefits and nurture partnerships.

63 See General Assembly resolution 70/1.
A coherent policy framework for poverty eradication and prosperity

93. This coherent policy framework must support interlinkages and connections at multiple levels. In the above discussion, some of the connections are highlighted between the theme of the high-level political forum in 2017, on poverty and prosperity, and the cluster of Sustainable Development Goals to be addressed at the 2017 forum.

94. While there is no one recipe to fit all countries in their pursuit of achieving sustainable development, some linkages should be considered by all countries.

95. The present document emphasizes that understanding multidimensional poverty is critical for developing effective poverty reduction strategies in support of Sustainable Development Goal 1, and points to future risks with respect to access to resources, economic opportunity, health and food security. These risks connect Goal 1 and Goal 2 on food security and sustainable agriculture.

96. Growing demand for non-food crops is driving a shift away from cultivation of food crops in many parts of the region and increasing pressure on land. At the same time, food supply chains are also growing more complex, the vulnerability of poor people to disruptions is increasing, and the availability of and access to traditional sources of nutrition is decreasing.

97. The overview of poverty and prosperity and discussion of the urban context points to the important role of health status in determining poverty outcomes, and urbanization trends are adding new complexities to health risks. In this discussion, Goal 3 on health and well-being is linked with Goal 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure in order to make the point that better targeting of infrastructure investments and utilization of ICT solutions can play an important role in facilitating improved access to social infrastructure, including health care.

98. Overall, an examination of health and well-being issues in the region also illustrates that data on multidimensional poverty needs improvement: not enough is available for all countries, and not enough is known about prosperity and subjective well-being. The aspirations of people, their values and experiences differ from context to context, and neither income nor multidimensional poverty indices are sufficient alone to describe the range of human needs and experiences that are important to a transformative and universal development agenda.

99. Further, there are multiple and evolving linkages between gender equality (Goal 5), urbanization, demographic trends, rural development and infrastructure. The scale of the gap between men and women distinguishes countries that are starting implementation of the 2030 Agenda at a disadvantage from those that are well prepared to move ahead on poverty reduction and building prosperity. In the conclusions of the present document, connections are drawn between Goals 5 and 9, highlighting the gender dimensions of urban poverty and rural-urban migration, and the importance of gender sensitivity in infrastructure planning and delivery is highlighted.

100. The infrastructure dimensions of Goal 9 and its links to Goal 1 are also identified in the document. Disparities and the risks of uneven access to ICT by marginalized groups are recognized, which make achievement of Goal 1 on poverty more difficult.
101. Action on Goal 9 is an opportunity to create decent work and to become dramatically more eco-efficient over time to mitigate the rising demand for natural resources and production of waste which is challenging urban and peri-urban environments, threatening rural livelihoods and driving climate change.

102. Lastly, the document touches on issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources that link Goal 14 with Goal 1 on poverty. Many of the issues raised relate to rural livelihoods and the demand for natural resources, and parallels are drawn in the context of artisanal and coastal fisheries and in the race for ocean resources, including minerals. In addition, the importance of improved ocean connectivity and infrastructure is recognized in the document, particularly for Pacific small island developing States.

103. The means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals – trade, finance, technology and capacity-building – are all impacted by the changing development context of Asia and the Pacific. The regional dimensions of that changing development context confirm the importance of ensuring coherence in regional action regarding the means of implementation and in the international support provided for their delivery.

104. Given these interlinkages and connections, a coherent policy framework is particularly important in the context of rural-urban transitions, and in particular in rapidly urbanizing countries. The fates of the most vulnerable groups in urban and rural areas are linked through the flows of people, natural resources, finance and technology. These linkages provide a basis for developing rural and urban development strategies that synergistically and in tandem create decent work, strengthen food security and ensure gender equality strategies.

105. Investment and partnership strategies for infrastructure development will be central to effective rural-urban transitions, engaging and supporting those most in need, but also linking rural and urban areas. Enhanced agricultural diversification, productivity and sustainability will be essential to support achievement of these Goals, in order to meet the needs of changing dietary preferences and the demand for safe and nutritious food, enhance rural livelihood needs and incentivize sustainable natural resources management to ensure that the flow of ecosystem services, which is critical to economic activity in both rural and urban areas, is maintained.

Balancing responsibilities and benefits and promoting partnership

106. Many of the good practices discussed in the previous sections work towards an evolved social contract, which will define the reciprocal rights, obligations and responsibilities between States and citizens\(^{64}\) and among stakeholders. Strengthened commitment is required by all actors, government and non-government, to leaving no one behind and to the ideals of the 2030 Agenda.

107. In the Asia-Pacific context, steps to strengthen this commitment should be reflected in strong policy signals, an enabling environment and strengthened governance, including better regulation and investment.

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strategies. However, this requires a better understanding of the factors and processes that are shaping poverty and prosperity outcomes, including through marginalization and exclusion.

108. In addition, the economic and political system must enhance its ability to equitably fulfill its obligations and responsibilities to all stakeholders, including future generations, in both developing and developed countries. Regional cooperation and integration arrangements and market forces are changing relationships between Governments and the private sector, and the private sector, people and Governments must become better at balancing the public and private benefits of investments in transparent and democratic ways.

109. Evolved social contracts present opportunities for innovative partnerships that provide effective solutions for eradicating poverty and building shared prosperity. Collaboration between Governments, non-governmental organizations, community organizations and private sector partners can help to frame and define solutions to the challenges, while effective partnerships can better align development outcomes with public interests.

**Strengthening regional cooperation for poverty eradication and prosperity**

110. Regional cooperation can address the shared concerns of member States related to the interlinkages and complementarity of the Sustainable Development Goals that can be built on to strengthen poverty eradication and prosperity outcomes.

111. Regional cooperation should address the strengthening of national statistical systems and innovations in data collection, to supply the data necessary to monitor progress and conduct integrated analysis for targeted policies to achieve poverty and prosperity outcomes.

112. Cooperation needs to be enhanced between countries on trade, migration, decent work and responsible cross-border investments in the agricultural sector as well as on infrastructure financing, in particular for ICT access, transport and renewable energy, in order for joint action to be taken to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda.

113. Knowledge partnerships at the regional and subregional levels can play an important role in building capacity for collective learning and implementation, in several areas including good practices with regard to urban resilience, management of rural-urban transitions, agro-supply chain governance and financing of sustainable infrastructure.

**VII. Matters calling for the attention of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development**

114. Member States and other stakeholders are invited to review the present document with a view to:

   (a) Sharing national perspectives on the issues raised and best practice responses to the challenges identified;

   (b) Discussing opportunities for regional cooperation to support national efforts towards poverty eradication and shared prosperity.
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
Bangkok, 29-31 March 2017
Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda
Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region:
regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

Note by the secretariat

Summary
This document contains a draft road map for regional cooperation on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. The draft road map contains priority areas of cooperation with a focus on the practical means of implementation. It also contains implementation arrangements and a process for tracking progress.

The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is invited to consider the draft road map for adoption with a view to forwarding it to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific for endorsement at its seventy-third session.

I. Introduction

1. The Second Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, in 2015, agreed that it would initiate the development of a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development in 2016. Accordingly, in 2016, the Third Forum identified the foundations for the development and implementation of the road map.

2. Subsequently, in its resolution 72/6, paragraph 7 (b), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) requested the
Executive Secretary to support the process to define a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda, pursuant to the recommendations of the Forum.

3. As requested, the secretariat facilitated discussions among member States and the sharing of input and views from various stakeholders, including by leveraging the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism.  

4. A draft annotated outline of the regional road map was circulated to member States and to agencies of the United Nations system in September 2016. Subsequently, a “zero draft” was circulated on 6 November 2016 and informal sessions of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission were held on 18 November 2016 and 13 January 2017 to discuss the first and second drafts. The last draft of the road map was presented to an informal meeting of the Advisory Committee on 15 February 2017, and finalized on the basis of comments received at that meeting.

5. The draft road map is now presented to the Forum for adoption at its current session with a view to forwarding it to the Commission for endorsement at its seventy-third session in May 2017.

II. Draft regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

A. Objectives and guidelines

1. Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals requires national, regional and international cooperative endeavours. The aim of this regional road map is to facilitate cooperation at the regional level, supported by the secretariat and other United Nations entities through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism as appropriate.

2. The road map places particular emphasis on supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by developing countries, in particular by least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and other countries with special needs.

3. The road map maintains the universality and transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda and takes into account different national and regional realities, capacities and levels of development, while respecting member States’ national development strategies, policy space and priorities, remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments and creating no new commitments or additional reporting requirements or obligations for Governments or new mechanisms, as requested by member States at the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.  

4. In line with the 2030 Agenda, the objective of the road map is to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable

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3 E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4, para. 16 A. (d).
4 ACPR/365/INF/5.
5 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4, para. 16 A. (b).
development through regional cooperation in a set of priority areas that support effective pursuit of sustainable development by member States.

5. The road map also aims to place gender equality and women’s empowerment at the centre of the regional policy agenda, in order to enhance women’s leadership and decision-making in all aspects of society.⁶

6. The expected impacts of the road map are as follows: (a) strengthened regional cooperation on priority issues as identified by member States; (b) continued and more efficient and coordinated support for member States provided by the secretariat, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and regional organizations through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism; and (c) more effective knowledge-sharing among countries.

7. This road map stems from decisions of the Second and Third Asia-Pacific Forums on Sustainable Development. It is for members and associate members of ESCAP and identifies opportunities to cooperate at the regional level, guided by all the principles reaffirmed and agreed to in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, as provided for by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/1 – in which it acknowledges the importance of the regional and subregional dimensions, regional economic integration and interconnectivity in sustainable development – and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

8. The regional road map contains priority areas of cooperation that could be supported using the secretariat’s existing expertise and resources, drawing on input from member States and the programme of work and strategic framework. The regional road map also draws on the thematic working groups of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism and, at the national level, on input from the United Nations Development Group. The ESCAP conference structure and its ongoing activities, as well as activities of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism member organizations, will be fully utilized in an effort to avoid duplication of work and increase efficiency.

B. Priority areas of cooperation

9. Regional and subregional cooperation in specific areas can support and complement the effectiveness of national mechanisms. The means of implementation – namely finance, technology, capacity-building, trade and systemic issues – are key to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Regional discussion and cooperation, including through regional and subregional organizations,⁷ can facilitate access to normative work; support capacity-building, technical cooperation and sharing of good practices and home-grown approaches, including among countries that share similar characteristics (such as least developed countries, small island developing States or middle-income countries); and facilitate member States’ access to the means of implementation and efforts towards

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⁶ Language adapted from E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/4, para. 2 (b).

⁷ Including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Pacific subregional organizations.
consolidating regional and global partnerships for sustainable development. Similarly, the externalities and spillover effects of many of the Sustainable Development Goals provide opportunities for regional approaches and engagement. The thematic areas of cooperation in this road map have been chosen for their multisectoral impact on sustainable development.

10. The opportunities for regional cooperation, including by leveraging regional and subregional organizations, draw upon the issues highlighted by member States within the conference structure of the Commission.

11. Member States have identified the following priority areas of cooperation, with particular emphasis on the practical means of implementation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

1. Means of implementation and partnership

(a) Data and statistics

Current status

12. Availability and access to high-quality data and statistics are essential to measuring and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. However, regional data are available for only approximately half of the defined indicators of the global monitoring framework. The multidimensional nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires integrated and disaggregated statistics that can support planning and analysis across the economic, social and environmental development pillars with a particular focus on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable people. Data and statistics should also be able to ensure that no one is left behind, and disaggregated data should be made more available as required by the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. In order to meet such demands, national statistical capacities to provide high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data to users must be strengthened, and the capacity of Governments to utilize data and statistics for evidence-based policymaking and for follow-up and review must be enhanced, inter alia. National statistical systems therefore need to be strengthened to supply the statistical evidence necessary for monitoring of progress, integrated policy analysis and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

13. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Promote the need for national statistical systems to be responsive to the requirements of users arising from the 2030 Agenda, and the need to encourage investments in national statistical systems that are adequate to meet statistical requirements and to support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals as appropriate;

(b) Formulate and implement continuous, comprehensive and system-wide strategies for the development of statistics, including statistics for the 2030 Agenda;

(c) Support national statistical systems to develop high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and vulnerability status and geographic location, and integrated measurement frameworks for Goal statistics that integrate data from multiple sources, including big data, in a coherent and consistent manner to support integrated analysis of sustainable development issues;
(d) Organize national statistical system business processes and modernize tools for strengthened quality, efficiency and effectiveness of statistical information management and exchange;

(e) Build the skills of the staff and management of national statistical systems, including of relevant data producers, to enhance the human resources capacity for generating the statistical products and services required for monitoring of national development plans and the 2030 Agenda.

(b) Technology

*Current status*

14. Science, technology and innovation can play a vital role in supporting sustainable development and driving growth and productivity. The Asia-Pacific region is characterized by large disparities across countries: while many countries rank in the bottom quartile of the Global Innovation Index, a number of member States are leaders in science, technology and innovation, accounting for almost 45 per cent of global research and development expenditure. The challenge is to bridge these gaps and address the digital divide, to enable member States, particularly countries with special needs, to take advantage of technologies and to nurture an innovative environment. Given the guidance offered by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation and the work under way on related ESCAP platforms, the use of policy on science, technology and innovation for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals can be promoted as follows.

*Opportunities for regional cooperation*

15. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Facilitate the sharing of best practices and capacity-building across member countries through the development of social enterprise, impact investment markets and information and communications technology in support of implementation of the Goals;

(b) Link regional needs and experience of international, regional and subregional organizations by acting as a bridge to facilitate cooperation for access to technology and know-how and joint action when necessary;

(c) Promote public, public-private and civil society partnerships, as appropriate, in order to harness science, technology and innovation for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.\(^8\)

(c) Finance

*Current status*

16. Effective pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals requires stable forward-looking and long-term financing. However, the available financial resources are either not appropriately channelled or not sufficient to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. In 2014, Asia-Pacific developing countries mobilized 17.6 per cent of their gross domestic product in tax revenues, which is only half the average across the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Since these levels of public

\(^8\) See Commission resolution 72/12.
finances are insufficient to effectively pursue the Goals, support should be made available to help developing countries increase their tax ratio. The region’s financial markets are also not developed enough to channel regional savings into productive investments in support of sustainable development needs. Besides lacking efficient financial intermediation processes for development purposes, banks in the region’s developing countries provide more than two thirds of the overall financial credit, while developed countries mobilize up to 80 per cent from diversified financial vehicles such as bonds and equity. On the financial inclusion side, more than 1.1 billion people in the Asia-Pacific region are unbanked. Considerable policy adjustments are needed in terms of both reorienting available resources and identifying additional sources of financing. Bilateral or multilateral public-private partnerships to mobilize financial resources are also required, not only for infrastructure development but also for other sectors, such as education and health, including through knowledge-sharing on good practices.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

17. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Continue to undertake research, analysis and consensus-building initiatives in the area of financing for development to enhance regional knowledge of infrastructure financing, including public-private partnerships;

(b) Provide capacity-building to mainstream financing for development issues in areas such as domestic resource mobilization;

(c) Enhance the capacity for domestic and international resource mobilization;

(d) Strengthen partnerships for effective development cooperation;

(e) Promote financial inclusion.

(d) Policy coherence

Current status

18. In Asia and the Pacific, high levels of economic growth have lifted great numbers of people out of poverty. However, if the region is to sustain the growth needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to enhance resilience, it must shift to a growth trajectory that is more resource-efficient and more able to meet the needs of present and future generations. Successful implementation of the Goals will require policy coherence, integrated approaches and a move away from single-sector policies and investments, which in turn will need an all-of-Government approach that promotes the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. Regional cooperation will be critical to maximize the opportunities for building synergies between the economic, social and environmental dimensions and to overcome the first-mover risk that may be present in terms of short-term economic competitiveness.

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9 See Commission resolution 72/6, para. 7 (d).
Opportunities for regional cooperation

19. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Develop integrated approaches, models and tools with respect to each country’s policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development;

(b) Support regional approaches to the prioritization of Goal interventions through the development of policy tools, methodologies and approaches;

(c) Promote integrated policies based on systems approaches and methodologies;

(d) Promote the valuation and quantification of the co-benefits of policy action addressing interconnected Goals and targets.

(e) North-South, South-South, international and regional partnerships

Current status

20. Comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will require partnerships and the deployment of new solutions between countries and across subregions. Countries in the Asia-Pacific region could benefit from North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation as well as the sharing of good practices and home-grown approaches.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

21. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Build capacity in developing countries, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;\(^{10}\)

(b) Share good practices through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, \(^{11}\) including through regional platforms such as the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;

(c) Promote and scale up best practices. \(^{12}\)

2. Thematic issues

(a) Leaving no one behind (social development)

Current status

22. Despite high and enduring economic growth and significant progress in terms of poverty eradication, inequality persists in the Asia-Pacific region, and in some instances has intensified. Growing disparities in income and wealth, as well as inequality of opportunity, disproportionately affect women and vulnerable groups. Currently, up to 70 per cent of the population lacks reliable access to good-quality and affordable health-care services, and less than one third of the working-age population are eligible for a pension in many countries of the region. The participation rate of women in the labour

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\(^{10}\) See General Assembly resolution 70/1.

\(^{11}\) See Commission resolution 72/6, para. 8.

\(^{12}\) See General Assembly resolution 70/222.
force remains low, at 48 per cent. Only 30 per cent of all persons with disabilities have enough income for self-support.

**Opportunities for regional cooperation**

23. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Promote analytical studies and policy advocacy to address inequalities, reduce poverty and enhance social protection, including for persons with disabilities, to build socioeconomic resilience;\(^{13}\)

   (b) Continue regional and subregional dialogues to support multisectoral policies, strategies and programmes to implement the 2030 Agenda and the Beijing Platform for Action and advance gender equality and women’s empowerment;\(^{14}\)

   (c) Address unemployment and underemployment among youth, including by improving the match between the knowledge and skills of youth and labour market demands;\(^{15}\)

   (d) Facilitate regional and subregional dialogue on policies to address population ageing;\(^{16}\)

   (e) Implement the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific;\(^{17}\)

   (f) Strengthen the linkages between international migration and development, including through more effective management of migration.\(^{16}\)

\(b\) **Disaster risk reduction and resilience**

*Current status*

24. Since 2005, the Asia-Pacific region has recorded almost 60 per cent of total global deaths, 80 per cent of affected people and 45 per cent of total economic damage due to disasters. Currently, over 500 million poor people are living at medium or high disaster risk.\(^{18}\) Disasters in the region are becoming more complex, often tending to affect multiple countries, and bring about cascading impacts. Many of these disasters are transboundary in nature, such as floods, El Niño, droughts, tropical cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis and sand and dust storms. For instance, the 2015-2016 El Niño affected entire swathes of the Asia-Pacific region, including South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific. There is scope for strengthened regional cooperation in relation to specific hazards such as transboundary river basin floods, flash floods, glacial lake outburst floods and landslides.

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\(^{13}\) See E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/4 and Commission resolution 67/8.

\(^{14}\) See Commission resolution 71/13.

\(^{15}\) See E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/4.

\(^{16}\) See Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/5 and General Assembly resolution 70/164.

\(^{17}\) See Commission resolution 69/13.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

25. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Promote effective regional and subregional efforts to strengthen disaster risk modelling, assessment, mapping, monitoring and multi-hazard early warning systems of common and transboundary disasters;\footnote{See Commission resolution 71/12.}

(b) Facilitate regional dialogue and cooperation in integrating disaster risk reduction into related development activities;

(c) Maximize the efficiency of existing regional cooperation mechanisms, including the World Meteorological Organization/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones and the Regional Cooperative Drought Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning;

(d) Improve analysis to enhance regional knowledge on disaster risk and resilience, promote the wide dissemination of such knowledge, identify challenges and opportunities for data-sharing and provide the analytical basis for regional cooperation;\footnote{See E/ESCAP/CDR(4)/6.}

(e) Promote capacity-building regarding climate resilience, including climate-related disaster risk reduction, through policy dialogues and the sharing of experiences and information;\footnote{See Commission resolution 72/8.}

(f) Develop and implement holistic and participatory disaster risk management at all levels, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(g) Promote a “build back better” approach in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction, as well as implementation of the health aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, including the Bangkok Principles, with a view to ensuring more systematic cooperation, coherence and integration between disaster and health risk management.\footnote{Based on A/71/230, paras. 68 and 69, and priority 2 (f) of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted at the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2016 (available from www.ndmindia.nic.in/AsiaRegionalPlan.pdf).}

(c) Climate change

Current status

26. Climate change has already taken hold in the Asia-Pacific region. Higher temperatures, the rise in sea level and extreme weather events related to climate change are likely having a major impact on the region, increasing risks to economies and natural and physical assets and potentially compounding development challenges, including with respect to poverty, food and energy security and health. Future climate change in the region may cause more frequent and severe coastal inundation and erosion, salinization, wildfires, heavy precipitation and drought. Climate change is a long-term threat to future generations, and given the significant past growth in greenhouse gas emissions in the region and the potential for an acceleration
of that growth in the near future, it is vital that Asia-Pacific countries take strong action to transition to more efficient, low-carbon economies to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. A recent World Bank study estimated that without further climate change adaptation and mitigation action, climate change could force more than 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030, many in the Asia-Pacific region.23

Opportunities for regional cooperation

27. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Promote capacity-building for climate action through policy dialogue and the sharing of experiences and information by utilizing existing institutions, forums and platforms;

   (b) Promote capacity-building of member States regarding climate change, climate resilience and adaptive capability, including climate-related disaster risk reduction;

   (c) Assist in the development of strategies towards attaining internationally agreed development goals;

   (d) Promote regional advocacy and support for access to climate finance that is additional to traditional official development assistance.

(d) Management of natural resources

Current status

28. As humankind’s livelihoods, nutrition and economic opportunities all fundamentally depend upon utilizing the terrestrial and marine resources and ecosystems of our planet, the Asia-Pacific region’s continuing survival and prosperity depends on managing these resources to be sustainable. The region consumes more than half of the world’s natural resources with increasing rates of absolute resource use and increasing resource use per person. This combination puts pressure on the natural environment and increases the possibilities of irreversible environmental damage, with direct social and economic consequences. At the same time, there is huge potential to improve the resource efficiency of the economies in the region’s countries as there are vast variations of resource efficiency between countries. For example, developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region use five times more materials per dollar of gross domestic product than the rest of the world, and 10 times more than industrialized countries in the region.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

29. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Develop regional capacity with respect to resource efficiency and environmentally sound technologies;

   (b) Share experiences and cooperate on management of natural resources with a view to increasing food security, conserving the

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environment, protecting biodiversity and enhancing the welfare of the community;

(c) Develop and share best practices related to increasing agricultural productivity, sustainable agriculture, food security and rural welfare while reducing negative environmental impacts and degradation of the ecosystem;

(d) Cooperate at the regional level on valuation of ecosystem services;

(e) Conduct analytical studies on regional status and trends of natural resource use (stocks and flows);

(f) Conduct advocacy and regional campaigns on responsible consumption;

(g) Promote the sustainable use of oceans and seas in the region and share knowledge, experience and information for mutual benefit.

(e) Connectivity for the 2030 Agenda

Current status

30. While trade has been a key engine of growth and development, there is growing recognition of the need to make it more inclusive and ensure that its benefits are spread more widely. Transport development has been road-oriented and has not optimized the comparative advantages of each mode of transport from the perspective of the three dimensions of sustainable development, but transport remains a main driver of growth. While transport is the second largest producer of carbon dioxide emissions globally, the sector has the potential to significantly contribute to sustainable development by optimizing the environmental and social comparative advantages of various transport modes. While Internet access is high across the region, there is also a widening digital divide. Improvements in regional connectivity in terms of transport, information and communications technology and trade will boost economic growth and will be a prerequisite for sustainable development.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

31. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Expand and integrate the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network and the network of dry ports to allow maximum modal integration and expansion of connectivity to rural areas; develop and integrate maritime connectivity and implement regional transport facilitation frameworks\(^24\) and other technical standards for operationalizing transport connectivity; develop regional standards including harmonization of technical standards of transport infrastructure, sustainable urban transport index, regional road safety goals, targets and indicators and handbooks on road safety;

(b) Implement the Asia-Pacific information superhighway\(^25\).

\(^{24}\) See the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport and the Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport.

\(^{25}\) See E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/10.
(c) Enable paperless trade and e-commerce and review the current approaches towards regional integration to improve their efficacy, in particular to simplify and harmonize trade and supporting regulations and procedures to make the benefits of trade accessible for all.  

(f) Energy

Current status

32. Nearly half a billion people in Asia and the Pacific still lack access to electricity. More than 80 per cent of the countries in the region have targets to improve energy efficiency and increase the share of renewable energy in the region. More than assisting in energy supply needs, renewable sources of energy are receiving further impetus from the climate agenda. While the region has emerged as the producer and provider of most of the world's renewable energy technology, the overall trend within the region is diversification of the domestic energy mix, depending on national and subregional context. Given the uneven distribution of energy resources in the Asia-Pacific region and the need for transition of the energy sector towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7, there is good scope for coordinated regional action to achieve optimal deployment and utilization of energy resources through enhanced connectivity, economic cooperation and integration.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

33. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Support the work of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum and other regional mandates as well as the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 7;

(b) Promote policy dialogues and networking among member States to develop a regional cooperation framework to enhance energy security, with a view to promoting greater use of sustainable energy resources, including universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, energy services, energy efficiency, advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies and renewable energy as well as energy connectivity, in particular transboundary power trade;

(c) Identify complementary approaches for small-scale energy solutions, especially in smaller or remote regions.

(g) Good governance and administration

Current status

34. The 2030 Agenda, including both the Sustainable Development Goals and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, highlights that sustainable development is explicitly linked to effective governance and inclusive institutions. It is specifically noted that implementation of the post-2015 development agenda should be underpinned by effective, accountable and inclusive institutions,

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26 See Commission resolutions 68/3 and 72/4.

27 See E/ESCAP/CE(1)/8.
sound policies and good governance at all levels. The quality of governance and effectiveness of public institutions are critical factors determining the prospects of countries, in terms of contributing to the process of development. To this extent, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has incorporated aspects of governance and effective institutions by explicitly calling upon countries to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (Goal 16).

**Opportunities for regional cooperation**

35. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Promote all aspects of effective governance, including but not limited to addressing inequality, institutional governance, both public and private, social protection and good economic governance;

   (b) Share knowledge and experience of good governance standards and programmes.

**C. Implementation**

36. As noted by the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the secretariat will facilitate cooperation among members and associate members of ESCAP under the regional road map, including by doing the following:

   (a) Promote multi-stakeholder engagement by facilitating input and views from various stakeholders as appropriate;

   (b) Mobilize support from, among other sources, the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations by leveraging the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism and its thematic working groups to play an active role;

   (c) Undertake, in consultation with member States, a needs assessment and gap analysis during 2017, if necessary, including mapping of countries that need support in certain areas.

37. The above priority areas of cooperation will be facilitated through the conference structure of the Commission, as well as through existing expertise within ESCAP subprogrammes, the regional institutes and the thematic working groups of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism. Cooperation in these priority areas is also intended to allow member States and the secretariat to contextualize global commitments and national priorities to harmonize dynamic social and economic conditions in the region.

38. Cooperation will be undertaken in coordination with regional and subregional organizations to ensure that activities contribute to subregional priorities, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

39. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is convened annually as an inclusive intergovernmental platform preparatory to the high-level political forum on sustainable development and will provide an

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28 Addis Ababa Action Agenda, para 11.
29 E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4, para. 16 A. (d).
opportunity for review of and dialogue on the road map. The priority areas of cooperation in this road map are flexible in nature and subject to review and revision. The phases of review of the regional road map may be aligned through the Forum with the four-year cycle of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The relationship between the Forum and the road map will be further defined pending agreement by member States on the form and function of the Forum.

**D. Tracking the progress of the regional road map through the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development**

40. Reviews of progress on implementation of the regional road map will take place annually at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, with reference to the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework. This process will not create additional reporting requirements for member States and will be conducted within existing resources.

41. The review process may include member States and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate.

**III. Matters calling for the attention of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development**

6. The Forum is invited to review the draft regional road map with a view to adopting it and forwarding it to the Commission for endorsement at its seventy-third session.
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
Bangkok, 29-31 March 2017
Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda
National progress and achievements on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific: the regional dimension

Note by the secretariat

Summary

Effective follow-up and review is critical for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development not only highlights the critical role of follow-up and review but also recognizes the role of regional approach towards implementing the SDGs and emphasizes the importance of regional contributions in assessing the progress in delivering the Agenda. This paper aims to provide inputs to the discussion on regional follow-up and review to support efforts to achieve the SDGs at national and global levels. It informs the Forum about the latest developments on follow-up and review for the 2030 Agenda, including the agreements at various levels thus far. Second, it explains the value-added of regional follow-up and review and the principles that may be considered in defining its implementation arrangements. Finally, the paper outlines some issues for further consideration by the member States as they deliberate on the detailed implementation arrangements to operationalize the follow-up and review mandate of the APFSD.

I. Introduction

1. Effective follow-up and review is critical for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development devotes about 18 paragraphs on the importance of a systematic follow-up and review (originally referred to as “monitoring and accountability” in the early stages of negotiation on the post-2015 development agenda) its roles, objectives, and guiding principles. This extensive elaboration of follow-up and review is exceptional given the absence of such framework in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In addition, the 2030 Agenda not only highlights the critical role of follow-up

* E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/L.1/Rev.1.
** This document is being issued without formal editing.
and review but also recognizes the role of regional approach towards implementing the SDGs and emphasizes the importance of regional contributions in assessing the progress in delivering the Agenda.

2. The third session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) in 2016 agreed to support to follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the regional level as one of the agreed functions of the Forum. Furthermore, the member States agreed that “detailed implementation arrangements will be decided after agreement in the General Assembly and will be further discussed." ESCAP Resolution 72/6 on “Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific” endorsed this recommendation from the APFSD among others. Subsequently the General Assembly Resolution 70/299 on “Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level” which was adopted in July 2016, provides guidance for further discussion and decision-making on the role of follow-up and review at the regional level.

3. With these agreements in place, the fourth session of APFSD provides an opportunity for member States to consider how they wish to move forward with respect to defining the implementation arrangements of follow-up and review at the regional level, as called for by the third session of the Forum.

4. This paper aims to provide inputs to this discussion. It informs the Forum about the latest developments on follow-up and review for the 2030 Agenda, including the agreements at various levels thus far. Second, it explains the value-added of regional follow-up and review and the principles that may be considered in defining its implementation arrangements. Finally, the paper outlines some issues for further consideration by the member States as they deliberate on the detailed implementation arrangements to operationalize the follow-up and review mandate of the APFSD.

5. This paper builds on the technical paper on follow-up and review commissioned by the ESCAP secretariat as well as on the background paper prepared by the Secretariat for the Expert dialogue on effective follow-up and review for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific held on 1-2 December 2016. Both papers significantly benefited from the insights and inputs from the 70 experts who participated in the dialogue.

II. Follow-up and review at the regional level: Context, value-added, and principles

A. Context

6. The 2030 Agenda provides for a three-tiered follow-up and review architecture at the national, regional, and global levels: (i) at the national level, Member States are encouraged to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress (para 79); (ii) Follow-up and review at regional and

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subregional levels\(^4\) is also recognized to provide useful opportunities for peer learning (para 80); and (iii) the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Political Forum will have a central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review at the global level (para 82).

7. Every four years, the HLPF meets at the level of Heads of State and government under the auspices of the UN General Assembly. The HLPF also meets annually (for eight days) including a Ministerial segment (three days) within the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The core objective of the HLPF is to provide a platform for (i) sharing information on strategies to implement 2030 Agenda; (ii) presenting national (success stories); and (iii) critically analysing obstacles and setbacks in achieving SDGs.

8. Goal 17 emphasizes on strengthening the means of implementation, which will require coordinated action to address a number of systemic issues in areas such as finance, technology transfer, and trade. Therefore, follow-up and review exercise has to articulate and address these structural issues as well as indicate progress made in this regard. The mandate of the HLPF includes undertaking follow-up and review on the advancement of the implementation of sustainable development commitments "of all major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the economic, social and environmental fields, as well as the respective means of implementation" including Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

9. GA Resolution 70/299 “Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level” adopted on 29 July 2016 provides that the annual sessions of the HLPF will focus its attention on predetermined themes every year. They will also focus on a pre-determined cluster of SDGs, with a view to completing a review of all 17 SDGs every four years. SDG 17 on the means of implementation will be reviewed every year at the HLPF. As the regional preparatory meeting for APFSD, the theme of the APFSD is aligned with the HLPF.

10. The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are the main instruments for national reporting at the HLPF. The first batch of such reports was presented at the HLPF meeting in July 2016. The second batch is slated for presentation in July this year. The first year of experience of preparing the VNRs indicate that there is a wide range of variability in the format and content of the report as well as in the process of preparing them.

11. The 2030 Agenda explicitly recognises the need to have an adequate mechanism for monitoring progress of SDGs and for taking necessary corrective actions at the regional (and subregional) level. The 2030 Agenda has also indicated that the task of designing such an arrangement has to be performed by the national governments (in the region) with support from the relevant UN Regional Commission, i.e. ESCAP in the Asia and the Pacific, along with other UN agencies and multilateral development organisations.

12. The guidance provided in paragraph 80 of the 2030 Agenda regarding regional follow-up and review for the agenda reads as follows. “Follow-up and review at the regional and subregional levels can, as appropriate, provide useful opportunities for peer learning, including through voluntary reviews,

\(^4\) Pacific Island countries have initiated the development of an integrated roadmap for regional reporting and implementation of the SDGs, SAMOA Pathway, and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism including an indicator framework. Approval is scheduled for September 2017.
sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets. We welcome in this respect the cooperation of regional and subregional commissions and organizations. Inclusive regional processes will draw on national-level reviews and contribute to follow-up and review at the global level, including at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.” Further discussion is however needed to clarify how the regional level feeds into national level implementation.

13. Although the 2030 Agenda does not specifically say what constitutes a “region”, by reading the above paragraph in conjunction with other provisions mentioned elsewhere that such “region” essentially implies the broad continental spaces covered by different regional commission of the UN. However, what needs to be noted that paragraph 80 also provides for follow-up and review at “subregional” level.

14. While the 2030 Agenda does not provide any other specific guidelines regarding the formation, operation and management of the regional follow-up and review mechanism, such guidelines may be safely inferred from the principles for global follow-up and review as stated in paragraph 74. These principles may be summarised as follows.

    (a) Governments have the primary responsibility for the follow-up and review at all levels including regional.

    (b) To ensure national ownership, “foundation” of follow-up and review at regional level (similar to the global level) will be the outcomes of the national processes.

    (c) The follow-up and review process will track progress in implementing the universal goals and targets including those relating to means of implementation. This will be done in integrated manner, interrelating the three dimensions of sustainable development.

    (d) The follow-up and review process should take a “longer-term orientation” and in order to support the countries in making informed policy choices, need to identify achievements and challenges as well as critical success factors and gaps in this regard.

    (e) The follow-up and review has to be “open, inclusive, participatory and transparent” for all people. Moreover, the process will support reporting by all relevant stakeholders.

    (f) The follow-up and review has to be “rigorous and informed by country-led evaluations and data”. The data to be used for this purpose has to be of “high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated”.

    (g) The follow-up and review has to be coupled with “enhanced capacity-building support for developing countries (e.g. least developed countries, small island development States, landlocked developing countries and middle-income countries), particularly in the areas of strengthening national system and evaluation programmes.

    (h) The UN system and other multilateral institutions are to provide “active support” to the follow-up and review process.

15. In addition to the above-mentioned guidance, the 2030 Agenda in its paragraph 72 mentions six attributes of the contemplated follow-up and review framework i.e. it has to be “robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated”. Indeed, these six mentioned attributes of the envisaged follow-up and review process are fully consistent with the guiding principles, scope and outcome of the follow-up and review framework. In the same paragraph, it is mentioned that the objective of the follow-up and
review framework is to “make a vital contribution to the implementation and help countries to maximize and track progress in implementing this Agenda in order to ensure no one is left behind”.

B. Value-Added

16. A perspective is emerging that follow-up and review at the regional level is necessary to reinforce the weak spots in the review architecture or the aspects that are not addressed in global or national reviews. Concretely, the additional value of a regional follow-up and review are as follows:

17. It provides a congenial space for discussion. Relative to a global platform, a regional platform can provide a more congenial space for the member States to discuss their developmental challenges in an open and candid manner, leading to strengthening of mutual and collective trust. The regional follow-up and review can instil transparency in the interpretation of diverse regional trends (including subregional and mega trends) and increase accountability of the regional efforts to implement SDGs.

18. It can foster regional cooperation to address shared challenges. The regional follow-up and review can be the most competent platform to monitor provisioning of regional public goods. It can provide regional solutions by providing necessary policy guidance, and technical assistance to the member States in response to their agreed priorities. It can channel inputs to supplement the data and information deficit affecting effective implementation of SDGs in the region.

19. It can foster peer learning and capacity building. Regional follow-up and review can be the most effective platform for peer learning and exchanging views on good practices discussing what works and what does not. In that sense, it may promote South-South cooperation. It can also provide spaces for stakeholders to extend capacity building support to national implementation. For example, it can provide a platform for the private sector to think about its role in the context of SDGs. It can also enable civil society organizations, think tanks and academic institutions to contribute to making progress in policy coherence and systemic issues as called for by the 2030 Agenda.

20. It can draw from multiple sources at the regional to enrich follow-up and review. There are various resources that the ESCAP region can draw from in enriching a regional follow-up and review, particularly from the wide range of institutions (including the ESCAP subregional offices and regional institutes), regional programmes and frameworks, such as the North-East Asian Subregional Programme on Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) and the Regional Action Framework on the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) in the region. Furthermore, the follow-up and review mechanism for Asia and the Pacific can also draw from regional cooperation initiatives that are active at the subregional level within the ESCAP region.

C. Principles

21. Preliminary guidance provided by the United Nations secretariat as elaborated in Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive

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follow-up and review at the global level (A/70/684) provides a foundation for further discussions on how to ensure that follow-up and review efforts strengthen implementation, not just add additional reporting requirements. Consistent with this, the outputs of the regional follow-up and review mechanism has to go much beyond the mere aggregation of the national and thematic reports, generating an integrated and inter-related distinctive regional perspective in the global context.

Focus on provision of regional public goods or core indicators that can support national implementation

22. A clear niche of regional-level monitoring is on keeping track of the provision of regional public goods that member States may wish to prioritize to effectively support efforts to achieve the SDGs. Once the member States identify the regional public goods that are crucial for supporting these efforts, analytical approaches and data needs should be identified in this regard.

23. Identification, development, and joint monitoring of a set of core indicators at the regional level could be also a niche of regional follow-up and review in the region. By focusing on implementation of various intergovernmental agreements, compliance of norms and standards, operationalization of guidelines for good practices in regional cooperation, the regional follow-up and review may provide a substantial support towards creating an enabling environment for delivery of the SDGs in the region, including for transboundary issues.

24. Towards implementing its monitoring function, the following inputs can be provided to regional follow-up and review by the ESCAP secretariat in cooperation with UN agencies and other development agencies: (i) thematic reports aligning with the annual theme of the HLPF; (ii) periodic report on the means of implementation; (iii) periodic report on state of delivery of selected regional public goods (e.g. climate-related measures, connectivity expansion and trade and investment treaties and agreement) should there be an agreement to monitor these jointly at the Asia-Pacific level or in its subregions; and (iv) periodic review of the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. The thematic report (i) and reports on the means of implementation; (ii) can be prepared for the APFSD. Feedback by member States and other actors on how to strengthen these reports as inputs to regional follow-up and review particularly in defining follow-up actions, are important as countries discuss the detailed implementation arrangement of follow-up and review at the regional level.

Multi-stakeholder participation and UN System coordination in review process

25. Follow-up and review at the regional level can serve as a platform for validating the interpretation of trends and required actions through multi-stakeholder participation in public forums, converging at the APFSD.

26. In order to further encourage a multi-stakeholder approach, the Forum may also invite, among others, representatives of the civil society, private sector and academia to directly engage in the inter-governmental process of regional follow-up and review. Moreover, ESCAP should strengthen its coordination mechanism involving other UN agencies as well as the international development organisations working in the region, as called for by ESCAP Commission Resolution 72/6. This inclusive approach will strengthen the quality and effectiveness, of the regional follow-up and review process as well as its accountability dimensions.
National ownership in defining follow-up actions

27. The distinctive contribution of the Asia-Pacific follow-up and review could also be with respect to the articulation of a set of regional perspectives on policy and institutional options for the consideration of member States in their pursuit for an accelerated, inclusive and transformative pathway for achieving the SDGs in the region. The member States of the ESCAP will have the primary responsibility of providing oversight to the regional follow-up and review process and national processes will provide the foundation for operationalizing the follow-up and review mechanism in the region.

Peer learning

28. Governments have stressed the value of follow-up and review for supporting peer learning, which is a valuable means of capacity-building. An equally critical area is providing support to enable member States to observe the norms and principles of follow-up and review, as stipulated in paragraph 74 of the 2030 Agenda.

III. Matters calling for the attention of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

29. In discussing the detailed implementation arrangements of the APFSD as a regional platform for supporting follow-up and review, the following are areas of consideration:

(a) The scope, and objectives of follow-up and review at the regional level.

(b) Modalities for strengthening the follow-up and review process.
   (i) Ensuring the inputs of civil society organizations and business sector.
   (ii) Possibility of creating standing expert/advisory groups to strengthen the credibility regional follow-up and review. The proposed expert groups, could, for example, conceptualise the content and process of monitoring regional public goods, or undertake in-depth examination of progress on a goal by goal basis, or examine issues related to policy coherence across the goals

(c) The required analytical work to underpin the design of the implementation arrangements, such as:
   (i) Understanding the experiences of follow-up and review from other policy domains, such as human rights, trade, and development cooperation
   (ii) The role of regional reports, and the HLPF’s schedule of review in guiding regional follow-up and review.
   (iii) Assessment of data availability and gaps along with a strategy to service the needs of the regional follow-up and review.
   (iv) Identification of regional trends (including mega and subregional trends) that may facilitate the prioritisation of regional public goods that could be monitored jointly at the regional level.
References


ESCAP Commission Resolution 72/6. Committing to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.


United Nations. *Critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level (A/70/684)*


Leveraging trade as a means of implementation in the new global environment

Note by the secretariat**

Summary

Trade has the potential to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in numerous ways. However, recent developments in the global environment in the form of a rise in protectionist rhetoric can threaten the ability of countries to harness this potential of trade. This paper provides an overview of current state and future prospects of international trade. It highlights some of the emerging challenges in the form gaining popularity of protectionist rhetoric; weakening of multilateralism; confounding the impact of technology and trade; and erosion of effective preferences to least developed countries and developing countries. Some of the policy recommendations that can help address these challenges include: promoting open and transparent discussions on the impacts of trade at a higher resolution; designing trade adjustment assistance programmes that works; continuing commitment to multilateralism, while exploiting synergies with deeper regional integration; addressing the real barriers to trade beyond tariffs; improving trade facilitation, especially by implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement; and harnessing digital trade to promote inclusive trade.

I. Introduction

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes trade as an important means of implementation of the Agenda. Trade is introduced within the 2030 Agenda as an “engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, and contributes to the promotion of sustainable development”.¹ Trade can be a direct and indirect enabler of sustainable development. However, there has been a recent rise of protectionist rhetoric
across the world. The looming “Brexit”, the withdrawal of the United States of America from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement and the suggestions about return to “bilateralism” are manifestations of a rising discontent towards trade liberalization, especially pursued through multilateral mechanisms. How can the potential of trade be harnessed to promote sustainable development in this new global environment? This is the central question which this information note aims to address.

2. This information note is intended to guide the discussions at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2017 and the subsequent discussion at the 73rd session of the ESCAP Commission. The note draws from the research work conducted by ESCAP and other sources. In order to gauge public opinion on trade as a means of implementation, an online global perception survey was conducted by the Trade, Investment and Innovation Division of ESCAP. Specifically the theme of the survey was “Leveraging trade as a means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the new global environment”. This information note integrates the results from this survey.

3. The structure of the note is as follows. The paper begins by highlighting the state of play in global trade drawing from ESCAP Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2016. The note then summarizes what it entails for trade to be a means of implementation. The subsequent section maps how trade policy measures are integrated within the Sustainable Development Goal framework. The paper draws attention to some of the emerging challenges of harnessing the potential of trade and concludes with discussing potential ways to address these challenges.

II. Trade: current state and future prospects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade is perceived as an opportunity rather than a threat at the country level and at the personal level.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70% of the respondents identified trade to be an opportunity to their economy and a larger proportion (80%) perceives trade as an opportunity for them personally or for their company.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The trade landscape has evolved significantly during the last two decades. Developing countries have gradually increased their share of world trade. Between 2005 and 2015, the share of developing countries in global trade increased from 40% to 46%. The Global Perception Survey on “Leveraging trade as a means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development in the new global environment, was open for three weeks during January-February 2017. The survey drew 290 responses (273 complete and 17 partial responses) from 59 countries worldwide. The 90% of the respondents stated to have a post-graduate or Ph.D. level education and 92% of the respondents rated moderate to high awareness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Among others, the survey was also circulated among members of the ESCAP Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR), subregional offices of ESCAP and the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT). The detailed results of the survey are available from https://goo.gl/r4GdYr.

2 The Global Perception Survey on “Leveraging trade as a means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development in the new global environment, was open for three weeks during January-February 2017. The survey drew 290 responses (273 complete and 17 partial responses) from 59 countries worldwide. The 90% of the respondents stated to have a post-graduate or Ph.D. level education and 92% of the respondents rated moderate to high awareness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Among others, the survey was also circulated among members of the ESCAP Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR), subregional offices of ESCAP and the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT). The detailed results of the survey are available from https://goo.gl/r4GdYr.

merchandise exports increased from 33% to 42%. Almost 60% of global trade now comprises trade in intermediate goods, governed by global value chains. This makes both the import and export sides of trade equally significant for countries as they try to deepen their participation in global value chains. At the same time, the trade in commercial services has been on the rise globally and the value of trade in commercial services trade in 2015 is almost double that of 2005.

5. Trade in the Asia-Pacific region experienced a major slump in 2015, with the United States dollar value of exports and imports declining significantly by 9.7% and 15%, respectively. Merchandise and services export growth weakened in 2015 despite relatively robust economic performance in many Asia-Pacific economies.

6. The main causes for trade faltering in 2015 and previous years range from cyclical to structural – sluggish global economic growth, a downward movement of commodity prices, adverse movements of exchange rates, capital flow volatility, maturation of global value chains and a decline in productivity growth. Most of these factors would have also been at work in 2016, although later in the year some economic indicators signaled more robust performance and return of stability, at least in emerging markets in Asia. Thus, expectations are that nominal exports and imports will bounce back in 2017 with a 4.5% growth in exports and 6.1% growth in imports.

7. The above forecasts were made without accounting for any major shifts in the global politics and trade architecture. The World Economic Forum has recently released its forecasts on the future of trade for the next three years integrating this broader “new global environment”. The Forum predicts a range of scenarios, from a “good” one that stabilizes and reinforces the trading system to an “ugly” scenario marked by unconstrained tit-for-tat and major “trade wars” among leading economies. The bottom-line is that the initial years of implementation of the 2030 Agenda is witnessing a bleak picture in terms of overall trade performance due to looming uncertainty of the future of trade.

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7 WTO, op. cit.
9 Ibid.
III. Trade as a means of implementation: what does it entail?

8. This section describes how trade contributes both as a financial and non-financial means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda. It also discusses some potential challenges to using trade to pursue sustainable development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do people perceive trade as a means of implementation?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the survey respondents were asked on what they thought “means of implementation” refers to in the phrase “Trade is a key means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals”. 50% of the respondents believe that “trade can directly help in the achievement of several of Sustainable Development Goals as well as help mobilize financial and non-financial resources that can be used to achieve any of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals”. 35% felt that “trade can help in the achievement a specific set of Sustainable Development Goals, primarily pertaining to increasing economic performance of developing countries”, while 15% of the respondents identified trade exclusively as “one of the main sources of generating financial resources to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. Trade as a financial means of implementation

9. Trade is an important source of generating finances which can in turn be used for financing policies that promote sustainable development. Trade can generate finances both directly and indirectly. There are three main ways to generate public revenue through trade, namely, tariff revenues generated through taxing of imports; export taxes on specified commodities and services; and finally other proceedings from exports such as through different contractual arrangements of export of primary commodities and fees derived from export/import licenses. While there are sound economic arguments to discourage countries from relying on trade taxes for the purposes of financing public expenditures, still in many countries trade taxes contribute a significant share of total public revenue. For instance, for the least developed countries of Asia and the Pacific region, the total taxes on international trade\(^{11}\) amounted to an average of 17% of their total public revenue for the period 2010-2015.\(^{12}\)

10. In addition to this direct public revenue generation potential, trade leads to generation of revenue indirectly through boosting of private finances. Increased opportunities, enabled by an open trade regime, have been found to increase foreign direct investment (FDI). Further, export opportunities provide incentives for the private sector to increase their investment and improve productivity leading to higher sales revenues and therefore higher tax payments. Expanded economic opportunities, enabled by trade, lead to more employment, higher tax collection from both income and sales as well as potentially lesser need for direct government spending on income support. This contributes to an overall increase in economic growth. All these indirect

\(^{11}\) Taxes on international trade include import duties, export duties, profits of export or import monopolies, exchange profits and exchange taxes.

\(^{12}\) Data for Myanmar and Tuvalu were missing for all years. For countries for which data were available, missing data points (if any) was estimated using linear extrapolation. Calculation by ESCAP, based on data on taxes on international trade provided by the World Bank World Development Indicators available from http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/GC.TAX.INTT.RV.ZS.
channels lead to an expansion of productive capacities of countries and indirectly add to the financial resources available to address the Sustainable Development Goals.

B. **Trade as a non-financial means of implementation**

11. Trade also gives access to a wide variety of non-financial resources indispensable for meeting several Sustainable Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goal framework recognizes this and trade related targets have explicitly been integrated under several of the Sustainable Development Goals. For instance, for achieving the goal on food security (Goal 2), correcting and preventing trade restrictions in agricultural market have been identified as a target. Further, trade can promote access to affordable medicine, health care services, green technology and a whole array of inputs required to achieve several of the Sustainable Development Goals. The contributions of trade to improve the economic dynamism of the economy are manifold. Trade helps creates jobs not only in export sectors where a country has its comparative advantage but also in import sectors in the process of facilitating imports. Well-functioning, export and import sectors help integrate economies into global value chains. Global value chains in turn play catalytic role in attracting FDI, which can lead to transfer of technology and knowledge spillovers. These non-financial benefits from trade improve the dynamism and overall capacities of countries to pursue sustainable development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strong agreement on the potential of trade to facilitate Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time people are worried of some negative impacts</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75% of the respondents of the survey strongly agreed that trade can have a significant effect on sustainable development. In terms of the mechanisms of impact, respondents feel that trade will have maximum positive impact through boosting of economic growth, technology enhancement, creating jobs and revenue generation. Other positive channels of impact identified by respondents were the social impacts of trade (in terms of education, health, labour laws and promoting social protection); enabling structural transformations; improving access to cheaper inputs and high quality products; and promoting peace and stability. At the same time respondents also shared their main concerns of trade’s potential negative impacts. The following were the main mechanisms of impact in the order of highest scores: destruction of local small scale industries; detrimental impact on environment; increase income inequality and create social tension; and destruction of jobs and lowering of wages of workers. Some other points raised by the respondents were the exacerbation of urban-rural divides and other intra-national inequalities; and the potential negative impacts of trade on the local culture.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

12. However, these benefits do come with some costs that need to be considered and addressed. Competition from abroad can make certain domestic sectors unviable as local consumers are able to access the same products at a cheaper rate from abroad. While this is beneficial to consumers and to the overall welfare of the country in many cases, it may lead to destruction of jobs and closure of certain sectors. Hence, the overall impact of trade on sustainable development would crucially depend on how its benefits are shared within economies. Trade can lead to a higher scale of production and resource extraction which might have adverse environmental
consequences. Such environmental impacts need to be mitigated through strict environmental policies. Also, while trade presents numerous opportunities, large sections of the population may not be in a position to benefit from these opportunities due to lack of various capabilities (including education, skills and access to finance). Hence, trade can exacerbate and reinforce existing inequalities. These issues need to be carefully dealt with using appropriate complementary policies.

IV. Trade policy within the Sustainable Development Goal framework

13. Trade policies are important to facilitate the various linkages between trade and the Sustainable Development Goals, listed in the previous section. The Sustainable Development Goal framework explicitly recognizes different trade policies. Table below maps the trade policy related measures that have been explicitly integrated within the Sustainable Development Goal framework. Both tariffs and certain non-tariff measures, namely producer support, export subsidies, rules of origin, and intellectual property rights, feature in the Sustainable Development Goal targets. For example, there is a call for the removal of export subsidies and other producer support measures to achieve Goal 2 on food security. Similarly, ensuring timely implementation of “duty-free quota-free” market access for least developed countries is targeted under Goal 17. However, in terms of concrete quantifiable indicators, tariffs clearly dominate mainly because of their predominance in multilateral trade negotiations but also partly driven by internationally comparable data availability.

Table
Mapping of trade policy related measures in Sustainable Development Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade policy related measure</th>
<th>Sustainable Development Goals</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tariffs</strong></td>
<td>Goal 10</td>
<td>10.a</td>
<td>10.a.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced inequalities between countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal 17</td>
<td>17.10</td>
<td>17.10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partnerships for the goals</td>
<td>17.12</td>
<td>17.12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-tariff measures</strong></td>
<td>Goal 2</td>
<td>2.b</td>
<td>2.b.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer support</td>
<td>Zero hunger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export subsidies</td>
<td>Goal 2</td>
<td>2.b</td>
<td>2.b.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zero hunger</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal 14</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life below water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rules of origin</td>
<td>Goal 17</td>
<td>17.12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partnerships for the Goals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade related intellectual property rights</td>
<td>Goal 3</td>
<td>3.b</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good health and well-being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid for Trade</td>
<td>Goal 8</td>
<td>8.a</td>
<td>8.a.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decent work and economic growth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. While trade has been given more prominence within the Sustainable Development Goal framework compared with the Millennium Development Goals, the way trade and trade policy measures have been treated within the Sustainable Development Goals have several limitations. One of the key limitations is that trade costs, which constitutes an important impediment to market access of firms in least developed countries and developing countries, are omitted within the framework.\textsuperscript{13} There is also an almost exclusive focus on exports with very little attention given to imports. ESCAP research highlights the continued importance of global value chains within international trade.\textsuperscript{14} Considering that the timely availability of imported inputs at competitive prices is a prerequisite for greater integration into global value chains, the import side of trade deserves policy attention as much as exports. While there are goals attached to increase the “quantity” of exports from least developed countries and developing countries, there is no attention given to the “quality” aspect of exports and export diversification in terms of sophistication of products. Despite these limitations, the Agenda 2030 places trade as a central means of implementation.

V. Emerging challenges to harnessing potential of trade

15. There are numerous pre-existing and emerging challenges to harness the potential of trade. For example, factors such as high trade costs and increased domination of non-tariff measures as an impediment to trade, insufficient support for Aid for Trade, are some of the pre-existing conditions that will continue to be relevant even in the future.\textsuperscript{15} This section captures some of the key emerging challenges, which has gained attention in the new global environment.

A. Protectionist rhetoric gaining popularity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People are wary of the risk posed by rising protectionism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61% of the survey respondents feel that the risk of rising protectionism can greatly weaken the potential of trade to support sustainable development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. There has been a sharp increase in the protectionist rhetoric, especially in developed countries. The withdrawal of the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, the intent of the new United States administration to review – and renegotiate – long standing trade agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement, the United Kingdom’s decision to withdraw from the European Union stands as prominent examples. These are symptoms partly of a misdirected anger towards trade originating from discontent over other components of globalization such as


\textsuperscript{14} See ESCAP, Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report 2015, op. cit., for comprehensive analyses of global value chains in the regional context.

\textsuperscript{15} More challenges are discussed in ESCAP, “Trade as non-financial means of implementing sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific”; op. cit.
freer flow of people, services and culture. Recent research shows that even a rise in threat of protectionism can greatly jeopardize international trade, even though there is no real increase in protectionism in terms of policy measures. The recent escalations in trade tensions are a harbinger of a loss of faith in open markets. One clear manifestation of the trade tensions between countries is captured by the initiation of trade remedy measures relating to anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safe-guards. Over mid-October 2015 to mid-October 2016, the world as a whole initiated 222 trade remedy measures, contributing to highest monthly rate of initiation since 2009. While 125 trade remedy measures were terminated worldwide, the ratio of initiation to termination of remedies also reached new records (1.78). The Asia-Pacific region initiated 98 trade remedies while terminating 36, and the ratio of the initiation to termination (2.1) was much higher than the world average. This rise of protectionist tendencies is in stark contrast to the target within the 2030 Agenda to promote “a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system”. This can greatly hamper the targets of enhancing the market access of least developed countries and developing countries.

B. Weakening multilateralism: from a “rule-based” to a “deal-based” system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future of trade agreements: Respondents feel that international trade architecture will continue to evolve with more and more trade negotiations taking place at regional, mega-regional and bilateral level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53.2% of respondents indicate that regional, mega-regional and bilateral trade agreements will become more prominent in the future. Only 28.8% felt that multilateral trade agreements under WTO would still be relevant and will continue evolving, while 18% feel that there will be a decline in all forms of trade liberalization efforts and that the world will see a rise in protectionism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rise of protectionism is accompanied by a perceptible reduction in the commitment towards multilateralism. This bodes the weakening of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which works on the principle that countries are stronger when they work together. A move away from WTO can bring forth unpredictability to the trading system, uncertainty to existing trade deals and destabilize a rule-based system that took years to build. This lack of trust in working together is against the spirit of Sustainable Development Goal 17 which calls for promoting a “global partnership for sustainable development”. Developed countries are openly declaring their interests to negotiate trade deals with their bigger trading partners bilaterally. A transition from a “rule based system” to such a “deal-based system” would exclude the interest of smaller developing countries and least developed countries. In addition to the change in the nature of trade negotiations, there is increasingly a shift in the epicenter of trade talks away from WTO to the regional and bilateral levels. This again raises the chances of excluding the non-members and more significantly the least developed countries and developing countries.


C. Confounding the impact of technology and trade

18. Technology is profoundly changing the economic landscape by altering the how, what and where of production and consumption processes. Jobs are getting automated or new production processes are emerging that requires new or different skill-sets. WTO estimates that more than 80% of the job losses in developed countries are in fact not due to trade, but due to increased productivity through technology and innovation. However, the disruption caused by technology is often confounded with the impact of threat of competition induced by international trade. This is fuelling further backlash against trade. This could continue to worsen in the future. Hence disentangling the impact of trade and technology would be a major policy challenge.

D. Erosion of effective preferences to least developed countries and developing countries

19. As per recent estimates, approximately 84% of exports from least developed countries and 79% of exports from developing countries enter developed countries without duties. It took years of negotiations, mostly at the multilateral level, to achieve these preferential access rates. The research shows that recent increase in regional trade agreements can potentially reduce the relative preferential margins enjoyed by least developed countries and developing countries. In terms of services exports from least developed countries, the decision regarding the operationalization of the “services waiver” for least developed countries was a milestone in the WTO Bali Ministerial Conference in 2013. However, progress has so far been slow in implementing it. So far only 24 countries have officially notified WTO regarding their specific commitments in this regard. Further, recent ESCAP research has revealed that “Brexit” can have significant trade diversion effect on least developed countries due to ensuing preference erosion. Hence, there needs to be continued monitoring of the impact of the evolving trade environment on the preferences granted to the least developed and developing countries.

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20 Relative preferential margin (RPM) is the difference between the preferential tariff rate for least developed countries and the applied tariff rates applicable to other competitor countries within a single market.
23 See ESCAP, “Implications of Brexit to the Asia-Pacific region: with a focus on least developed countries”, Trade Insights, No. 20 (Bangkok), available from www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Trade%20Insight%20final_0.pdf.
VI. How can the potential of trade be harnessed in the new global environment?

20. The challenges outlined in the previous section could pose serious risks to harnessing the potential of trade towards sustainable development. This section captures some of the policy entry points to address some of these challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People’s perception on policies required to harness potential of trade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey respondents rated trade policies promoting greater regional integration efforts as the top policy instrument to harness the potential of trade. This is in line with the overall perception of the respondents that regional, mega-regional and bilateral trade agreements might become more prominent in future. This was closely followed by “free trade policies supplemented by appropriate redistributive policies and retraining programmes for workers in sectors affected by foreign competition”. The respondents rated policies to reduce protectionism and policies to protect local industries and local jobs from foreign competitions as the other relevant policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The respondents were asked to state other policy measure they thought that are relevant in this context. The following were some of the themes that emerged: policies to promote multilateralism; policies to promote trade facilitation; policies for creating a better domestic policy environment (including competition policies) and need to focus on non-tariff measures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. Open and transparent discussions on the impacts of trade at a higher resolution

21. Globally, one of the limitations on trade policy discussions so far has been that the evidence presented and discussed commonly are at the aggregate level. Policy discussions and decisions were made based on the overall or aggregate welfare impact of trade. Therefore, information on who are the exact winners and losers of trade remained elusive. The lack of open, transparent and inclusive discussions on winners and losers of trade in policy discourse and appropriate policies to support those who lose out is one of the main reasons for the current backlash against trade and globalization. With the increasing availability of firm level data, container shipment data and “Big Data”, it is possible to engage in trade policy discussions at a much higher resolution. For example, the “trade policy 2.0” project of the European Commission is a good example in this regard. As part of this initiative, an online tool has been developed that geo-localizes every single European Union exporter to the United States. This helps local population and local government authorities to understand how many local firms will be affected. More granular discussions on trade policy like this will help in designing appropriately targeted schemes to accommodate the needs of the people who might be affected by international trade agreements. Further, it will also help to untangle the impacts of technology and trade. At the same time, a more transparent discussion of trade policy will help to convey the benefits of trade and convince the public of the same. Gaining the support of the “median voter” on trade would be vital in order to harness the potential of trade for sustainable development.
B. Design trade adjustment assistance programmes that works

22. One of the important failures of the past trade policy packages has been the lack of targeted trade adjustment assistance packages for sectors and workers affected by trade induced competition. In the past, most readjustment programmes were piecemeal or an afterthought or had inadequate financial support. Programmes to effectively retrain and re-skill displaced workers, taking into account the cultural and other realities on the ground, are important. Income support schemes and unemployment schemes that incentivize workers to get retrained and seek employment need to be designed. Financing such schemes would require more progressive taxation and measures to check tax avoidance by the larger corporations. These “readjustment packages” should be considered an integral part of the trade policy package itself. These policies are crucial for making trade an engine of growth for all.

C. Continued commitment to multilateralism, while exploiting synergies with deeper regional integration

23. The multilateral system, comprising the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and WTO, forms the foundations of the current economic system. These systems took years of concerted efforts and rounds of negotiations to reach where they are now. There are considerable benefits of maintaining these systems and allowing them to evolve to address emerging trade policy issues. However, there has been a proliferation of preferential trade agreements at the bilateral, regional and even at the mega-regional level. The Asia-Pacific economies now represent 63% of the total global number of preferential trade agreements in force, yet their share of merchandise trade with the agreement partners are not too high.\(^\text{24}\) The new wave of regionalism, including the push for formation of mega-regionals, are now dealing with issues which go beyond WTO issues and thus are setting their own standards for trade regimes. In the face of a lack of progress at the multi-lateral level there could be merits of pursuing deeper regional integration efforts. However, the commitment towards gradually expanding these disciplines at the multi-lateral level should be maintained, as it can foster transparency and it will give opportunities to integrate concerns of least developed countries and developing countries better. Hence, there is a need to systematically exploit the synergies between multilateralism and deeper regionalism.

D. Address the real barriers to trade beyond tariffs: non-tariff measures and services trade restrictions

24. Non-tariff measures have been found to be a costlier barrier to trade, especially to the small and medium-sized enterprises\(^\text{25}\) and exporters from developing countries. In many sectors tariffs are already quite low and non-tariff measures remain the major impediment. For example, in the case of trade in environmental goods, a recent ESCAP study shows that non-tariff measures and services restrictions are much more significant impediments to trade than tariffs and they impact the exporters from developing countries.


disproportionately higher.\textsuperscript{26} However, non-tariff measures and service trade restrictions have not been well-integrated into the existing Sustainable Development Goal framework in terms of targets and indicators. Considering their enormous and differentiated impact, especially on exporters from developing countries and least developed countries, these issues need to be addressed urgently.

E. Improving trade facilitation: implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement

25. Trade facilitation, with a focus on reducing trade costs by making international trade procedures more efficient, will have a great impact on sustainable development. It has been found that commitments to paperless trade in preferential trade agreements have nearly doubled since 2005; and that trade facilitation commitments in regional trade agreements have helped reduce trade costs not only between preferential trade agreement members but also multilaterally.\textsuperscript{27} The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement entered into force on 22 February 2017. The Agreement is considered one of the biggest trade deals in almost two decades. It aims to streamline, simplify and standardize customs procedures, thereby reducing the time and cost of moving goods across borders.\textsuperscript{28} It is important for countries to ensure timely implementation of the Agreement once it comes to force. The ESCAP initiated Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific is expected to provide a unique tool for the region to better implement the Trade Facilitation Agreement, building on existing bilateral, subregional and regional initiatives and enhancing the trade competitiveness of the region as a whole.

F. Harness digital trade to promote inclusive trade

26. Digital trade platforms can be effectively harnessed to make trade more inclusive, especially for small scale traders and women entrepreneurs. Evidence show that emergence of new online business platforms have significantly increased the potential of many small and medium-sized enterprises to become successful and important global traders.\textsuperscript{29} Information and communications technology (ICT) can also enable these enterprises to integrate better to global value chains. However, these enterprises and other small scale agricultural producers require enabling polices and support to make use of the opportunities offered by digital platforms. There should be greater affordability and accessibility to ICT infrastructure, international payment gateways and locally adapted ICT capacity building resources. It is an important area where there is a need to harness the synergies between different means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda (here, trade and technology). As discussed earlier, confounding the impact of technology with trade, especially on jobs, has emerged an important challenge to international trade. By facilitating smoother trade flows and creating jobs in the process, technology can in fact help to counteract some of the damage it has afflicted on trade.

\textsuperscript{26} A. Jacob and A. Moeller, “Policy perspective on trade in environmental goods”, ARTNeT Working Paper (Bangkok, ESCAP, forthcoming).


\textsuperscript{28} See more from https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/spra_e/spra153_e.htm.

\textsuperscript{29} WTO, World Trade Report 2016, op. cit.
VII. Conclusion

27. The note highlights some of the important emerging challenges to harnessing trade as a means of implementation. These challenges range from increasing protectionist tendencies, weakening multi-literalism, erosion of preferential access to developing countries to confounding of the impact of technology and trade. The note provides some positive policy approaches to deal with these challenges. The note makes the following policy recommendations: promote open and transparent discussions on the impacts of trade at a higher resolution; design trade adjustment assistance programmes that works; continue commitment to multilateralism, while exploiting synergies with deeper regional integration; address real barriers to trade including non-tariff measures and services trade restrictions; improve trade facilitation by implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement and harness digital trade to promote inclusive trade. Implementation of these policies would determine to a large extend how and to what extend the potential of trade will be harnessed in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
Policy approaches to scaling social enterprise and impact investment in Asia and the Pacific

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The private sector – including start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises, corporations and investors – will need to play an important role if we are to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, to fully support this Agenda, the private sector must engrain social and environmental purpose at the core of their economic business models. In this regard, more social forms of enterprise (“impact-driven” enterprises) and investing practices that focus on the generation of social and environmental value as well as economic return will be critical to generate inclusive and sustainable development.

Governments in the Asia-Pacific region have demonstrated global leadership through the implementation of innovative and experimental policies to build ecosystems for social enterprises, create enabling impact investment climates, and incentivize the mainstream private sector to adopt social enterprise and impact investment principles.

This paper provides an overview of the breadth and diversity of the policy approaches that Governments in the region have implemented to harness the potential of social enterprise and impact investment. It also provides policy priorities to unlock the potential of social enterprise and impact investment to support member States as they strive to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I. Introduction

1. To support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the private sector – including start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises, corporations and investors – will need to engrain social and environmental purpose at the core of their economic business models. That is to say, more social forms of enterprise (“impact-driven” enterprises) and investing practices that focus on
the generation of social and environmental value as well as economic return will be critical to generate inclusive and sustainable development.

2. The opportunity in the Asia-Pacific region is significant. With regard to corporations, 40 per cent of the Forbes 500 companies are headquartered in Asia.\(^1\) While these entities can lead the way, small and medium-sized enterprises, who comprise 96 per cent of all enterprises, employ 62 per cent of the national labour force and contribute 42 per cent of gross domestic product, will also play a critical role.\(^2\) Small and medium-sized enterprises could be valuable sources of innovation for sustainable development if the right incentives are provided to become more impact-driven. This is already happening in some parts of the region. With regard to investment, a survey published by the Global Impact Investment Network highlighted South Asia as well as East and South-East Asia as key markets for impact investment.\(^3\)

3. In this context, the concept of social enterprise has the potential to have a real impact in the region with the growing recognition that the full integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – will be key in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. A social enterprise can be defined as an organization committed to explicitly including social and/or environmental returns as part of its core business while seeking profit or return on investment.\(^4\) The broader concept of impact investment as a tool to finance the Sustainable Development Goals has also been gathering momentum in the region given its focus on investing to generate social and environmental value, as well as financial return.\(^5\)

4. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda contains a commitment to promote social innovation,\(^6\) of which social enterprise and impact investment are key pillars. However, it is recognized that to truly harness its potential, Governments will have to actively work to facilitate more social forms of enterprise, create an enabling impact investment climate, and engage the mainstream private sector.

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II. The emerging impact investing and social enterprise movement in the region

5. The cost of solving the world’s most critical problems runs into the trillions – including an estimated $2.1 trillion to $2.5 trillion annual funding gap needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.\(^7\) Private capital is urgently needed to fill this gap. Innovative finance solutions to mobilize private capital in new and more efficient ways towards development objectives have been pursued. One such solution is impact investment.

6. The Asia-Pacific region has been at the forefront of this trend. While data on impact investment is limited, the Global Impact Investment Network released a regional report on the landscape in South Asia, focusing on six South Asian economies which estimated $9 billion of impact capital deployed between 2004 and 2014 in the six countries.\(^8\) To date, the level of impact investing remains relatively small. There are several issues hindering the growth of impact investing, one of which is the lack of investment-ready enterprises in the region.

7. Asia and the Pacific has also become a fertile environment for social enterprises. Although the diversity and sheer number of social enterprises throughout Asia and the Pacific complicate efforts to establish a holistic regional measure, country-by-country figures show there are significant pockets of social entrepreneurship in the region. A 2016 survey by the British Council found that Bangladesh is thought to be home to over 150,000 social enterprises. The study also estimates 450,000 social enterprises currently operate in Pakistan, and as many as 2 million in India.\(^9\) Similarly, there exist approximately 120,000 social enterprises in Thailand,\(^10\) and at least 20,000 in Australia.\(^11\) Despite these promising numbers, more can be done to incentivize enterprises to promote environmental and social objectives, strengthen regulatory frameworks and implement policy innovations which enable social enterprises to develop.

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III. “Impact-driven” small and medium-sized enterprises could be the backbone of an economy for sustainable development

8. Small and medium-sized enterprises could potentially be a valuable source of innovation in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals if the right incentives are provided to become more impact-driven SMEs or social enterprises.

9. Governments in the region have been at the forefront of experimenting with policy to support the growth of social enterprise markets. In North-East Asia, the Republic of Korea announced its Social Enterprise Promotion Act in 2007. The Act provides social entrepreneurs with management consultation and access to professional services, technical assistance and even provides subsidized rentals and reduced taxes. The metropolitan Government of Seoul also opened a Social Economy Support Centre that acts as an incubator for social enterprises. This initiative, in tandem with other strategies, has resulted in a 353 per cent growth in the number of social enterprises in Seoul between 2012 and 2015.12

10. In South-East Asia, Malaysia recently produced a Social Enterprise Blueprint 2015–201813 to develop a social enterprise ecosystem which outlined a variety of policy measures, including building human capital by including social entrepreneurship in national education systems. Thailand has also actively focused on developing its social enterprise sector. The Government established the Thai Social Enterprise Office in 2010 and followed it up with the recent Social Enterprise Promotion Act which facilitates tax relief for businesses establishing social enterprises as well as tax incentives for impact investments.14 Viet Nam’s Enterprise Law was revised in 2014 to provide a legal definition of social enterprise and the Government committed to encourage, support and promote the development of social enterprises through measures such as facilitating the raising of capital and the formation of public-private partnerships.15 The Philippines and Indonesia are also in the process of establishing policies to promote social enterprise in their economies.

11. In South-Asia, the Governments of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have taken steps to create an innovation ecosystem to support social enterprises. India’s entrepreneurship policy framework16 recognizes the emergence of social enterprise as a model for addressing social and environmental challenges through economic business models and has a focus on social entrepreneurship education through courses delivered by universities and academic institutions. A key objective of the Government of Pakistan’s Vision 2025 Plan,17 is to promote innovation and enterprise. To support this objective, the Government is establishing a Centre for Social

12 See https://avpn.asia/2016/06/16/building-a-social-economy-in-asia/.
Entrepreneurship to function as an incubator for social enterprises. Bangladesh, viewed by many as the birthplace of social enterprise, recently held a policy dialogue – Social Enterprise: Policy and Practice – that resulted in a report to the Government on high-level policy steps that could be adopted.  

12. The policy mixes highlighted in the examples above include subsidies and tax incentives to encourage more social forms of enterprise, the provision of business support services and physical infrastructure to development high potential social enterprises, and a focus on social enterprise education to develop the next generation of more socially-minded entrepreneurs. Alongside the objective of developing more social forms of enterprise, the ambition of these policies is also that they will provide a pipeline of investible opportunities for impact investors.

IV. Creating an enabling environment for impact investing

13. Securing access to finance is a challenge for many small and medium-sized enterprises, and one that only gets accentuated in the case of social enterprises seeking to simultaneously pursue economic, social and/or environmental impact. Given that traditional investment decisions are made solely on commercial and economic criteria, creating an enabling environment for impact investment is critical. However, before implementing policies to create an enabling impact investment climate, the foundations for an effective investment regime must be in place. Fundamental policy objectives such as efficient processes for starting a business, resolving insolvency, strengthening protection for minority investors and contract enforcement must be first order priorities.

14. From this foundation establishing seed funds, innovative financing mechanisms and providing incentives to investors to consider social and environmental dimensions in investment decisions are potential policy avenues to explore. As examples, the Australian Government commissioned the Social Enterprise Development and Investment Fund to leverage private sector investment for social enterprises.  

20 The Seoul Social Impact Bond will provide child welfare services over three years to a total of $9.4 million. The services will work with children and young people in group homes to improve their social outcomes and build capacity for long-term independence and wellbeing.  

21 In Thailand, the Government incentivizes impact investment through tax reliefs. The Australian Government’s Social Enterprise Development and Investment Fund aim to leverage private sector investment is an important objective as diverting private capital towards development challenges will be critical to mainstream the scale of delivery required to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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V. Moving impact investment from the margins to the mainstream corporations as social enterprises

15. To move impact investment from the margins to the mainstream, it must be delivered at large scale. Corporations are equipped to deliver innovation at scale. However, in order to create social and environmental value to complement their economic imperative, corporations need to move beyond the concept of corporate social responsibility and its focus on “public relations” or “community service” to redefine their objective as creating “shared value”.

Creating shared value is the practice of creating economic value whilst explicitly incorporating social and environmental outcomes in the decision making process. Shared value is not corporate social responsibility, rather it is defining value across the three dimensions of sustainable development as part of the core business strategy and reporting process. Governments have a role to play in incentivizing mainstream reporting of societal and environmental impacts alongside economic returns.

16. Specific polices aiming to unlock shared value are rare, however India has experimented with policy applications on this agenda. In 2011, India released the National Voluntary Guidelines to encourage the adoption of responsible business practices and to mainstream disclosure and reporting on environmental, social and governance metrics in India. The National Voluntary Guidelines were launched by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs and provide businesses with a framework to enable them to move towards responsible operational decision making and adopt a “triple-bottom-line” approach (economic, social and environmental).

17. In a move to incentivize shared-value creation, India is the first country to enshrine corporate giving into law in 2014. The law mandates companies with a certain turnover and profitability to spend 2 per cent of their net profit on activities across several categories, which include hunger and poverty, education, health, gender equality and women’s empowerment, skills training, environment and social enterprise. In addition, companies that have to comply with this law are required to report on their activities. While this initiative could be seen as an extension of corporate social responsibility, the policy intent is to raise much needed finance for social and environmental challenges and to move conversations about corporate social responsibility from the fringes to the boardroom as companies are made to think seriously about their legal obligation.

18. While corporations themselves can be a source of impact capital, incentivizing more impact-driven corporations could provide a more secure investment – when compared to an early-stage investment in a social enterprise – to attract mainstream capital from sources such as private equity.

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25 See https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/apr/05/india-csr-law-requires-companies-profits-to-charity-is-it-working.
funds, pension funds, insurance firms and sovereign wealth funds amongst others. However, incentives such as appropriate tax relief will be required to attract large scale investments in corporations which create public value but may generate below-market returns.

VI. Creating a market for impact investment

19. To ensure the long-term viability of impact investment, it will be critical for Governments to support markets for this type of investment. In this regard, potential policy priorities could include embedding impact investment principles in government procurement, trade agreements and stock exchanges.

20. Government procurement can represent large investment flows in economies and opening up procurement to impact-driven small and medium-sized enterprises and social enterprises would provide a valuable source of capital for their growth. Explicitly applying social and environmental criteria in the public procurement decision-making process could also incentivize more established businesses to engrain social and environmental purpose in their core business models. As examples, the metropolitan Government of Seoul enacted an ordinance to procure goods and services from social enterprises ($57 million in 2015). Additionally, the World Bank’s new procurement framework for infrastructure projects – often the baseline for national procurement policies in developing nations – also allows for the inclusion of social and environmental impact criteria in the selection of vendors. In an effort to address climate change, the Government of Singapore recently announced plans to procure only electrical products that have been certified with high energy efficiency. In addition, the Government will only procure printing paper that carries the Singapore Green Label, which indicates that the supplier practices sustainable forestry management. The intent is that by having a sustainable, green procurement policy, private sector suppliers will consider sustainability in their business models so that they can retain market share.

21. In recent years, the multilateral trading system has witnessed an amplified volume of trade in goods and services with technology with significant environmental implications. In light of a changing climate and increased environmental degradation, trade policies for sustainable development must support the trading of technologies from conventional to environmentally sound technologies through a range of regulatory means and incentives. Environmental regulations have encouraged industry to reduce its climate footprint, signaling growth in the trade of “green” technologies. This has elevated global trade in environmental goods to $1 trillion annually. With international efforts such as the Environmental Goods Agreement, global trade in environmental goods is projected to further grow to $3 trillion by 2020. An increased focus on trade policies that promote the transfer, dissemination and diffusion of innovations for sustainable development will

27 See www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/pre-ods/CICTSTI11_7E.pdf.
provide important avenues of growth opportunities for impact-driven enterprises.

22. It may be that the ability to list on a “social stock exchange” would make it easier for such firms to conduct an initial public offering and attract impact investors who are motivated to protect and advance the social missions of the firms in which they invest. Social stock exchanges have begun to emerge. The oldest and most established is the Impact Investment Exchange in Asia, which was established in 2005. The Exchange was developed to be Asia’s first private and public platform for social enterprises to raise capital.31

VII. Governments in Asia and the Pacific have demonstrated leadership and innovation but more analysis and evidence is required to establish effective practices

23. Governments in the region have demonstrated global leadership through the implementation of innovative and experimental policies to build ecosystems for social enterprises, create enabling impact investment climates, and incentivize the mainstream private sector to adopt social enterprise and impact investment principles.

24. This paper highlights the breadth and diversity of the policy approaches that Governments in the region have implemented to harness the potential of social enterprise and impact investment. It is important to recognize that both concepts are in their infancy. The evaluation of the impact of these initiatives should be a policy priority for the region alongside continued and well-evaluated innovative policy experimentation to establish what works and equally importantly, what does not. Through these activities, effective frameworks can be developed to unlock the potential of social enterprise and impact investment to support member States as they strive to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Bangkok, 29-31 March 2017
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda* 

Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region: form and functions of the Forum

The form and function of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Note by the secretariat**

I. Introduction

1. At its seventy-second session, the Commission adopted resolution 72/6 in which it decided to implement the recommendations of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development on its third session, including recommendations on the form, function and modalities of the Forum. These recommendations are reflected in paragraph 15 of the report of the Forum.1

2. At its third session, the Forum had agreed that the form, function and modalities of the Forum would be modified/decided upon in 2016 and 2017, “taking into account the inputs from the high-level political forum on sustainable development regarding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and then periodically by member States, and adjusted as appropriate.”2

3. In this regard, the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/299, deciding on a number of organizational issues pertaining to the High-level Political Forum, including decisions on the themes and review of a pre-defined cluster of goals for future sessions up to 2019. The Assembly had also previously decided, in its resolution 67/290, that the High-level Political Forum would meet annually in the context of the Economic and Social Council and every four years in the context of the Assembly.

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* E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/L.1/Rev.1.
** This document is being issued without formal editing.
1 See E/ESCAP/72/16
2 See E/ESCAP/72/16 paragraph 15(i).
4. Bearing in mind the above, the current session of the Forum will consider its form, function and modalities with a view towards reaching agreement and forwarding the outcome for endorsement by the Commission at its seventy-third session. To facilitate this discussion, the secretariat has prepared the following draft terms of reference of the Forum, drawing on previous consultations and proposals presented to the second and third sessions of the Forum, as well as the agreed recommendations contained in paragraph 15 of the report of the Forum’s third session.

5. The proposals also reflect the link between the Forum and the draft road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (subject to its adoption by the Forum at its current session).

6. The following draft terms of reference are structured to first define the overall functions of the Forum, how the Forum will be conducted, and then its link with the conference structure of the Commission.

II. Draft terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

A. Overall functions

7. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is an annual, inclusive intergovernmental forum. It supports preparations for the High-level Political Forum for sustainable development in the context of both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

8. The Forum will serve as a regional platform for:

   (a) Supporting countries, in particular countries with special needs, including through enhancing their capacity for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

   (b) Providing a regional perspective on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by identifying regional trends, and consolidating and sharing best practices and lessons learned, taking into account the contributions of other United Nations system bodies at the regional level, other regional and subregional organizations and relevant stakeholders;

   (c) Supporting follow-up and review of progress on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level through: assessing progress and providing opportunities for peer learning related to the theme and goals that will be reviewed at the High-level Political Forum; supporting the presentation of Voluntary National Reviews; and undertaking periodic review of progress of the road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

9. These functions will benefit from inter-agency support through the United Nations Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism.

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3 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/3 and E/ESCAP/FSD (2)/2.
4 See E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/XXX
5 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (a) (i)
6 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (a) (ii)
7 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (a) (iii)
B. Conduct of the Forum

10. As part of the conference structure of the Commission, the Forum will be convened annually as an inclusive intergovernmental forum ahead of the High-level Political Forum. The theme of the Forum should be consistent with that of the High-level Political Forum and the cluster of goals to be reviewed in-depth should be identical to the cluster of goals under the High-level Political Forum.  

11. The Forum will not get ahead of, or pre-judge decisions of the High-level Political Forum, increase the reporting burden of member States or increase the regular budget of the Commission beyond what has already been approved by the General Assembly.

12. The current format, including the election of the bureau and co-chairs for each session, could be maintained and provide space for multi-stakeholder engagement for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in consultation, as appropriate, with member States.

13. The outcome of the Forum will be in the form of a report with a chair’s summary annexed to the report.

14. The Forum may consider subregional perspectives on the themes addressed by the Forum. Preparatory meetings of stakeholders may be convened, within existing resources.

15. The Forum, including stakeholder engagement, will be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission as well as the modalities of the High-level Political Forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council as long as there is no conflict between them.

16. During each session, a member of the bureau of the previous session could report on the discussions at the intervening High-level Political Forum and on the conclusions of the previous session of the Forum.

17. The conduct of the Forum will avoid duplication with other regional forums and platforms; in the interest of efficiency, where appropriate, the Forum will be convened in coordination or collaboration with other forums and platforms.

C. Relationship of the Forum with the conference structure of the Commission

18. The report of the Forum as defined in paragraph 13 will be brought to the attention of the subsequent session of the Commission by the Chair or rapporteur of the Forum.

8 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (b)
9 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (c)
10 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (d)
11 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (g) (i)
12 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (g) (ii)
13 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (h)
14 See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (e) (i)
19. The Forum could receive inputs from the committees that are subsidiary to the Commission as well as other relevant stakeholders.\textsuperscript{15}

20. The Forum could benefit from advice provided by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission as a modality for consulting member States between sessions of the Forum.\textsuperscript{16}

21. In the years when the High-level Political Forum meets under the auspices of the General Assembly at the summit level, which is every four years, the Forum may converge with the Commission session in April/May, and the Commission and the Forum will share the same theme. In other years when the High-level Political Forum meets under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, the Forum shall meet at the senior technical level.

22. If requested by member States, the terms of reference of the Forum may be revised upon recommendation of the Forum and endorsement by the Commission, taking into account new inputs from the High-level Political Forum and based on periodic review by member States.

D. Conclusions and recommendations

23. The Forum is invited to:

(a) Comment generally on the draft terms of reference of the Forum.

(b) Consider the desirability of a possible merger every four years of the Commission session and the Forum, as suggested above, and how it can be accommodated.

(c) Adopt the draft terms of reference for endorsement by the Commission at its seventy-third session.

\textsuperscript{15} See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (e) (ii)

\textsuperscript{16} See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4 para 15 (e) (iii)
Rudraneel CHATTOPADHYAY, INDIA

Statement – Day 2 – Mayor’s Panel – Agenda item 3(a)

Honorable Chair, Member State Representatives, IGO, CSO and Major Group representatives, and all other stakeholders,

In addressing this Forum yesterday, India highlighted its strategies and preparedness for the VNR process and how it is placed to fuel the 2030 Agenda in the country. India notes with appreciation the measures taken by Member States in institutionalizing and achieving the SDGs which representatives have shared since yesterday. India also commends the efforts being undertaken by Member States for VNR this year and it remains committed to partnering with Member States and all other stakeholders for the further implementation of the SDGs.

In the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we attach significance to the regional review, follow-up and learning processes in implementation and progress in addition to the VNR engagement process. India recognizes the indispensable role that civil society organizations, major groups and the business sector has to play in the achievement of the Global Goals. India resonates with the emphasis laid this morning by the Hon. Vice-President of ECOSOC Mr. Munir on the necessity of ownership of the SDGs by the masses, and we extend that idea to corporates and businesses as well.

As brought out by the recommendations of the Roundtable on SDG 9 last evening, it is essential for businesses to imbibe sustainability in their DNAs and governments must create conditions for ensuring this result. We have taken into consideration and are in line with the Note by the Secretariat on Leveraging trade as a means of implementation in the new global environment (document no. E/ESCAP/FSD(4)/INF/6). India recognises the importance of trade as a measure of implementation of the SDGs. Our region could unlock the full potential of attracting international investment and business if it prepares adequately and is able to prove its commitment and alignment to sustainability, with special emphasis on corporate sustainability and responsibility. For that, governments must also map their trade policies with the SDGs, as guided by the page 6 of the Note of the Secretariat, and also move towards preferring sustainably produced commodities in public procurement.

In the area of furthering the trade & SDG linkage, we commend the work which is being undertaken in this area by the UN Forum on Sustainability Standards,
UNCTAD, UNIDO, WTO and other donor agencies for promoting mechanisms, research grants and international cooperation for ironing out issues relating to sustainability standards and helping producers revamp capacities for sustainable production. We observe these to have a positive impact on trade, exports, and integration of firms with Global Value Chains, while at the same time driving the sustainability agenda in the production and manufacturing sector. India further notes with concentration the role of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the achievement of the SDGs. In India, our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given a clarion call for implementing Zero Defect Zero Effect in manufacturing and in MSMEs; in line with that, our autonomous national accreditation body, Quality Council of India, from which I belong, is driving the ZED Certification Scheme with support from the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises of the Govt. of India. The scheme is an extensive drive of the Govt. of India to enhance global competitiveness of the MSMEs by providing them financial support in assessment rating and handholding of its manufacturing processes on quality & environment parameters.

We have also initiated a National Platform on Private Sustainability Standards for addressing key issues in the area of sustainability standards and to help stakeholders in dealing with them. Having said that, we continue to note with concern the potential that private sustainability standards may have in becoming non-tariff technical trade barriers for developing countries, and therefore, it’s essential to address the issues of duplication, accountability, traceability, legitimacy and costs in their implementation. India is willing to help Member States in this endeavour of promoting sustainability and through its experience of dealing with sustainability standards.

I congratulate and thank the UN ESCAP for organizing this meeting and the Royal Thai Government for creating an enabling atmosphere and extending hospitality for productive meetings such as this.
End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day

1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance

1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters

1.a Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions

1.b Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions
End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons

2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality

2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed

2.a Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries

2.b Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round

2.c Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility
3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births

3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births

3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases

3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being

3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol

3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents

3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all

3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination

3.a Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate

3.b Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all

3.c Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States

3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences

5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women

5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels
Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

**TARGETS**

9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all

9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry’s share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries

9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets

9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities

9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending

9.a Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

9.b Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities

9.c Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020
Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

**14.1** By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

**14.2** By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans

**14.3** Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels

**14.4** By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

**14.5** By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information

**14.6** By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation

**14.7** By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

**14.a** Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries

**14.b** Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

**14.c** Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of “The future we want”
Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2017

Agenda item 2(b) Regional perspectives on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: an assessment of the progress in implementation of SDGs at regional level

In-depth review of the cluster of goals

Wednesday 29 March 2017, 13:15 to 18:30 hrs
United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok

The APFSD will take a close look at the cluster of sustainable development goals that will be the focus of the 2017 session of the APFSD. In line with the GA resolution on follow up and review (A/70/299), the set of goals and their interlinkages, including if appropriate, with other goals shall be reviewed in-depth. For 2017 the goals to be reviewed in-depth are: Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and; Goal 17. Partnership for the goals (Means of implementation).

The APFSD will provide recommendations on six of these goals (Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14) through six parallel roundtables, convened in break out rooms from 13:15 to 15:30 pm. After a brief break, the conclusions of each roundtable will then be shared in the plenary of the APFSD in Conference room 2, from 17:00 to 18:30.

The objective of the session will be to develop a shared understanding of the outlook for the achievement of the goal and to develop recommendations on (a) addressing systemic challenges that are barriers to further progress (b) priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation efforts – including through attention to key leverage points; (c) promising innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level; (d) areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of these goals and challenges.

Roundtable 1 – SDG 1: No Poverty

The Asia-Pacific region has seen a spectacular fall in poverty rates over the past two decades. Yet more than 931 million people remain impoverished across the region when considering multidimensional poverty. Deprivations in health and living standards are among the most striking challenges, and women remain more vulnerable to multidimensional poverty due to obstacles that they encounter when seeking decent jobs, credit, health care and education. The round table on Goal 1 will focus attention on two main questions:
- What are the challenges are member States encountering in terms of policy coherence to reach Goal 1 and how can these be overcome?
- What are the most important systemic challenges (e.g. that countries need to address to achieve Goal 1, and how should they be addressed)?

**Roundtable 2 – SDG 2: Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture**

There is a challenging road ahead to achieve SDG 2. Despite significant progress in the reduction of hunger and malnutrition, improvements vary across sub regions and countries and disproportionately affect the nutritional status, food security and livelihoods of vulnerable groups. In many places, undernourishment and obesity co-exist; and agriculture continues to pose an unsustainable burden on the planet’s carrying capacity. Climate change will have a significant impact on crop yields and harvest, disproportionately affecting the nutritional status and livelihoods of impoverished households.

The round table on SDG 2 will share the outlook of the SDG 2 and come up with recommendations to achieve cluster of targets: 1) targets on food security and malnutrition, 2) targets on agricultural productivity and sustainable food production systems, and 3) targets on means of implementation for SDG 2 including trade, investment and food commodity markets. Recommendations will focus on the following 4 facets: 1) overcoming systemic challenges, 2) policy coherence, 3) regional cooperation, and 4) innovation.

**Roundtable 3 – SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being**

The Asia-Pacific region has made significant strides in expanding access to health services and universal health care coverage. In some countries, rates of maternal and child mortality are persistently high, and such diseases as HIV and tuberculosis continue to disproportionately impact marginalized groups of people. Access to affordable quality health care and medicines is constrained and unequal in many countries. The region also faces increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases, accompanied by population ageing, cross-border epidemics, antimicrobial resistance, natural disasters and environmental pollution. These emerging trends are likely to place considerable financial and capacity constraints on health care systems.

At the same time, in many countries, attention will need to be given to the unfinished agenda of ending preventable maternal, new-born and child mortality and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. As countries are implementing the SDGs, a stronger focus on monitoring progress and results towards Goal 3 will be critical to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages by 2030, and to leave no-one behind.
The round table on Goal 3 will focus attention on four main topics: 1) Unfinished MDGs agenda, 2) Emerging priorities, with a focus on NCDs, 3) Universal Health Coverage, 4) Monitoring progress and results.

**Roundtable 4 – SDG 5: Gender Equality**

The roundtable on SDG 5 aims to review the progress of the implementation and monitoring of SDG 5 targets at the country level in the region in order to; Enable a shared understanding of regional progress and where we stand, including levels of optimism around the achievement of SDG 5; Enable exchange of experiences and south-south cooperation by identifying key challenges, good practices and opportunities for follow-up; and Identify regional multi-stakeholder recommendations on each target under SDG 5.

**Roundtable 5 – 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

Asian developing countries have outperformed industrialized countries as well as developing countries in other regions in terms of their share of manufacturing employment in total employment. Asian developing countries’ manufacturing employment share grew 73% between 1970 and 2013, reaching a 15.7% share in 2010–2013. This progress, however, has been uneven. Gaps are widening in some areas, such as manufacturing value-added (MVA) per capita. MVA per capita in landlocked developing countries and least developed countries increased from $180 to $235 and $28 to $112, respectively, between 1990 and 2015. In high-income countries of the region, it increased from $4,890 to $7,214 over the same period.

At the same time, industrial development has also added to the sustainable development challenges facing the region, in particular as regards pollution, greenhouse gases, and access to clean water.

Simultaneously, millions of people in the region are shut out from transformative digital opportunities due to a lack of broadband connectivity. In 2015, less than 2% of the population had adopted fixed broadband in as many as 20 countries in Asia and the Pacific, widening the digital divide between high-income and low-income countries at an alarming speed. Resilient ICT infrastructure is essential to narrow the digital divide, and thus realize the digital economy and sustainable development in the region.

Concerted efforts are thus needed to keep developing countries, in particular landlocked and least developed countries, from missing out on the New Industrial Revolution. Stronger efforts are also required to move this industrial development towards a more innovative and low carbon pathway. The round table on Goal 9 will focus attention on two main questions:

- What are the challenges are member States encountering in terms of policy coherence to reach Goal 9 and how can these be overcome?
- What are the most important systemic challenges (e.g. that countries need to address to achieve Goal 9, and how should they be addressed?
The oceans and seas of Asia-Pacific are of vast social, economic and environmental importance as the region becomes the global growth engine with heavy reliance on marine and coastal resources. This is more so for the Pacific SIDS where the vast ocean space has greatly influenced their culture in addition to the significant socioeconomic contribution. Humans, however, have put the ocean at risk of irreversible damage by unregulated exploration and coastal development, increasing pollution, climate change and ocean acidification.

To achieve the SDG 14: conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”, collective efforts are required from all stakeholders at all geopolitical levels and sectors to promote effective ocean governance, adopt ecosystem-based management approaches, apply innovative science and technology, encourage partnerships and support advocacy. In supporting the implementation of SDG 14 at national and regional level, the round table on Goal 14 will focus on:

- Sharing perspectives on the SDG 14 implementation at national, regional and global level;
- Informing APFSD & the High-level Political Forum on priority challenges and recommendations for SDG 14 implementation in the region.
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Bangkok, 29-31 March 2017
Item 2(b) of the provisional agenda
Assessment of the progress in implementation of SDGs at regional level

Reports of the round tables on sustainable development goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14 organized under Agenda item 2(b)
Assessment of the progress in implementation of SDGs at regional level
I. Introduction

1. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) reviewed in-depth the cluster of sustainable development goals that will be the focus of the 2017 session of the High-level political forum on sustainable development, in line with the UN General Assembly resolution on follow up and review 70/299.

2. For 2017 the goals to be reviewed in-depth are: Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere; Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages; Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation; Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development and Goal 17. Partnership for the goals (Means of implementation).

3. Under Agenda item 2(b) Assessment of the progress in implementation of SDGs at regional level, recommendations on six of these goals (Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14) were developed through six parallel roundtables. The objective of the session was to develop a shared understanding of the outlook for the achievement of the goal and to develop recommendations on (a) addressing systemic challenges that are barriers to further progress (b) priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation efforts – including through attention to key leverage points; (c) areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of these goals and challenges; and (d) promising innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level.

4. The conclusions of each roundtable were shared in the plenary of the APFSD, with the report of each delivered by its Rapporteur.

II. Roundtable 1 on Goal 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere)

5. The roundtable was co-organized by ESCAP, FAO and UNDP. An opening presentation and remarks were delivered by Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary for Sustainable Development of ESCAP, Ms. Xiangjun Yoo, Regional Strategic Programme Coordinator of FAO, and Mr. Haoliang Xu, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific.

6. Mr. Thinley Namgyel, Secretary, GNH Commission, Bhutan, moderated the session. Dr. Min Bahadur Shrestha, Vice Chairman, National Planning Commission, Nepal; Dr. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, Minister of Planning and Development, Pakistan; Mr. Subandi Sardjoko, Deputy for Human and Societal Development and Cultural Affairs, Indonesia; Mr. Ezizgeldi Annamhammedov, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economy and Development, Turkmenistan; Mr. Tugsbilgun Tumurkhuleg, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mongolia to ESCAP; and Ms. Karin Fernando, Senior Research Professional, Center for Poverty Analysis and Civil Society Representative contributed as discussants.

7. The report of the roundtable was delivered in plenary by Mr. Thinley Namgyel, Secretary, Gross National Happiness Commission, Bhutan, as Rapporteur.

Outlook for the goal

(a) In the Asia-Pacific, since the period 2000-2004, the proportion of persons living in extreme poverty has decreased from 29.7 per cent to 10.3 per cent in the period 2010-2013 in Asia-Pacific. This equates to an estimated 400 million poor for the Asia-Pacific region, with the total number of poor worldwide being estimated at 767 million (52 % of the world poor in Asia-Pacific). The extent of poverty differs significantly throughout the region, with the Pacific (excluding Australia and New
Zealand) having the highest rates at 38.2 per cent, due to the situation in Papua New Guinea, whereas the rate in East and North-East Asia is currently only 1.8 per cent.

(b) ESCAP has conducted a survey of perceptions on the attainment of SDGs with sample from the Asia-Pacific region. The findings of the survey show that the level of optimism on the SDGs stands on the middle-ground overwhelmingly. Respondents perceived political commitment, good governance, legal frameworks, data and monitoring, and capacity building are most importance areas for the attainment of the Goal 1. However, most respondents show more concerns about corruption, legal and policy framework, which are the major challenges in the attainment of the Goal.

Overview of issues discussed in the roundtable

(c) The primary challenge is to end poverty in all its forms everywhere while ensuring equitable and secure economic opportunities for all people and strengthening resilience, particularly in the face of new threats and risks, including as a result of climate change. In particular, the panel discussed the following four targets: eradicating extreme poverty for the poor and the vulnerable, appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, building resiliency of the poor and those in vulnerable situations, ensuring significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources.

Main recommendations for governments/policy-makers

(d) Addressing systemic challenges that are barriers to further progress

1. Multidimensional poverty – policymakers need to look beyond the prevalent definition of poverty, and set up the mechanism to assess poverty.
2. Identify the target group as policies are not always targeted well. Policymakers have to promote country-specific and country led policy practices.
3. Improve better understanding of the various reasons for prevalence of poverty, both at the urban and rural areas.
4. Strengthen infrastructure development policies to improve ICT and connectivity, lack of which is constraining implementation of SDG 1
5. Lack of effective delivery of public services has been pointed out to be a factor that has failed to increase tax morale, and to boost the collection of tax revenues.

(e) Priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation efforts – including through attention to key leverage points

6. Prepare policies on the basis of the local specificities - localized policy making and its coherence is the most important element for sustainable inclusive growth for poverty reduction.
7. Multidimensional nature of poverty needs multidimensional mechanisms and policy coordination to eradicate poverty in all its forms
8. Budget decentralization through devolution to local government and social audits can be instrumental to use resources effectively and efficiently.
9. At various levels the depth of poverty has not been explored appropriately leading to lack of policy coherence to understand the various dimensions of poverty: the vulnerability groups get low priority, so there is need to create more awareness and representation for resources to be more targeted at the vulnerable groups and populations
10. Need to strike a right balance among the three pillars of sustainable development, while ensuring that the policy coherence to support the development progress does not come at the cost of hurting the vulnerable groups and marginalised communities.

(f) Areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of these goals and challenges
11. Coordinated responses across countries are necessary to address transboundary dimensions of SDG 1, especially as the economic and ecological shocks and risks can reduce the hard-won gains in poverty reduction.

12. Emphasize the importance of regional cooperation on tax matters to fight against illicit financial flows, and help the Asia-Pacific countries reducing their tax revenues gap, when applicable.

13. Regional cooperation is essential for resilient building, disaster risk reduction and disaster response, particularly those responding to cross-border risks, which caused large amount of economic and human loss.

14. Need to strengthen information and reliable and frequent data sharing on issues related to tax leakages, climate change consequences and disasters risks related issues.

15. Harness bilateral and trilateral efforts, including through south-south partnerships to ensure that concern for development partnerships to support national, subregional, and regional projects are implemented in an effective and transformative manner.

(g) Promising innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level

16. Successful policies need to be replicated and adopted to local conditions through specific actions plans to support policy innovations as well as technological improvement, especially for the countries with special needs (LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS).

17. Increase technological innovations related to access to regional and subregional funds during and after natural disasters, which usually negatively affects the communities resources, as many of them don’t have social insurance.

18. Policymakers are encouraged to enable innovation in supporting sustainable development of a digital community and in teaching ICT to local communities, especially to women and youth.

19. Increase the usage of technologies at various levels of the governments, and support the public and private partnership as one of the policy innovations to mobilize more financial resources and to deliver public services in an innovative and cost-effective way.

20. Ensure improved understanding of monitoring and evaluation of development projects and programmes, including through establishment of databases on policies on SDG 1 by introducing innovations and new methods from the local to national levels.

Other recommendations

(h) ESCAP to get involved in more regional and subregional projects and programmes, including through regional intergovernmental processes such as the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development, that have meaningful and significant implications at the country level sustainable development processes, especially through their national planning frameworks, to support the implementation of their projects and programmes to address the multidimensional nature of poverty.

In closing

(i) As a way forward, success in achieving Goal 1 by 2030 will be highly dependent on several critical factors, including the effective targeting of social protection policies, job creation and effective governance mechanisms that increase support in an inclusive and sustainable manner for the most vulnerable groups and marginalized communities in the Asia-Pacific region. ESCAP stands ready to implement the Goal 1 by 2030 in partnerships with UN agencies, funds and programmes, regional development banks and financing institutions, national partners through multi-stakeholder engagement process.
III. Roundtable on Goal 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture)

8. The roundtable was co-organized by ESCAP (EDD, CAPSA, and CSAM) and FAO. Welcome remarks were delivered by Mr. Masakazu Ichimura, Head of the ESCAP Centre for Poverty Alleviation through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA) and Mr. Sumiter Broca, Senior Policy Officer and Leader, Socio-Economic Development and Policy Support Group, FAO. The opening presentation was delivered by Mr. Sumiter Broca.

9. Mr. Sumiter Broca moderated the session. Hon. Viam Pillay, Assistant Minister for Agriculture, Fiji; Ms. Sisomboun Ounavong, Director-General, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Lao PDR; Prof Norichika Kanie, Project Leader for Governance for Sustainable Development; UNU/IAS; and Ms. Azra Talat Sayeed of Roots for Equity and Mr. Ajay Kumar Jha, on behalf of civil society, contributed as discussants.

10. The report of the roundtable was delivered in plenary by Hon. Viam Pillay, Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Fiji as Rapporteur.

Outline for the goal

(a) In the MDG era, the region’s efforts have resulted in a lot of positive changes. The region significantly reduced hunger, almost doubled agricultural and food production mostly by small-scale food producers. However, there are remaining challenges. About 2 billion people suffer from “hidden hunger”. Obesity is increasing rapidly. 5% of arable land was lost between 1993 and 2003. Water availability per person decreased. Rates of use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides per hectare are among highest in world.

Overview of issues discussed in the roundtable

(b) The panel shared national experiences. The roundtable discussed how to achieve food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, ensure means of implementation for SDG 2 and other goals through 4 perspectives: 1) systemic changes, policy coherence, innovations, and regional cooperation.

Main recommendations for governments/policy-makers

(c) Systemic changes

- Address unfair and inequitable domestic subsidy rules through addressing key agricultural issues in the WTO Doha round
- To ensure Target 2.C is met, we need to regulate futures markets, and governments must cooperate on this
- Rectify the restrictive intellectual property standards enshrined in trade and investment agreements, which restrict the farmers from using their seeds freely.
- more investment in social protection responsive to disaster and focused on addressing hunger, and nutrition sensitive
- diversification of livelihood outside agriculture (investing in alternative livelihood)
- Make agriculture a formal sector and protect farmers by labor laws

(d) Priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation effort

- Ensure transparent, participatory, and democratic process for the public investments (including those by international institutions) in agriculture
- Areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of these goals and challenges.
• Promising innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level
• Invest into education on sustainable agriculture and stimulate partnerships between academia, government, private sector, civil society
• Develop and implement regulatory framework (including taxation and subsidies) to incentivize the private sector to contribute to SDG2 in particular 2.a and 2.b.
• Strengthening alternative agriculture production systems through public investment and other
• Land distribution policy should be implemented for landless farmers
• Conduct legislative and policy review to protect traditional livelihoods and occupation of small-scale farmers and indigenous peoples along with the recognition of the collective rights to land, territories and resources

(e) Innovation and good practices

• Public investment in agroecology which is based on using internal resources such as animal dung and compost instead of pesticides etc.
• Invest in agricultural research not just crops but also animal husbandry including indigenous species, which tend to be resistant to climate change
• Food fortification as well as diversify livestock and poultry to address nutrition needs based on indigenous genetic materials
• Ensure dietary diversity by ensuring seeds diversity including indigenous species
• Access to information to farmers, including but not limited to ICT (on price signals etc.)
• Regulation of contract farming and promoting farmer owned marketing systems (farmers-own initiatives)
• Research and development should be based on farmer's needs, drawing on local and indigenous knowledge

(f) Regional cooperation

• South-South cooperation (farmers and farmers cooperatives-led South-South cooperation) for knowledge exchange, farmers-led decision making, and in-kind trade
• ODA to promote fair trade in the region, especially among farmer cooperatives (landless farmers and women)
• Regional risk financing scheme to respond to disasters with focus on hunger, malnutrition and livelihood destruction due to disasters
• Need to focus on prevention of stunning and malnutrition over curative measures
IV. Roundtable on Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages)

11. The roundtable was co-organized by UNFPA, WHO and ESCAP. Ms. Lubna Baqi, Deputy Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, UNFPA and Dr. Phyllida Travis, Director, Department of Health System Development, Regional Office for South East Asia, WHO. UNFPA delivered the opening remarks and WHO the overview presentation.

12. Mr. Srinivas Tata, Chief, Capacity Development and Partnerships Section, Strategy and Programme Planning Division, ESCAP served as Moderator. Ms. Peseta Noumea Simi, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Samoa; Dr. Wah Wah Maung, Director-General, Central Statistical Organization, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Myanmar; Ms. Neha Chauhan, Programme Specialist, Advocacy, International Planned Parenthood Federation, India; Dr. Walaiporn Patcharanarumol, International Health Policy Programme, Ministry of Health, Thailand; and Ms. Maria Lourdes S. Marin, Regional Coordinator, Coalition of Asia-Pacific Regional Networks on HIV/AIDS (7 Sisters) on behalf of civil society contributed as discussants.

13. The report was delivered by Ms. Peseta Noumea Simi, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Samoa, Rapporteur, as follows:

Regional outlook for the achievement of the goal

(a) Universal access to health care remains a major challenge in Asia and the Pacific, especially in terms of inequity along income, education and gender lines. Substantial progress was made on the health MDGs; however, child health, maternal mortality and reproductive health targets were unmet; some 81 million women wanting to avoid pregnancy are not using effective family planning methods. While communicable diseases persist, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are rising rapidly in the region, spurred by population ageing. The aforementioned challenges are compounded by public health spending remaining relatively low in Asia and the Pacific compared with other regions. In sum, prospects for achieving SDG 3 in the region will depend on building on the gains made during the MDG era but taking a more integrated and multisectoral approach, backed by sustained political support.

Overview of issues discussed in the roundtable

(b) Strengthening laws, legislation and monitoring, and utilizing integrated approaches can overcome systemic barriers to progress on achieving SDG 3. Key to this is ensuring Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and using innovative means regarding, among others, resource mobilization, health promotion and disease prevention. In the Pacific, morbidity and mortality from NCD are particularly alarming; on the other hand, child and maternal mortality and lack of sexual and reproductive health services remain serious concerns in several countries across region. Nevertheless, opportunities exist especially through greater collaboration between sectors, adhering to accountability frameworks and utilizing technology to spread awareness and adopt new ideas. Further opportunities exist in reviewing and monitoring the implementation of SDGs, building on existing international and regional frameworks and monitoring mechanisms.

Main recommendations for governments/policy-makers

1. Ensure progress on the unfinished MDG agenda related to maternal, reproductive and adolescent health is achieved, by increasing political action, creating enabling environments and changing social norms; as well as specifically addressing the unmet need for family planning; and providing sufficient health workers to deliver quality care.

2. Use the right to health and UHC as the common platform for advancing SDG3, with interventions to improve access to quality care and financial protection, as well as increase local ownership of health care. A special focus should be directed to health workers, access to medicines and reducing out-of-pocket payments. It is also important to sustain and build on
current actions to expand frontline services and to increase pre-payment for health care, as well as share lessons across countries for greater impact. Such actions will also make health systems more resilient to withstand internal and external shocks including from natural disasters.

3. Ensure that public policies related to health are coherent and explicitly address equity and benefit disadvantaged groups, in particular those left furthest behind, and that new approaches are developed, implemented and monitored using disaggregated data and innovative methods.

4. Bolster progress on NCDs, by increasing interaction between health and other sectors to reduce key risk factors - such as tobacco, alcohol, obesity and high blood pressure - through ensuring effective regulation and taxation, developing new service delivery models for long term care, and by being responsive to rapid demographic and epidemiological changes.

5. Promote multisectoral and multi-stakeholder action, including through public-private partnerships and engagement of civil society, to enhance the impact of investments in other goals on achieving better health, and vice versa. New technologies and other innovations need to be used, such as in addressing NCDs and involving youth.

6. Increase domestic health expenditure and better understand both economic and social gains from investing in health to attain progress on SDG3. However, public health spending is more than just the amount of funding, since innovative, transparent and efficient public financial management are essential to ensuring equity and sustainability.

7. Reinforce progress that has already been made, as evidenced in many countries, on adapting national health monitoring frameworks to incorporate SDG3. Special attention should be directed to equity monitoring, and improved civil registration and vital statistics. Increased data transparency and dialogue on results with multiple stakeholders is vital to ensure accountability.

8. Strengthen regional, including south-south, cooperation, to foster peer learning and share knowledge of successful policies and initiatives, such as on enhancing the health workforce, improving access to medicines, transferring technology, mitigating the impact of natural disasters, and addressing environmental concerns and other determinants of health.

_In closing_

(c) Translating international agreements to the local level, including national monitoring frameworks, though a challenge, provides opportunities to see issues of common concern, such as climate change, and prioritize health as central to sustainable development.
V. Roundtable on Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls)

14. The Roundtable was co-organized by the UN Regional Coordination Mechanism’s Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (TWG-GEWEW), co-chaired by UN Women and ESCAP/SDD and in collaboration with UNFPA and FAO. Mr. Nagesh Kumar, Director, Social Development Division of ESCAP and Ms. Anna-Karin Jatfors, Deputy Regional Director at the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific opened the meeting. An overview presentation was delivered by Ms. Cai Cai, Chief of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Section of the Social Development Division of ESCAP. Mr. Rezaul Bashar Siddique, Deputy Secretary of Development Effectiveness Wing, Economic Relations Division (ERD) of Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh Chaired the roundtable. Ms. Janneke Kukler, Regional Strategic Planning and Coordination Specialist, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific provided additional meeting facilitation.

15. Ms. Khaleen Sasuman, Supervising Gender and Development Specialist, Philippine Commission on Women; Ms. Sarah Zaman, Director, Bodily Rights Programme, Shirkat Gah - Women’s Resource Centre, Pakistan, contributed as discussants.

16. The report was delivered in plenary by Mr. Rezaul Bashar Siddique, Deputy Secretary of Development Effectiveness Wing, Economic Relations Division (ERD) of Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh as Rapporteur.

Objective of the Roundtable

(a) The roundtable reviewed progress of the implementation and monitoring of SDG 5 targets at the country level in the region. The roundtable enabled participants to foster a shared understanding of regional progress; exchange experiences and south-south cooperation by identifying key challenges, good practices and opportunities for follow-up; and identify regional multi-stakeholder recommendations on each target under SDG 5.

The regional outlook for the achievement of SDG 5 in Asia-Pacific is seen as challenging

(b) Persistent discrimination against women and girls is still evident throughout the region, as illustrated by low and even declining trends in female labor force participation; persistent occupational segregation; low levels of political representation in national parliaments; persistence of child, early and forced marriages as well as violence against women and girls (VAWG); high burdens of unpaid care and domestic work that are unequally distributed and remain unrecognized; discriminatory legislation among others, with emphasis on women and girls left furthest behind.

(c) Participants reaffirmed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; recalled international covenants and conventions promoting the equal rights of all women and men, as well as commitments made under the Agreed Conclusions of the Commission of the Status of Women, and considered other related international agreements.

Main recommendations for governments/policy-makers

(d) In terms of addressing systemic challenges

- To address systemic challenges, participants recommended a broad range of policy actions, focused on strengthening enabling environments, institutions and regulatory frameworks that can have impacts across all the targets in SDG 5.
To enhance interlinkages between SDGs, particularly link SDG 5 with SDG 16 as a means of ending discrimination and ensuring access to justice, strengthening the rule of law and due recourse through existing laws.

To strengthen generation, collection, analysis and use of reliable, comparable and disaggregated data at national and local levels to better assess the situation of women and girls in order to leave no one behind.

In line with the General Comment No. 22 (2016) on the right to sexual and reproductive health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), ensure implementation, budgeting, monitoring and accountability of laws and policies that guarantee sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of women and girls, including those who face legal, procedural, geographic and socio-cultural barriers in their access.

Recognising women’s leadership as a pivotal pathway to achieving all the SDGs, as well as the particular importance of enabling and promoting women’s leadership in the context of addressing increased extremisms in the region, take measures to ensure women’s full and equal participation in leadership at all levels and in all spheres in society, including national and local governance, political parties, business, civil society, science and technology.

(e) To strengthen policy coherence, participants recommended:

- Strengthening coordination and achieving synergies across government ministries to achieve the internationally agreed upon commitments on gender equality.

- Mainstreaming gender perspectives into all legislation, policies and programmes to leverage gender-responsive policies, as well as developing and implementing effective multisectoral national policies and programmes with the full and effective participation of women and girls.

- Linking the SDGs to existing frameworks on disability such as the Incheon Strategy to Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities as an inclusion strategy for women with disabilities.

(f) Recommendations for regional cooperation include:

- Creating effective partnerships and coordination mechanisms to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, with all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector.

- Developing regional strategies and mechanisms to address gender-based discrimination and promote empowerment across all SDG 5 targets, especially for VAWG and harmful practices.

- Engagement of women’s organizations, particularly meaningful representation of women left behind, in regional and national platforms, to support the review and implementation of the SDGs.

- To strengthen existing collaboration, coordination and relations with regional and subregional bodies on gender equality and women’s empowerment

(g) Recommendations on innovations include:

- Implement gender-responsive budgeting, including tracking public investment in health and care to improve the redistribution of care work, provision of gender-sensitive services and decent work for women, to ensure equitable access to economic resources and opportunities.

- Provide adequate support and enhance accountability of political parties to promote participation of women, including through affirmative action, nomination, support, education of women and the public, and funding.
VI. Roundtable on Goal 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation)

17. The roundtable was co-organized by UNIDO, UNFCCC, UN-HABITAT and ESCAP. An opening presentation and remarks were delivered by Mr. S. Hansen, UNIDO Regional Director.

18. Ms. Sooksiri Chamsuk, Programme Officer, UNIDO moderated the session. The following discussants were on the panel: H.E. Mr. Theng Pagnathun Director-General of Planning, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia; Mr. Lal Shankar Ghimire, Joint Secretary/Division Chief, Economic Management Division, National Planning Commission Secretariat, Nepal; Mr. Peter Decorte, Chief Executive Officer, Tong Siang Co, Ltd, Thailand; and Mr. Gomer Padong, Philippine Social Enterprise Network. A statement on behalf of civil society was delivered by Mr. Julius Cainglet, Federation of Free Workers – International Trade Union Confederation (FFW-ITUC).

19. The report of the roundtable was delivered in plenary by Ms. Molruedee Puangngern, Director, International Agreement Group, International Affairs Division, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand, as Rapporteur.

Overview of issues

(a) The roundtable on SDG9 discussed how to ensure more sustainable and inclusive industrialization, develop sustainable and resilient infrastructure, enhance innovation and technological capacities of domestic industrial sectors for this aim.

(b) The region has made progress in a number of areas, including expanding infrastructure services in energy, ICT and mobile communications, transport, water and sanitation. The share of manufacturing in total employment and as share of GDP has grown strongly, and expenditures on R&D in the region now represent over 42% of the global. However, this hides large disparities between countries, with large and widening gaps for manufacturing value added per capita, a widening digital divide, and with most R&D and innovation coming from a handful of countries. The progress has also brought additional challenges, both environmental and social.

Main recommendations for governments/policy-makers on:

(c) Addressing systemic challenges that are barriers to further progress:

- Governments need to put in place policies to adjust the cost of low-carbon technologies through shifting subsidies and taxes to favour clean and energy efficient technology
- Curricula in schools and universities should be adjusted to integrate sustainable development in coursework and education plan, in particular for engineering and management studies. The role of universities in contextualizing and localizing R&D was highlighted.
- Governments should provide increased support to SME development, including access to credits/finance, more enabling regulations, and support the integration of SME into global supply chains.
- Governments also need to incentivize and embed ‘impact investing’ and sustainable development thinking within the DNA of the private sector, and promote indigenous grass-roots innovations and knowledge systems in addressing SDGs
- Governments should also promote and support business to perform energy auditing, to increase the use of energy efficient technology
- In the area of ICT and infrastructure, persistent challenges include tackling digital illiteracy, leveraging innovative financing models for ICT infrastructure development, ensuring digital security, providing localized content and accessibility, and monitoring progress on ICT targets.
- The need to connect rural areas and public facilities including hospitals and local government offices with broadband connectivity and innovative ICT applications was expressed repeatedly.
(d) Priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation efforts – including through attention to key leverage points:

- Governments need to ensure coherence between IPR systems and trade agreements to facilitate local technology adaptation and development.
- Government need to set standards that can help identify high sustainability impact innovations and technology early on. UN can help in creating capacity within governments.
- The importance of competition and enabling regulations was underlined in the discussion to ensure that the service providers can offer affordable access to rural as well as urban citizens.

(e) Promoting innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level:

- Promoting ICT R&D in education and research to develop and utilize digital innovations are essential to ensure that everyone can reap the benefits of ICT, including localizing content and applications to address local SDG challenges.
- The need to promoting the use of private and voluntary sustainability standards through appropriate enabling policy frameworks and national platforms was also stressed.

(f) Areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of these goals and challenges:

- UN can help countries develop regional technology facilitation mechanisms and strong national innovation systems based on diverse sources of knowledge.
- UN can support and facilitate collaboration on conducting technology foresight studies to scan the horizon to assess sustainable development impact of emerging technologies.
- Regional collaboration on energy-efficient technologies; information sharing, trainings and knowledge exchange between countries.
- There is the need for concerted efforts and regional cooperation, taking a multi-stakeholder approach including the private sector and universities, to promote innovation and broadband connectivity, share best practices and resources, and ultimately enable everyone in the Asia-Pacific region to reap the benefits of ICT.
- The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway was identified as an important initiative to ensure open-access, cross-border, disaster-resilient ICT infrastructure and regional cooperation.
VII. Roundtable on Goal 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development)

20. The roundtable was co-organized by: UNESCO, UNDP, UN Environment, and ESCAP. Mr. Iosefa Maiava, Director, ESCAP Pacific Office opened the meeting. On behalf of co-organizers, Mr. Wenxi ZHU, Head, IOC Regional Secretariat for the Western Pacific and adjacent regions (WESTPAC), UNESCO Bangkok provided a presentation on the SDG 14 outlook in the Asia Pacific;

21. Mr. Iosefa Maiava, moderated the roundtable. The following invited discussants contributed to the roundtable discussion: H.E. Mr. Semi Koroiavesau, Minister for Fisheries, Fiji; H.E. Ms. Saida Muna Tasneem, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Thailand; and Mr Ukkrit Satapoomin, Program Specialist from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Thailand; Ms. Lani Eugenia from Indonesian Farmer and Rural Women Organization and Ms. Viva Tatawaqa from the Diverse Voices for Action (DIVA) for Equality Fiji in their capacity as the representatives of the Asia and Pacific CSO Forum for Sustainable Development.

22. The report of the roundtable was delivered in plenary by H.E. Ms. Saida Muna Tasneem, as Rapporteur.

The regional outlook for the achievement of the goal

(a) The roundtable agreed that oceans, seas and coasts in the Asia-Pacific are of vast social and economic importance to the region, the growth engine of the world economy. The prospects for the achievement of this goal hinge on effective conservation and sustainability of marine and coastal ecosystems while maintaining the social, and economic value to humans’ livelihoods and regional prosperity. It was agreed that climate change and ocean acidification, overfishing, pollution, invasive species introduction and habitat losses, arising from poor or sectoral management practices and limited knowledge & transfer of marine technology are threatening ocean health, with serious harmful and irreversible consequences

(b) The roundtable agreed that a number of countries in the region have been taking immediate actions to fulfill their commitments, which include, among other, the establishment of inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms with associated task forces on respective goals; the alignment of national strategies/development plans with the SDG 14, the development of relevant SDG 14 indicators to monitor the progress; the strengthening of inclusive and partnership approaches to implementing the SDG 14, and the launching of ocean advocacy or campaigns for SDG 14.

(c) The roundtable also recognized that in the Pacific sub-region, Pacific countries just concluded their Pacific Regional Preparatory meeting for the UN Ocean Conference, committed to significantly improve ocean governance, the development of comprehensive frameworks to sustainably manage, and conserve ocean and its resources by 2020, with the goal of full implementation by 2030. The Pacific Leaders have made unprecedented commitments in the Pacific through robust regional ocean policy and established effective coordination arrangements.

(d) At the regional level, the role of ESCAP as a UN regional Commission was recognized as important to the implementation of SDG14, and follow up of ESCAP Resolution 72/9 was highlighted. It was also agreed that United Nations ocean-related agencies/programs and other partnership also respond immediately to the needs of their member states in the region, forming strategic links/platforms between SDG 14 global objectives and national programs and actions, providing coordination and technical assistance in addressing respective goals of SDG14.

Overview of issues discussed in the roundtable

(e) Awareness on the ocean’s vital importance;
(f) Sectoral regulatory & policy frameworks without coherence;
(g) participatory approach /partnership;
(h) Human and institutional capacity & limited knowledge & transfer of marine technology

Main recommendations for governments/policy-makers on:

(i) Addressing systemic challenges that are barriers to further progress

1. Ocean advocacy and campaigns;
2. Policy coherence for sustainable development;
3. Inter-ocean related ministerial coordination mechanism;
4. Multi-stakeholder or partnership approaches
5. Data and information gap;
6. Human capacities, ocean knowledge & transfer of marine technology (for instance, ocean acidification)

(j) Priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation efforts – including through attention to key leverage points;

7. Governments to play a pro-active role in integrating SDG14 into their ocean policy coordination at cabinet level;
8. Whole-of-government perspective on formulation, implementation of policy and regulation;
9. Policy coherence framework (analytical framework, institutional framework, and monitoring framework), including through the blue economy approach;
10. Inter-ministerial coordination to resolve policy conflict

(k) Areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of these goals and challenges.

11. Utilize the UNESCAP Regional Coordination Mechanism to enhance cooperation among UN ocean-related agencies, programs at the regional level (i.e establishment of UN-Oceans for the Asia Pacific) were strongly recommended.
12. Strengthen the existing regional ocean governance and scientific development mechanisms;
13. Establish regional ocean partnerships among UN agencies, sub-regional and regional ocean and fishery related organizations, NGOs, civil societies, public and private sectors, including local communities;
14. Support ecosystem-based approach, such as Large Marine Ecosystems, Marine Spatial Planning, Marine Protected Areas, etc.;
15. Support the UN proposal for an International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)

(l) Promising innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level

16. There were a number of innovations and best practices at national level. Thailand presented a number of actions to address SDG 14, including with the UNESCO/IOC-WESTPAC to establish 2 ocean acidification monitoring sites, National action plan and a Command Center for combating illegal, Unregulated and Unreported fisheries; Pacific countries implement actions for a cleaner Pacific at all level, including call for global action to reduce plastics and other forms of pollution by 2025.

Implementation of ESCAP resolution E/ESCAP/RES/71/9

(m) As a follow up to the UNESCAP resolution E/ESCAP/RES/71/9 on regional cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia Pacific:

1. Convene a high level consultation on partnerships and commitments for SDG 14, at 73rd Commission in May 2017, as a preparatory meeting for the UN Ocean Conference;
2. Explore the possibility for organizing a side event, at the UN Ocean Conference, on regional ocean partnerships in the Asia and Pacific
3. To run the roundtable on SDG 14 on a regular basis and enlarge the participation, building on existing UN ocean-related agencies and programs.

For UN Environment Assembly 4-6 December 2017 with the theme of pollution free planet to address marine litter pollution;

**In closing**

(n) The partnerships for implementation of SDG14 at all levels between governments, the private sector and civil society is vital to the achievement of SDG14. They need to be functional and proactive and transformative. They should be an integral part of national and regional planning and implementation processes.

(o) The region is the key to link the global objectives with national development priorities. Therefore, there is a pivotal role that UN and its specialized agencies, including ESCAP, should be committed to play in assisting countries, particularly these developing countries, SIDS and LDCs, towards the attainment of SDG 14.
PAVILION OF PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Venue: 2nd Floor, UNCC
Date: 29-31 March 2017
Time: 9:00 – onwards

Background

The third session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), 2016 agreed that the Forum may be convened annually as an inclusive intergovernmental forum preparatory to the High-Level Political Forum and that the theme should be consistent with that of the High-Level Political forum. To this end, the theme of the fourth session of the APFSD, 2017 is “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific”.

APFSD, 2017 is organised around several interconnected themes. The Forum will engage Member States, United Nations and other institutions, major groups and other stakeholders in a dialogue on regional priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific. It will address scientific and technological innovation for sustainable development and focus attention on poverty eradication whilst fostering prosperity, through a discussion on achieving SDG 1 in the region. The forth session of the APFSD will also consider the draft of a regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, and define form, function and modalities after 2017.

A number of special sessions will also be held, focusing on Global Partnership on Sustainable Development Data, and on the implementation of SDGs 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere); 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture); 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages); 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation); and 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development). Furthermore, Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development) is to be considered each year1.

Scope of the Pavilion

The objective of this year’s Pavilion is to provide additional informal space for member states, including those preparing voluntary national reviews, civil society, UN agencies and other stakeholders to share good practices for integrated and inclusive approaches for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including with a focus on the cluster of SDGs (1,2,3,5,9,14 and 17) to be reviewed in-depth at the 2017 High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

1 In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/299 “Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level”
How does it work?

Participants in the Pavilion of Partnerships for Sustainable Development (Member states, partners and stakeholders) are most welcome to share their knowledge products, and preferably audio-visual materials and other non-traditional means of information sharing and interactive engagement of audiences in addition to posters, hand-outs, leaflets, booklets, publications) at designated booths in the exhibition area, as well as during side events and networking sessions taking place during the APFSD, 2017.

Networking sessions, including Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) presentations, learning café, market place sessions and others will be hosted to allow stakeholders and policy makers attending the APFSD-2017 to share and promote pertinent issues in a non-formal setting.

The preliminary schedule of these events is provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Time*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, 29 March 2017</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break/Pavilion Networking Sessions (morning)</td>
<td>09.35 – 10.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break/Pavilion Networking Sessions (afternoon)</td>
<td>15.30 – 17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, 30 March 2017</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break/Pavilion Networking Sessions (morning)</td>
<td>10.15 – 10.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break/Pavilion Networking Sessions (afternoon)</td>
<td>14.45 – 15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, 31 March 2017</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break/Pavilion Networking Sessions /Side events (round 1)</td>
<td>09.30 – 11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break/Pavilion Networking Sessions /Side events (round 2)</td>
<td>11.00 – 12.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that these times may be subject to change

How to join the Pavilion

To join the Pavilion, kindly indicate your interest in exhibiting to Ms Aneta S. Nikolova at the following email address nikolova@un.org (kindly CC Ms Sara Libera Zanetti at slzanetti.unescap@gmail.com) by 7 March 2017.
Annex I

Logistic Arrangements of the Pavilion

This year’s Pavilion will take place on Level 2 of the UNCC building, strategically placed outside of Conference Room-1 and Conference Room-2 (APFSD, 2017 will be held in one of these rooms, to be confirmed shortly).

In order to have a better idea of the layout, please find attached a preliminary plan showing the position of the exhibition booths, screens and the sustainable development knowledge platform (online access). This may be subject to change.

Should you indicate an interest in exhibiting at this year’s Pavilion, you will be requested to fill in a registration form and specify your equipment needs. ESCAP will provide the following materials, at no cost, to each pavilion partner who requires them:

- 1 V-shape panel with lights
- 1 Desk
- 2 Chairs

Partners are invited to display posters, publications, banners and other exhibition materials within the booth space provided.

ESCAP will provide two LCD displays in the Pavilion area on which videos received from Pavilion partners will be shown on a loop during the Pavilion’s operating hours (see Table 1 below). Should you wish to display a video from your organisation, you will be asked to indicate this on the registration form by Tuesday 14 March 2017 and will be subsequently provided with an upload link. The Pavilion will operate according to the following schedule (Table 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Close</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 29 March 2017</td>
<td>08.00 hours</td>
<td>19.00 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 30 March 2017</td>
<td>08.00 hours</td>
<td>18.00 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 31 March 2017</td>
<td>08.00 hours</td>
<td>16.30 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Pavilion operating hours

Pavilion partners are requested to complete the set-up of their Pavilion booths on Tuesday, 28 March 2017 between 16:30-18:30 and latest on Wednesday, 29 March 2017 between 08.00 and 09.30 hours to be make their knowledge products visible already at the first break right after the opening session of the APFSD-4, 2017.
During the Pavilion operating hours, partners are responsible for all items left unattended at their designated booth area. ESCAP cannot take responsibility for any valuables left unattended.

Each Pavilion partner will be solely responsible for managing their own booth for the duration of the exhibition. Pavilion participants are encouraged to take full advantage of registration times, coffee and lunch breaks, and evening receptions as the main opportunities for networking with APFSD participants. It is recommended that partners arrange for at least one person to be available at their exhibition booth during the periods indicated in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 March 2017</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>08.00 – 09.00 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Break I</td>
<td>09.35 – 10.05 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
<td>12.15 – 13.30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Break II</td>
<td>15.45 – 17.00 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 March 2017</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>08.00 – 09.00 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Break I</td>
<td>10.15 – 10.30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
<td>12.15 – 13.30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Break II</td>
<td>14.45 – 15.00 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 March 2017</td>
<td>Side events/Networking</td>
<td>09.30 – 11.00 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sessions (round 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
<td>12.30 – 14.30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Side events (round 2)</td>
<td>11.00 – 12.30 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Break and Event Schedule

*Please note that these times may be subject to change

Participants are requested to remove all materials from their exhibition booth space between 15:00 to 16:00 on Friday, 31 March 2017 as exhibitions will be dismantled shortly thereafter. Participants are responsible for the removal from the ESCAP premises of all items that have not been distributed. ESCAP cannot take any responsibility for items left at exhibition booths after this time.
VNR Learning Café Concept Note

Venue: Engagement Space at the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development, 2nd Floor, UNCC

Date: 29 March 2017

Time: 15:30-17:00 (coffee and refreshments will be provided)

Background

The overall theme of the fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) is "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific." Dedicated roundtable sessions will be organized based on the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2017 cluster of SDGs, in line with the UN General Assembly resolution on follow up and review 70/299. A dedicated session on Voluntary National Reviews will create a platform for the VNR participating countries to highlight experiences from the first year of SDG implementation and to exchange perspectives on the role of regional follow-up and review in supporting national and global review.

To create an additional informal atmosphere for networking, exchange of experiences and good practices for integrated and inclusive approaches for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development, including spaces for exhibition, engagement and peer-learning, is being set-up, and side events are being organized.

Scope of the VNR Learning Café

In preparation for the panel discussions in the plenary on the next day, representatives of the VNR participating countries will be invited to join a VNR Learning Café. Experts will have an informal opportunity for exchange of experiences and discuss ideas on processes and tools for follow-up and review, including stakeholder involved and the role of regional networks. The VNR Learning Café will be set up at the Engagement Space of the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development which is designated to facilitate informal peer-learning experiences throughout the duration of the 4th session of the APFSD. The target participants will consist of a technical-level professionals, institutional actors, academia representatives, scientists, as well as contributors from civil society.

Objectives of the VNR Learning Café

1 SDGs 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere); 2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture); 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages); 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation); and 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development), as well as Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development)
The objectives of the VNR Learning Café are two-fold:

- To provide a space for informal engagement, peer-learning and dialogue on the main theme of the APFSD;
- To offer opportunities to learn and explore applications of innovative engagement methods that delegates could utilize in their own contexts.

**How would it work?**

Facilitated discussions will be held in small working groups around the following areas:

1) Ongoing or planned national-level follow-up and review, and challenges;
2) Processes and tools to facilitate preparation of VNRs;
3) How to undertake meaningful stakeholder engagement in follow-up and review.
4) Regional commonalities and lessons learned from VNR preparations undertaken so far;

Summary of these discussions will be developed by the facilitators and will inform ESCAP’s capacity building strategy to support ESCAP’s SDG focal points and regional VNR focal points.

In addition, participants will have the opportunity to provide their direct feedback on the VNR Wish Wall and on the Engagement Wall with the questions “What will you contribute to the 2030 Agenda?” and ”What support would you need from us to do that?” during the designated time of the VNR Learning Café and at any other given time during the APFSD.

**Additional Information Charing Opportunities**

Representatives of the VNR participating countries are invited to share audio-visual materials and publications related to success stories in implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the SDGs at the Engagement Space at the Pavilion of Partnerships on Sustainable Development, which will allow wider outreach and sharing of experiences.
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
Bangkok, 29-31 March 2017
Agenda item 5
Review and adoption of the draft report of the Forum

Draft report

1. The Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), was held in Bangkok from 29 to 31 March 2017.

2. It was attended by more than 500 participants, including representatives of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations bodies, international organizations, civil society organizations and other entities.

3. The Forum was attended by representatives of the following ESCAP members: Afghanistan; Armenia; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Fiji; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Turkey; Turkmenistan; United States of America; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam. A representative of Switzerland attended as an observer.

4. Under agenda item 1 (a), the Chair of the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, Mr. Gamini Jayawickrama Perera, Minister of Sustainable Development and Wildlife, Sri Lanka, made a statement on the outcome of the Third Forum. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered a welcome statement and provided an overview of the Forum. Statements were also delivered by Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thailand, and Mr. Nabeel Munir, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council. Ms. Helen Hakena and Mr. Amit Timilsina delivered statements on behalf of civil society.

5. Under agenda item 1 (b), the Forum elected the following Bureau members:
   
   (a) Chair:
       Mr. Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary (Pakistan)
   
   (b) Vice-Chairs:
       Mr. Thinley Namgyel (Bhutan)
Mr. Semi Koroilavesau (Fiji)
Mr. Subandi Sardjoko (Indonesia)
Ms. Zhyldyz Polotova (Kyrgyzstan)
Mr. Bahadur Shrestha (Nepal)
Mr. Gamini Jayawickrama Perera (Sri Lanka)
Mr. Arjuna Sujeewa Senasinghe (Sri Lanka)
Mr. Ezizgeldi Annamuhammedov (Turkmenistan)

(c) Rapporteur:
Ms. Rosemarie G. Edillon (Philippines)

6. Under agenda item 1 (c), the Forum adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Forum:
   (a) Opening statements;
   (b) Election of officers;
   (c) Adoption of the agenda.

2. Regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:
   (a) Global to regional context of follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and implications for the Asia-Pacific region;
   (b) Assessment of progress in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level;
   (c) National progress and achievements with respect to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region:
   (a) Strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region;
   (b) Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;
   (c) Form and function of the Forum.

4. Other matters.

5. Review and adoption of the draft report of the Forum.


7. Under agenda item 2 (a), the Executive Secretary delivered a presentation on regional progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

8. Under agenda item 2 (b), a panel addressed regional perspectives and trends in relation to the theme of the Forum, “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific”.

9. Under the same agenda item, the Forum was informed of key recommendations from six round tables which conducted an in-depth review
of the Sustainable Development Goals in the cluster to be addressed at the forthcoming high-level political forum on sustainable development of the Economic and Social Council. The full summaries and recommendations from the round tables are available from www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/pre-ods/EESCAPFSD(4)CRP1.pdf.

10. Under agenda item 2 (c), the Asia-Pacific countries participating in voluntary national reviews with regard to the high-level political forums on sustainable development in 2016 and 2017 shared national perspectives on progress and achievements relating to the 2030 Agenda.

11. Under agenda item 3 (a), the Forum was informed of the three panel discussions, which were on the topics “Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls: a pathway to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals”, “Experiences and lessons on localizing the Sustainable Development Goals”, and “Strengthening the delivery of the means of implementation”.

12. Under agenda item 3 (b), the Forum adopted the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, as contained in annex II to the present document, for consideration by the Commission, with a view to endorsing it at the seventy-third session of the Commission.

13. Under agenda item 3 (c), the Forum adopted the terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, as contained in annex III to the present document, for consideration by the Commission, with a view to endorsing it at the seventy-third session of the Commission.

14. Under agenda item 4, no other matters were discussed.

15. Under agenda item 5, the Forum adopted the present report and its annexes on 31 March 2017. The Chair’s summary of the Forum is contained in annex I to the present document.

16. The Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership between ESCAP, the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme was launched, as were its data portal and knowledge products: Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Goals Outlook and the thematic report “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific”. Other knowledge products that were launched at the Forum included the United Nations World Water Development Report 2017 – Wastewater: The Untapped Resource and “South-South in Action: Sustainability in Thailand – Experience for Developing Countries”, which was jointly authored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

17. Side events were held on the following topics: “The importance of civil registration and vital statistics to eradicate poverty in Asia and the Pacific”; “Technology and sustainability (Global Conference on CyberSpace 2017 – Destination India)”; “Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction for poverty eradication in Asia and the Pacific”; “Migration: a critical factor for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific”; “New platforms for civil society engagement with Governments for realizing the 2030 Agenda”; “Including persons with disabilities in sustainable development: an inclusive pathway to eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity”; “Sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality: crucial to eradicating poverty in Asia and the Pacific”; “The contribution of family farming to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia”; and “Regional
cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region for Sustainable Development Goal implementation in developing and least developed countries”. A voluntary national review learning café was also held.

18. The following preparatory events were held: the Asia-Pacific Civil Society Organization Forum on Sustainable Development; Asia-Pacific Conference: Taking Collective Action to Accelerate Transformation of Official Statistics for the 2030 Agenda; ESCAP/United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability workshop on multi-stakeholder partnerships for Sustainable Development Goal implementation in Asia and the Pacific; and ESCAP/Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations regional preparatory workshop for voluntary national review countries from the Asia-Pacific and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia regions.

19. The Forum agreed that the present report, including its annexes, should be brought to the attention of the Commission, at its seventy-third session, and to the global dialogues on sustainable development, including in particular the upcoming high-level political forum on sustainable development which will be held in New York from 10 to 19 July 2017.
Annex I

Chair’s summary of discussions at the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

1. The theme of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development was “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing Asia-Pacific”. During the Forum, members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), intergovernmental bodies, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, major groups and other stakeholders engaged in a dialogue on regional perspectives on the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific region, including an in-depth review of the theme and of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17, which constituted the cluster of Goals to be discussed by the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2017. The Forum also discussed means to strengthen implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region.

I. Regional perspectives on the theme of the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

2. During the session, a panel reflected on key challenges in eradicating poverty and achieving shared prosperity in Asia and the Pacific and on the responses that had been put forward by Governments, international organizations and civil society.

3. Several delegations reported that they had created national bodies to mainstream and implement the 2030 Agenda. The majority of the bodies were interministerial and cross-sectoral in nature and some included non-governmental stakeholders such as civil society and academia. Several delegations pointed out that key national strategies and development plans had already been aligned with the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, while other delegations reported the introduction of mapping exercises to match responsibility for the Goals with relevant ministries.

4. The Forum noted efforts to define national indicators and to establish nationwide processes for data collection to monitor progress on achieving the Goals, and highlighted the importance of localizing the Goals and tailoring interventions to the specific needs of households that were being left behind. Several delegations mentioned the important role of youth and women in promoting the implementation of the Goals. The Forum noted the efforts of two delegations in drafting their voluntary national reviews for the 2017 high-level political forum and of one delegation in tabling a sustainable development act.

5. Interventions from international organizations highlighted that effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals depended on mainstreaming nature-based solutions and that well-managed ecosystems could contribute to eradicating poverty. Interventions from civil society stressed the challenges posed by increasing inequality and disproportionate investment priorities that compromised the rights of local populations and could derail progress in achieving the Goals. The realization of the rights of persons with disabilities, as outlined in the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, was stressed as a prerequisite to leaving no one behind.
II. In-depth review of the cluster of Sustainable Development Goals

6. The Forum conducted an in-depth review of six of the seven Sustainable Development Goals that would be the focus of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2017, in line with the General Assembly resolution 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level, and developed specific recommendations on the following: (a) addressing systemic challenges that were barriers to further progress; (b) priorities for strengthening policy coherence in implementation efforts, including through attention to key leverage points; (c) areas for regional cooperation to address the transboundary dimensions of those Goals and challenges; and (d) promising innovations (policy, social, institutional, technological or other) at the national level.

7. The conclusions of each round table, including the wide range of specific recommendations made, were shared in a plenary session with reports delivered by the rapporteurs of each round table (available from www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/pre-ods/EESCAPFSD(4)CRP1.pdf).

8. A joint statement by civil society organizations called on States to take concrete actions to address the root causes and consequences of poverty, inequality, discrimination, violence and injustice and to build regional cooperation to that end. Regional trends that were not in line with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals were highlighted, including land grabs; increased military spending; territorial, resource and ethnic conflicts, violence against women and girls; and displacement of farmers and indigenous communities. Shrinking civil society space would prevent successful implementation of the Goals. Policy and institutional coherence were interlinked, and the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism should provide coherent support and civil society engagement.

9. Regional cooperation and action to enable development justice was supported by the statements made by the representatives of persons with disabilities and of fisherfolk communities. The opportunity to address barriers and inequalities due to disability, faced by one sixth of the regional population, through regional and global frameworks was emphasized. Participation, partnerships, awareness-raising, enabling regulations to protect rights and access to marine resources, and strengthened policy coherence at all levels were also urged, together with action to address the wide range of economic activities that decreased the income of small-scale fisherfolk, marginalized artisanal fishing and promoted migration and displacement. Mainstreaming the nature-based concept would support implementation and tackle the most pressing issues such as food and water security, disasters and climate change.

III. National progress and achievements with respect to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

10. The session highlighted national perspectives from countries participating in the voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development and provided an opportunity to exchange views on how member States were overcoming challenges, including alignment of national development plans, development aid programmes and institutional mandates through interministerial coordination and wider engagement of all stakeholders, as well as through regional peer learning and South-South cooperation networks.
11. The Forum reiterated the importance of political commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of alignment of national development strategies and subregional plans such as the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway with the 2030 Agenda through the institutional mandates of ministries and government institutions at the national, provincial and local levels.

12. The Forum noted that national efforts to localize the Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators through an inclusive and participatory process were improving the rule of law and promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment, peace and governance, and the inclusion of persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples.

13. The Forum highlighted the importance of subregional and regional cooperation and the pivotal role of the Forum as a platform for follow-up and review, for peer learning through the sharing of knowledge and best practices, and for South-South cooperation.

14. Civil society organizations recommended strengthening national follow-up and review through localization of the Goal indicators and engaging stakeholders and civil society in inclusive and participatory approaches for data collection and monitoring of implementation.

IV. Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls: a pathway to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

15. In this session, a panel highlighted the catalytic role that gender equality and women’s empowerment played across the three dimensions of sustainable development. It proposed innovative strategies and key recommendations to support gender equality and women’s empowerment in strengthening implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

16. The Forum emphasized its commitment to gender equality, including in promoting gender-responsive policies and plans and ensuring equal opportunities with respect to education, employment, leadership, decision-making and access to health services and social protection.

17. The Forum reported on innovative partnerships and concerted efforts to ensure effective service delivery for lower-income women, as well as measures to eradicate harmful practices against children and promote global citizenship. One delegation recommended strengthening institutional capacity and raising awareness among policymakers and society, mainstreaming gender equality into legal and policy frameworks and providing training for women to better prepare them for the changing world of work and the application of information and communications technology.

18. Civil society organizations stressed that economic growth models were based on systematic discrimination of women in the workforce and reliance on unpaid work by women, and called for the meaningful inclusion of women in all decision-making. The inclusion of women with disabilities in initiatives at all levels was emphasized as essential to effectively respond to the 2030 Agenda. In addition, the potential of youth to dismantle discriminatory gender norms was underlined, including through the addressing of their key needs and concerns in relation to gender-transformative education and health programmes, as well as through the promotion of meaningful youth participation.
V. Experiences and lessons learned with respect to localization of the Sustainable Development Goals

19. In this session, participants discussed the significant role of local governments in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals to eradicate poverty and promote prosperity in cities in the Asia-Pacific region. A panel of mayors stressed that successful efforts to localize the Goals took into account local developmental needs, were embedded in the local cultural, ecological and political contexts, and ultimately empowered people to take ownership of the Goals.

20. One delegation noted that local governments should focus not merely on reducing economic poverty, but on enhancing overall quality of life by building local capacities and reducing dependencies of people on the government. Another delegation noted the importance of adopting universally accepted sustainability standards for industrial processes and of promoting the use of trade and procurement as tools for enhancing the implementation of the Goals. In that regard, Governments should map their trade policies in relation to the implementation of the Goals.

21. Civil society organizations emphasized the responsibility of local governments in recognizing that older persons and persons with disabilities were equal and productive yet vulnerable citizens whose role was integral to the process of localizing the Goals. Local government associations reiterated their commitment to building local government capacities and multi-stakeholder partnerships for the implementation of inclusive, resilient and sustainable solutions in alignment with the Goals.

VI. Strengthening the delivery of the means of implementation

22. In this session, a panel drew attention to some of the main challenges currently faced by the region in harnessing different means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, especially to eradicate poverty and ensure prosperity. The participants highlighted ways to address those challenges and emphasized the need to exploit the synergies between different means of implementation.

23. The Forum observed that good governance and an enabling business environment were crucial in harnessing the potential of different means of implementation. Considerable synergies existed between the different means of implementation, which needed to be harnessed through coherent national policies. The Forum discussed how information and communications technology could accelerate the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in international trade, how increased public infrastructure investments could in turn promote trade and private investments, and how new technologies could generate data required to monitor implementation of the Goals.

24. The Forum recognized the importance of integrating statistical planning into national development planning and that ill-informed policies could be much more expensive than investment in data and statistics. The Forum noted that statistical capacity-building and stakeholder engagement were key challenges in implementation of Goals at the national level, and underscored that collecting and managing high-quality and relevant disaggregated data remained an issue.

25. One delegation requested ESCAP to continue assisting member States with the reform of public finance, including taxation and public expenditure
matters. The Forum requested ESCAP to assist member States in meeting the data requirements for the 2030 Agenda by providing technical support for national efforts to strengthen data and statistics, and urged Governments to make statistics development a national development target. The Forum recommended that it should act as a platform to identify regional priorities, key challenges and opportunities.

26. The civil society organizations recommended a more explicit recognition of trade as means of implementation within the regional road map for implementing 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific. They also called for a regional compatibility impact assessment of existing trade and investment agreements on the Goals, and requested ESCAP to play a lead role in that process. The major groups called for ensuring greater integration of core labour standards and rights into trade and investment agreements. The business community reaffirmed the important role of the ESCAP Sustainable Business Network as an important modality for the Commission to actively engage business in promoting environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive growth in the Asia-Pacific region, and supported the Asia-Pacific Business Forum as a platform to articulate strategies for promoting public-private partnerships to achieve the Goals.

VII. Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and the terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

27. The Forum considered the draft regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and the draft terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

28. The Forum welcomed the inclusive and collaborative efforts to develop the road map and thanked the secretariat for supporting the process.

29. The Forum recognized the road map as a living document that served as guidelines for regional cooperation and support in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

30. Civil society organizations recognized the road map’s contribution and benefits to developing and least developed countries, calling for wide stakeholder participation in its implementation, and made several suggestions for future iterations to promote development justice and ensure inclusion of all marginalized groups.
Annex II

Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

A. Objectives and guidelines

1. Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals requires national, regional and international cooperative endeavours. The aim of this regional road map is to facilitate cooperation at the regional level, supported by the secretariat and other United Nations entities through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism as appropriate.

2. The road map places particular emphasis on supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by developing countries, in particular by least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, countries in conflict situations and post-conflict countries and other countries with special needs.

3. The road map maintains the universality and transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda and takes into account different national and regional realities, capacities and levels of development, while respecting member States’ national development strategies, policy space and priorities, remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments and creating no new commitments or additional reporting requirements or obligations for Governments or new mechanisms, as requested by member States at the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.\(^a\)

4. In line with the 2030 Agenda, the objective of the road map is to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development through regional cooperation in a set of priority areas that support effective pursuit of sustainable development by member States.

5. The road map also aims to place gender equality and women’s empowerment as a central issue of the regional policy agenda, in order to enhance women’s leadership and decision-making in all aspects of society.\(^b\)

6. The road map also recognizes that sustainable development must be underpinned by peaceful and inclusive societies, addressing inequality, and by good governance. The quality of governance and effectiveness of public institutions are critical factors to the process of sustainable development.

7. The expected impacts of the road map are as follows: (a) strengthened regional cooperation on priority issues as identified by member States; (b) continued and more efficient and coordinated support for member States provided by the secretariat, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and regional organizations through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism; and (c) more effective knowledge-sharing among countries.

8. This road map stems from decisions of the Second and Third Asia-Pacific Forums on Sustainable Development. It is for members and associate members of ESCAP and identifies opportunities to cooperate at the regional

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\(^a\) See E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4, para. 16 A. (b).

\(^b\) Language adapted from E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/4, para. 2 (b).
level, guided by all the principles reaffirmed and agreed to in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, as provided for by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/1 – in which it acknowledges the importance of the regional and subregional dimensions, regional economic integration and interconnectivity in sustainable development – and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

9. The regional road map contains priority areas of cooperation that could be supported using the secretariat’s existing expertise and resources, drawing on input from member States and the programme of work and strategic framework. The regional road map also draws on the thematic working groups of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism and, at the national level, on input from the United Nations Development Group. The ESCAP conference structure and its ongoing activities, as well as activities of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism member organizations, will be fully utilized in an effort to avoid duplication of work and increase efficiency.

B. Priority areas of cooperation

10. Regional and subregional cooperation in specific areas can support and complement the effectiveness of national mechanisms. The means of implementation – namely finance, technology, capacity-building, trade and systemic issues – are key to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Regional discussion and cooperation, including through regional and subregional organizations, can facilitate access to normative work; support capacity-building, technical cooperation and sharing of good practices and home-grown approaches, including among countries that share similar characteristics (such as least developed countries, small island developing States or middle-income countries); and facilitate member States’ access to the means of implementation and efforts towards consolidating regional and global partnerships for sustainable development. Similarly, the externalities and spillover effects of many of the Sustainable Development Goals provide opportunities for regional approaches and engagement. The thematic areas of cooperation in this road map have been chosen for their multisectoral impact on sustainable development.

11. The opportunities for regional cooperation, including by leveraging regional and subregional organizations, draw upon the issues highlighted by member States within the conference structure of the Commission.

12. Member States have identified the following priority areas of cooperation, with particular emphasis on the practical means of implementation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

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c Including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Pacific subregional organizations.
1. Means of implementation and partnership

(a) Data and statistics

Current status

13. Availability and access to high-quality data and statistics are essential to measuring and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. However, regional data are available for only approximately half of the defined indicators of the global monitoring framework. The multidimensional nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires integrated and disaggregated statistics that can support planning and analysis across the economic, social and environmental development pillars with a particular focus on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable people. Data and statistics should also be able to ensure that no one is left behind, and disaggregated data should be made more available as required by the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. In order to meet such demands, national statistical capacities to provide high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data to users must be strengthened, and the capacity of Governments to utilize data and statistics for evidence-based policymaking and for follow-up and review must be enhanced, inter alia. National statistical systems therefore need to be strengthened to supply the statistical evidence necessary for monitoring of progress, integrated policy analysis and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

14. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Promote the need for national statistical systems to be responsive to the requirements of users arising from the 2030 Agenda, and the need to encourage investments in national statistical systems that are adequate to meet statistical requirements and to support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals as appropriate;

(b) Formulate and implement continuous, comprehensive and system-wide strategies for the development of statistics, including statistics for the 2030 Agenda;

(c) Provide and promote capacity-building support to national statistical systems to increase the availability of high-quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated data, including to develop integrated measurement frameworks for Sustainable Development Goal statistics that integrate data from multiple sources, including big data, in a coherent and consistent manner to support integrated analysis of sustainable development issues;

(d) Organize national statistical system business processes and modernize tools for strengthened quality, efficiency and effectiveness of statistical information management and exchange;

(e) Build the skills of the staff and management of national statistical systems, including of relevant data producers, to enhance the human resources capacity for generating the statistical products and services required for monitoring of national development plans and the 2030 Agenda.
(b) Technology

Current status

15. Science, technology and innovation can play a vital role in supporting sustainable development and driving growth and productivity. The Asia-Pacific region is characterized by large disparities across countries: while many countries rank in the bottom quartile of the Global Innovation Index, a number of member States are leaders in science, technology and innovation, accounting for almost 45 per cent of global research and development expenditure. The challenge is to bridge these gaps and address the digital divide, to enable member States, particularly countries with special needs, to take advantage of technologies and to nurture an innovative environment. Given the guidance offered by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation and the work under way on related ESCAP platforms, the use of policy on science, technology and innovation for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals can be promoted as follows.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

16. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Facilitate the sharing of best practices and capacity-building across member countries through the development of social enterprise, impact investment markets and information and communications technology in support of implementation of the Goals;

(b) Link regional needs and experience of international, regional and subregional organizations by acting as a bridge to facilitate cooperation for access to technology and know-how and joint action when necessary;

(c) Promote public, public-private and civil society partnerships, as appropriate, in order to harness science, technology and innovation for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.\(^d\)

(c) Finance

Current status

17. Effective pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals requires stable forward-looking and long-term financing. However, the available financial resources are either not appropriately channelled or not sufficient to meet the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. In 2014, Asia-Pacific developing countries mobilized 17.6 per cent of their gross domestic product in tax revenues, which is only half the average across the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Since these levels of public finances are insufficient to effectively pursue the Goals, it is therefore important to enhance the tax ratio while recognizing the role of cooperation among countries in the region in sharing good practices. The region’s financial markets are also not developed enough to channel regional savings into productive investments in support of sustainable development needs. Besides lacking efficient financial intermediation processes for development purposes, banks in the region’s developing countries provide more than two thirds of the overall financial credit, while developed countries mobilize up to 80 per cent from diversified financial vehicles such as bonds and equity. On

\(^d\) See Commission resolution 72/12.
the financial inclusion side, more than 1.1 billion people in the Asia-Pacific region are unbanked. Considerable policy adjustments are needed in terms of both reorienting available resources and identifying additional sources of financing. Bilateral or multilateral public-private partnerships to mobilize financial resources are also required, not only for infrastructure development but also for other sectors, such as education and health, including through knowledge-sharing on good practices.

**Opportunities for regional cooperation**

18. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Continue to undertake research, analysis and consensus-building initiatives in the area of financing for development to enhance regional knowledge of infrastructure financing, including public-private partnerships;

   (b) Provide capacity-building to mainstream financing for development issues in areas such as domestic resource mobilization;

   (c) Enhance the capacity for domestic and international resource mobilization;

   (d) Strengthen partnerships for effective development cooperation;

   (e) Promote financial inclusion.

**Policy coherence**

**Current status**

19. In Asia and the Pacific, high levels of economic growth have lifted great numbers of people out of poverty. However, if the region is to sustain the growth needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to enhance resilience, it must shift to a growth trajectory that is more resource-efficient and more able to meet the needs of present and future generations. Successful implementation of the Goals will require policy coherence, integrated approaches and a move away from single-sector policies and investments, which in turn will need an all-of-Government approach that promotes the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. Regional cooperation will be critical to maximize the opportunities for building synergies between the economic, social and environmental dimensions and to overcome the first-mover risk that may be present in terms of short-term economic competitiveness.

**Opportunities for regional cooperation**

20. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Develop integrated approaches, models and tools with respect to each country’s policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development;

   (b) Support regional approaches to the prioritization of Goal interventions through the development of policy tools, methodologies and approaches;

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\[e\] See Commission resolution 72/6, para. 7 (d).
(c) Promote integrated policies based on systems approaches and methodologies;

(d) Promote the valuation and quantification of the co-benefits of policy action addressing interconnected Goals and targets.

(e) **North-South, South-South, international and regional partnerships**

*Current status*

21. Comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will require partnerships and the deployment of new solutions between countries and across subregions. Countries in the Asia-Pacific region could benefit from North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation as well as the sharing of good practices and home-grown approaches.

*Opportunities for regional cooperation*

22. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Build capacity in developing countries, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;\(^f\)

(b) Share good practices through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation,\(^g\) including through regional platforms such as the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;

(c) Promote and scale up best practices.\(^h\)

2. **Thematic issues**

(a) **Leaving no one behind (social development)**

*Current status*

23. Despite high and enduring economic growth and significant progress in terms of poverty eradication, inequality persists in the Asia-Pacific region, and in some instances has intensified. Growing disparities in income and wealth, as well as inequality of opportunity, disproportionately affect women and vulnerable groups. Currently, up to 70 per cent of the population lacks reliable access to good-quality and affordable health-care services, and less than one third of the working-age population are eligible for a pension in many countries of the region. The participation rate of women in the labour force remains low, at 48 per cent. Only 30 per cent of all persons with disabilities have enough income for self-support.

*Opportunities for regional cooperation*

24. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Promote analytical studies and policy advocacy to address inequalities, reduce poverty and enhance social protection, including for persons with disabilities, to build socioeconomic resilience;\(^i\)

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\(^f\) See General Assembly resolution 70/1.

\(^g\) See Commission resolution 72/6, para. 8.

\(^h\) See General Assembly resolution 70/222.

\(^i\) See E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/4 and Commission resolution 67/8.
(b) Continue regional and subregional dialogues to support multisectoral policies, strategies and programmes to implement the 2030 Agenda, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and advance gender equality and women’s empowerment;

(c) Address unemployment and underemployment among youth, including by improving the match between the knowledge and skills of youth and labour market demands;

(d) Facilitate regional and subregional dialogue on policies to address population ageing;

(e) Implement the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific;

(f) Strengthen the linkages between international migration and development, including through more effective management of migration.

(b) Disaster risk reduction and resilience

Current status

25. Since 2005, the Asia-Pacific region has recorded almost 60 per cent of total global deaths, 80 per cent of affected people and 45 per cent of total economic damage due to disasters. Currently, over 500 million poor people are living at medium or high disaster risk. Disasters in the region are becoming more complex, often tending to affect multiple countries, and bring about cascading impacts. Many of these disasters are transboundary in nature, such as floods, El Niño, droughts, tropical cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis and sand and dust storms. For instance, the 2015-2016 El Niño affected entire swathes of the Asia-Pacific region, including South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific. There is scope for strengthened regional cooperation in relation to specific hazards such as transboundary river basin floods, flash floods, glacial lake outburst floods and landslides.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

26. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Promote effective regional and subregional efforts to strengthen disaster risk modelling, assessment, mapping, monitoring and multi-hazard early warning systems of common and transboundary disasters;

(b) Facilitate regional dialogue and cooperation in integrating disaster risk reduction into related development activities;

(c) Maximize the efficiency of existing regional cooperation mechanisms, including the World Meteorological Organization/ESCAP Panel

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\(^{j}\) See Commission resolution 71/13.

\(^{k}\) See E/ESCAP/CSD(4)/4.

\(^{l}\) See Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/5 and General Assembly resolution 70/164.

\(^{m}\) See Commission resolution 69/13.


\(^{o}\) See Commission resolution 71/12.
on Tropical Cyclones and the Regional Cooperative Drought Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning;

(d) Improve analysis to enhance regional knowledge on disaster risk and resilience, promote the wide dissemination of such knowledge, identify challenges and opportunities for data-sharing and provide the analytical basis for regional cooperation;

(e) Promote capacity-building regarding climate resilience, including climate-related disaster risk reduction, through policy dialogues and the sharing of experiences and information;

(f) Develop and implement holistic and participatory disaster risk management at all levels, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2016 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(g) Promote a “Build Back Better” approach in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction, as well as implementation of the health aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, including the Bangkok Principles, with a view to ensuring more systematic cooperation, coherence and integration between disaster and health risk management.

(c) Climate change

Current status

27. Climate change has already taken hold in the Asia-Pacific region. Higher temperatures, the rise in sea level and extreme weather events related to climate change are likely having a major impact on the region, increasing risks to economies and natural and physical assets and potentially compounding development challenges, including with respect to poverty, food and energy security and health. Future climate change in the region may cause more frequent and severe coastal inundation and erosion, salinization, wildfires, heavy precipitation and drought. Climate change is a long-term threat to future generations, and given the significant past growth in greenhouse gas emissions in the region and the potential for an acceleration of that growth in the near future, it is vital that Asia-Pacific countries take strong action to transition to more efficient, low-carbon economies to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. A recent World Bank study estimated that without further climate change adaptation and mitigation action, climate change could force more than 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030, many in the Asia-Pacific region. There is a need to enhance finance related to climate change and the capacity of countries in the region to access it.

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\(^{p}\) See E/ESCAP/CDR(4)/6.

\(^{q}\) See Commission resolution 72/8.


Opportunities for regional cooperation

28. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Promote capacity-building for climate action through policy dialogue and the sharing of experiences and information by utilizing existing institutions, forums and platforms;

   (b) Promote capacity-building of member States regarding climate change, climate resilience, including climate-related disaster risk reduction.

(d) Management of natural resources

Current status

29. As humankind’s livelihoods, nutrition and economic opportunities all fundamentally depend upon utilizing the terrestrial and marine resources and ecosystems of our planet, the Asia-Pacific region’s continuing survival and prosperity depends on managing these resources to be sustainable. The region consumes more than half of the world’s natural resources with increasing rates of absolute resource use and increasing resource use per person. This combination puts pressure on the natural environment and increases the possibilities of irreversible environmental damage, with direct social and economic consequences. At the same time, there is huge potential to improve the resource efficiency of the economies in the region’s countries as there are vast variations of resource efficiency between countries. For example, developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region use five times more materials per dollar of gross domestic product than the rest of the world, and 10 times more than industrialized countries in the region.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

30. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

   (a) Promote policies and strategies with respect to resource efficiency and environmentally sound technologies;

   (b) Share experiences and cooperate on management of natural resources including oceans and seas with a view to increasing food security, conserving the environment, protecting biodiversity and enhancing the welfare of the community;

   (c) Develop and share best practices related to increasing agricultural productivity, sustainable agriculture, food security and rural welfare while reducing negative environmental impacts and degradation of the ecosystem.

(e) Connectivity for the 2030 Agenda

Current status

31. While trade has been a key engine of growth and development, there is growing recognition of the need to make it more inclusive and ensure that its benefits are spread more widely. Transport development has been road-oriented and has not optimized the comparative advantages of each mode of transport from the perspective of the three dimensions of sustainable development, but transport remains a main driver of growth. While transport is the second largest producer of carbon dioxide emissions globally, the sector has the potential to significantly contribute to sustainable development by optimizing the environmental and social comparative advantages of
various transport modes. While Internet access is high across the region, there is also a widening digital divide. Improvements in regional connectivity in terms of transport, information and communications technology and trade will boost economic growth and are of critical significance in achieving sustainable development.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

32. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Expand and integrate the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network and the network of dry ports to allow maximum modal integration and expansion of connectivity to rural areas; develop and integrate maritime connectivity and implement regional transport facilitation frameworks¹ and other technical standards for operationalizing transport connectivity; develop regional standards including harmonization of technical standards of transport infrastructure, sustainable urban transport index, regional road safety goals, targets and indicators and handbooks on road safety;

(b) Implement the Asia-Pacific information superhighway;²

(c) Enable paperless trade and e-commerce and review the current approaches towards regional integration to improve their efficacy, in particular to simplify and harmonize trade and supporting regulations and procedures to make the benefits of trade accessible for all.³

(f) Energy

Current status

33. Nearly half a billion people in Asia and the Pacific still lack access to electricity. More than 80 per cent of the countries in the region have targets to improve energy efficiency and increase the share of renewable energy in the region. More than assisting in energy supply needs, renewable sources of energy are receiving further impetus from the climate agenda. While the region has emerged as the producer and provider of most of the world’s renewable energy technology, the overall trend within the region is diversification of the domestic energy mix, depending on national and subregional context. Given the uneven distribution of energy resources in the Asia-Pacific region and the need for transition of the energy sector towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7, there is good scope for coordinated regional action to achieve optimal deployment and utilization of energy resources through enhanced connectivity, economic cooperation and integration.

Opportunities for regional cooperation

34. Opportunities for regional cooperation are to:

(a) Support the work of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum and other regional mandates as well as the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 7;

¹ See the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport and the Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport.
² See E/ESCAP/CICTSTI(1)/10.
³ See Commission resolutions 68/3 and 72/4.
(b) Promote policy dialogues and networking among member States to develop a regional cooperation framework to enhance energy security, with a view to promoting greater use of sustainable energy resources, including universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, energy services, energy efficiency, advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies and renewable energy as well as energy connectivity, in particular transboundary power trade;\(^w\)

(c) Identify complementary approaches for small-scale energy solutions, including in smaller or remote regions;

(d) Assist in the development of strategies towards attaining internationally agreed development goals on energy.

C. Implementation

35. As noted by the Third Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development,\(^x\) the secretariat will facilitate cooperation among members and associate members of ESCAP under the regional road map, including by doing the following:

(a) Promote multi-stakeholder engagement by facilitating input and views from various stakeholders as appropriate;

(b) Mobilize support from, among other sources, the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations by leveraging the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism and its thematic working groups to play an active role;

(c) Undertake, in consultation with member States, a needs assessment and gap analysis during 2017, if necessary, including mapping of countries that need support in certain areas.

36. The above priority areas of cooperation will be facilitated through the conference structure of the Commission, as well as through existing expertise within ESCAP subprogrammes, the regional institutes and the thematic working groups of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism. Cooperation in these priority areas is also intended to allow member States and the secretariat to contextualize global commitments and national priorities to harmonize dynamic social and economic conditions in the region.

37. Cooperation will be undertaken in coordination with regional and subregional organizations to ensure that activities contribute to subregional priorities, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

38. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is convened annually as an inclusive intergovernmental platform preparatory to the high-level political forum on sustainable development and will provide an opportunity for review of and dialogue on the road map. The priority areas of cooperation in this road map are flexible in nature and subject to review and revision. The phases of review of the regional road map may be aligned through the Forum with the four-year cycle of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The relationship between the Forum and the

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\(^w\) See E/ESCAP/CE(1)/8.

\(^x\) E/ESCAP/FSD(3)/4, para. 16 A. (d).
road map will be further defined pending agreement by member States on the form and function of the Forum.

D. Tracking the progress of the regional road map through the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

39. Reviews of progress on implementation of the regional road map will take place annually at the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, with reference to the globally agreed Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework. This process will not create additional reporting requirements for member States and will be conducted within existing resources.

40. The review process may include member States and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate.
Annex III

Terms of reference of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

A. Overall functions

1. The Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development is an annual, inclusive intergovernmental forum. It supports preparations for the high-level political forum on sustainable development in the context of both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

2. The Forum will serve as a regional platform for:

   (a) Supporting countries, in particular countries with special needs, including through enhancing their capacity for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

   (b) Providing a regional perspective on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by identifying regional trends, and consolidating and sharing best practices and lessons learned, taking into account the contributions of other United Nations system bodies at the regional level, other regional and subregional organizations and relevant stakeholders;

   (c) Supporting follow-up and review of progress on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals at the regional level through: assessing progress and providing opportunities for peer learning related to the theme and goals that will be reviewed at the high-level political forum; supporting the presentation of voluntary national reviews; and undertaking periodic review of progress of the road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

3. These functions will benefit from inter-agency support including through the United Nations Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism.

B. Conduct of the Forum

4. As part of the conference structure of the Commission, the Forum will be convened annually as an inclusive intergovernmental forum ahead of the high-level political forum. The theme of the Forum should be consistent with that of the high-level political forum and the cluster of goals to be reviewed in-depth should be identical to the cluster of goals under the high-level political forum.

5. The Forum will not get ahead of, or pre-judge decisions of the high-level political forum, increase the reporting burden of member States or increase the regular budget of the Commission beyond what has already been approved by the General Assembly.

6. The current format, including the election of the bureau for each session, could be maintained and provide space for multi-stakeholder engagement for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in consultation, as appropriate, with member States.

7. The outcome of the Forum will be in the form of a report with a chair’s summary annexed to the report.
8. The Forum may consider subregional perspectives on the themes addressed by the Forum. Preparatory meetings of stakeholders may be convened, within existing resources.

9. The Forum, including stakeholder engagement, will be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission as well as the modalities of the high-level political forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council as long as there is no conflict between them.

10. During each session, a member of the bureau of the previous session could report on the discussions at the intervening high-level political forum and on the conclusions of the previous session of the Forum.

11. The conduct of the Forum will avoid duplication with other regional forums and platforms; in the interest of efficiency, where appropriate, the Forum will be convened in coordination or collaboration with other forums and platforms.

C. Relationship of the Forum with the conference structure of the Commission

12. The report of the Forum as defined in paragraph 13 will be brought to the attention of the subsequent session of the Commission by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Forum.

13. The Forum could receive inputs from the committees that are subsidiary to the Commission as well as other relevant stakeholders.

14. The Forum could benefit from advice provided by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission as a modality for consulting member States between sessions of the Forum.

15. In the years when the high-level political forum meets under the auspices of the General Assembly at the summit level, which is every four years, the Forum may converge with the Commission session in April/May, and the Commission and the Forum will share the same theme, where appropriate. In other years when the high-level political forum meets under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, the Forum shall meet at the senior technical level.

16. If requested by member States, the terms of reference of the Forum may be revised upon recommendation of the Forum and endorsement by the Commission, taking into account new inputs from the high-level political forum and based on periodic review by member States.