

**ASSESSMENT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE
ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

Bangkok, Thailand
22-24 February 2012

Summary Assessment

The second session of the Committee on Environment and Development was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 22-24 February 2012. A questionnaire was distributed towards the end of the session to obtain feedback from participants on its relevance, effectiveness and quality, to enable the secretariat to improve on its preparations for and servicing of future sessions. The response rate to the questionnaire was not very good with 34.6 percent or 9 of 26 participating delegations responding. Hence the responses cannot be generalized in view of the low number of participating delegations.

The present assessment has been conducted on the basis of the feed-back received from delegations together with a qualitative analysis of the draft report of the session, bearing in mind the terms of reference for the Committee on Environment and Development as contained in resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission.

I. Attendance

The Committee session was not very well attended, with only 41.9% (N=26/62) of ESCAP members and associate members participating.

Three or 22% respondents indicated that their delegation was from the Capital – Ministry of Environment and Development, one (1) or 11 % indicated that their delegation was from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and (4) 44% indicated that their representatives was mainly from Embassy representatives in Bangkok, while (2) 22% indicated that their delegation was a combination of representatives from the Capital and the Embassy in Bangkok.

Some delegations provided comments and suggestions on how to encourage higher and wider representation from their countries at the Committee sessions, including: (a) ESCAP providing financial support to attend the meeting from the Capital and (b) discussions with national focal point prior to meeting.

II. Ownership

The sense of ownership by participants of the Committee was relatively good, as demonstrated by 33% (N=3/9) of respondents indicating that the Committee session was owned and driven by member States to a great extent and 56% (N=5/9) to a good extent, and 33% (N=3/9) responding that the overall outcome of the deliberations was a result of a collaborative effort to a great extent and 44% (N=4/9) to a good extent. 22% (N=2/9) of respondents felt that the draft report adequately reflected the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the Committee to a great extent and 56% (N=5/9) to a good extent. Additionally, 22% (N=2/9) indicated that the secretariat's in session interventions contributed to effective conduct and outcome of the session to a great extent, and 78 % (N=7/9) indicated to a good extent.

III. Relevance

The feed-back indicates that participants were of the view that the agenda items of the Committee were timely and relevant to issues and trends regarding Environment and Development in the Asian and Pacific region. Respondents 44% (N=4/9) agreed to a great extent and 56% (N=5/9) indicated to a good extent. An equal number of four respondents or 44% agreed to a great extent that the agenda items reflected the needs and priorities of their countries, while 44% of the respondents (N=4/9) agreed to a good extent. The majority (56%) N=5/9 agreed to a great extent that the benefits of their delegation's attendance justified the costs (travel, time opportunity cost of absence from the office), while 44% (N=4/9) agreed to a good extent.

The most relevant agenda items for the delegations in attendance included (in order): (1) Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in environmental sustainability. (2) Rio+20 Regional preparation and work of the Committee and some representatives expressed that all the agenda items were of equal importance.

IV. Efficiency

The feed-back indicates that member States were satisfied with the efficiency of organization and conduct of the Committee session. Many respondents agreed to a great extent that the pre-session documents conveyed clear messages 56% (N=5/9), while 22% (N=2/9) indicated to a good extent and 22% N=2/9 remained neutral. The majority of respondents indicated that the pre-session documents were issued in a timely manner, 56% (N=5/9), to a greater extent and 22% (N=2/9) to a good extent while 22% (N=2/9) were neutral. Participants also indicated that the conference services provided by the secretariat were efficient 11% (N=1/9) indicating to a greater extent and 67% (N= 6/9) indicating to a good extent while 11% (N=1/9) were neutral. A number of respondents 22% (N=2/9) agreed to a great extent that the organization of work prior to/in between Committee sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Committee, 56% (N=5/9) agreed to a good extent.

V. Outcomes in light of ESCAP resolution 64/1

The responses regarding the outcomes relating to the general terms of reference for the Committee were positive the majority felt that the Committee was successful in addressing its Terms of Reference. The session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on Committee on Environment and Development addressed effectively the issues outlined in resolution 64/1 that should be addressed by all Committees subsidiary to the Commission. The majority of participants indicated that they were satisfied with the committee session addressing its terms of reference in particular; to review and analyze regional trends, 33% (N=3/9) indicating to a greater extent, and 56% (N=5/9) indicating to a good extent.

Many felt that the committee session succeeded in identifying priorities and emerging issues 33% (N=3/9) to a greater extent while 56% (N=5/9) indicated to a good extent.

1. An equal number of respondents felt that the committee session promoted dialogue on regional and subregional approaches to a great extent 33% (N=3/9),

while 33% (N=3/9) indicated to a good extent and 33% (N=3/9) were neutral. Additionally some participants indicated to a greater extent that the committee session succeeded in promotion of a collaborative approach to address development challenges at the regional and sub regional levels, 11% (N=1/9) indicating to a greater extent and 56% (N=5/9) indicating to a good extent and 33% (N=3/9) remaining neutral. Overall the majority of respondents felt that the Committee was able to fulfill its terms of reference to a good extent.

VI. Most and least successful

Some participants felt that the most successful feature of the committee session included but not limited to; Consensus on issues related to Environment and Development, Rio+20 discussions and the organization of the working group.

Of the least successful features of the session were; lack or low participation from the capital.

VII. Conclusion

In general, participants at the second session of the Committee on Environment and Development were satisfied with the ownership, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the Committee. However, this assessment concludes that the second session was affected negatively by the low participation of member States.

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Overall relevance of the session

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. The agenda items were timely and relevant to issues and trends regarding environment and development in the Asian and Pacific region.	4(44%)	5(56%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)
b. The agenda items reflected the needs and priorities of my country.	4(44%)	4(44%)	1(11%)	(0%)	(0%)
c. The benefits of my delegation's attendance justified the costs (travel, time, opportunity cost of absence from the office).	5(56%)	4(44%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)

Organization

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. The pre-session documents conveyed clear messages concerning the issues placed on the agenda.	5(56%)	2(22%)	2(22%)	(0%)	(0%)
b. The pre-session documents were issued in a timely manner.	5(56%)	2(22%)	2(22%)	(0%)	(0%)
c. The Committee used efficiently the time available for discussions.	2(22%)	5(56%)	2(22%)	(0%)	(0%)
d. The conference services provided by the secretariat were efficient.	1(11%)	6(67%)	1(11%)	(0%)	1(11%)
e. The organization of work prior to/in between Committee sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Committee.	2(22%)	5(56%)	1(11%)	1(11%)	1(11%)

Substantive outcome of the session

3. To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. Agenda item 4, Outcome of the Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20 <i>Expected outcome: Member States are briefed on the outcome of the Regional Preparatory Meeting held in Seoul from 19-20 October 2011.</i>	5(56%)	4(44%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)
b. Agenda item 5, Outcome of the Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum <i>Expected outcome: Member States are reported on the proceedings of the Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum held in Bangkok from 22-24 June 2011, particularly focusing on the conclusions and recommendations, including secretariat's role in the implementation.</i>	5(56%)	4(44%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)

3. To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
<p>c. Agenda item 6a, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in environmental sustainability</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of the environment and socio-economic interactions, as well as the emerging trend in the enabling socio-economic policies and practices applied at the national level. Member States are also informed of the basis for further exchange of relevant information and national experiences as well as for defining the direction of future regional cooperation.</i></p>	3(33%)	5(56%)	1(11%)	(0%)	(0%)
<p>d. Agenda item 6b, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in energy security</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States review the status of opportunities for and challenges to energy security and the sustainable use of energy in the region and will reflect the process leading up to the 2013 Asia-Pacific Energy Forum.</i></p>	3(33%)	6(67%)	(0%)	(0%)	(0%)
<p>e. Agenda item 6c, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in water resource management</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of why implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) continue to be crucial in managing water resources holistically, taking into cognizance the impact of rapid urbanization and impact of climate change which hit through changes in the hydrological cycle and water balance.</i></p>	4(44%)	4(44%)	(0%)	1(11%)	(0%)
<p>f. Agenda item 6d, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in sustainable urban development</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States discuss some strategies that could achieve ESCAP's role in helping countries achieve inclusive and sustainable urban development.</i></p>	4(44%)	4(44%)	1(11%)	(0%)	(0%)
<p>g. Agenda item 6e, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Progress in implementing outcomes of MCED6</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the progress in implementing outcomes of MCED6, with highlights on actions being undertaken in the 6 key areas of the Regional Implementation Plan on Sustainable Development in Asia and Pacific 2010-2015 (RIP), which member States agreed to work together during the next five years.</i></p>	4(44%)	4(44%)	1(11%)	(0%)	(0%)
<p>h. Agenda item 7, Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States provide recommendations and guidance on the focus of the short- and longer-term work in the area of environment and development, taking into account the programme direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework for 2012-2013.</i></p>	2(22%)	4(44%)	2(22%)	1(11%)	(0%)

3. To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
i. Agenda item 8, Consideration of draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session <i>Expected outcome: Member States consider possible draft resolutions relating to environment and development for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.</i>	2(22%)	6(67%)	(0%)	1(11%)	(0%)
j. Agenda item 9, Other matters <i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed and decide on any other concerns related to the Committee on Environment and Development.</i>	1(11%)	3(33%)	1(11%)	(0%)	3(33%)

Committee's general terms of reference

5. To what extent did the Committee session succeed in addressing its terms of reference?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. Review and analyze regional trends.	3(33%)	5(56%)	1(11%)	(0%)	(0%)
b. Identify priorities and emerging issues, particularly those with implications for the work of the secretariat.	3(33%)	5(56%)	1(11%)	(0%)	(0%)
c. Promote dialogue on regional and subregional approaches and an exchange of experiences on policies and programmes.	3(33%)	3(33%)	3(33%)	(0%)	(0%)
d. Promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges at the regional and subregional levels.	1(11%)	5(56%)	3(33%)	(0%)	(0%)

Participation

7. To what extent do you feel that...	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. the Committee session was owned and driven by member States?	3(33%)	5(56%)	1(11%)	(0%)	(0%)
B. the overall outcome of the deliberations is a result of a collaborative effort by members of the Committee?	3(33%)	4(44%)	2(22%)	(0%)	(0%)
C. the draft report adequately reflects the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the Committee?	2(22%)	5(56%)	(0%)	1(11%)	1(11%)
D. the secretariat's in-session interventions contributed to effective conduct and outcome of the session?	2(22%)	7(78%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

8. My delegation's attendance at the Committee session was:

22%	mainly from the Capital	
11%	mainly from the Capital - Ministry of Foreign Affairs	
44%	mainly by representatives in Bangkok (Embassy)	
22%	a combination of the above	
0	0%	other:

Annex II. Questionnaire comments

Additional comments

[Verbatim from the completed questionnaires]

What was the most relevant agenda item for your delegation?

- All agenda items were of equal relevance.
- Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in environmental sustainability (agenda item 6a)
- Agenda item 8.
- All of the items was very important.
- Rio +20 Regional preparation and work of the Committee. Provide and insight view on the issues at regional and other country's level.
- Item 6a, b, c, d
- Item 6.

How can the Committee more effectively address its terms of reference (5 (a-d) above)?

- Dialogue between countries?

Is there anything that could have been done to encourage higher and wider representation from your country at the Committee session?

- ESCAP may provide financial support to attend the meeting from the Capital.
- Discussion with national focal point.

What was the most successful feature of the Committee session?

- Consensus on issues related to Environment and Development.
- In view of the forthcoming Rio+20, the positions of various delegations are better known to each other.
- Readiness/willingness of the member states and the secretariat to come out with consensus on the issues.
- Organization of working group.
- The meeting and discussion reflect members' view and make the session very informative.

Annex II. Questionnaire comments

What was the least successful feature of the Committee session?

- Participation from the Capital is very low.
- The general faculty of the issues as each countries have their own approaches in handing the matter.

Please provide any additional comments you may have on the Committee session and further suggestions on how we may improve on secretariat preparations for and the servicing of future session:

- The circulation of the draft report was timely despite slight contusion relating to duplicated paragraphs.
- On behalf of Kazakhstan, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for Secretariat's work during last 2nd session. I hope for future cooperation in all spheres to Secretariat of ESCAP.
- Better communication between the secretariat and the member States.
- Report should reflect clearly what members expressed or delivered in the panel.
- The meeting could be prepared with less paper (less printed documents).

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Annex III. Achievement of substantive outcomes

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Agenda Item	Substantive Outcome	Quantitative survey response	Qualitative assessment based on a review of the draft report of the session
<p>e. Agenda item 4, Outcome of the Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States are briefed on the outcome of the Regional Preparatory Meeting held in Seoul from 19-20 October 2011</p>	<p>(56%) N=5/9 to a greater extent and N= 4(44%) to a good extent</p>	<p>The substantive outcomes were met to a greater extent with some room for further improvement. The Committee took note of the Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth and the Astana Green Bridge Initiative and the projects under those initiatives implemented by the member States. The Committee agreed that a green economy has to be seen in the context of sustainable development , poverty eradication and the need to reform and improve the institutional framework for sustainable development.</p> <p>The Committee also recommended that ESCAP continues to strengthen regional and subregional cooperation including the development of networks and knowledge networks platforms to share views and best practices and policies to achieve sustainable development.</p> <p>The Committee recognized the need for developed countries to provide enabling resources, including technologies, in particular environmentally sound technologies, and predictable financing, knowledge sharing and capacity development.</p>
<p>f. Agenda item 5, Outcome of the Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States are reported on the proceedings of the Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum held in Bangkok from 22-24 June 2011, particularly focusing on the conclusions and</p>	<p>(56%) N=5/9 to a greater extent and N= 4/9(44%) to a good extent</p>	<p>The substantive outcomes were met to a good extent. Experience was shared and recommendations were made.</p> <p>The Committee recognized the importance of formulating and implementing policies for sustainable production and consumption and emphasized the need to enhance energy security by improving resource efficiency.</p>

Annex III. Achievement of substantive outcomes

	<p>recommendations, including secretariat's role in the implementation.</p>		<p>The Committee called for an action oriented , forward looking, consensus –based , balanced and inclusive outcome document from Rio+20 which supports global partnerships for sustainable development, reaffirming the principles of solidarity and equity and ensuring support to reduce developing countries vulnerabilities to financial, fuel and climate crisis.</p> <p>The Committee stressed that poverty eradication was closely linked to access to clean water and basic sanitation and remained a challenge, particularly in remote areas.</p> <p>The Secretariat was requested to clarify the term “household water security” and continue working on improving water resources management which will ultimately lead to improved access to clean water and improved sanitation. One delegation asked the Secretariat to further develop a regional and subregional network in which member states could share experiences and best management practices in the areas of agricultural water management, infrastructure development, research and development and data sharing for integrated water resources management and disaster risk management.</p>
<p>g. Agenda item 6a, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in environmental sustainability</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of the environment and socio-economic interactions, as well as the emerging trend in the enabling socio-economic policies and practices applied at the national level. Member States are also informed of the basis for further exchange of relevant information and national experiences as well as for defining the direction of future regional cooperation</p>	<p>N=3/9 (33%) agree to a greater extent and N=5/9 (56%) agree to a good extent</p>	<p>The Committee was informed of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's recognition of the impact of rapid urbanization and the need for sustainable urban development and that the city was in the process of integrating the concept of sustainability into city planning and administration with several initiatives such as the Action Plan on Global Warming Mitigation for 2007-2012.</p> <p>The Committee was also informed of India's urban population which is growing at a rapid rate and had generated additional requirements for public infrastructure regarding basic health and sanitation services.</p>

Annex III. Achievement of substantive outcomes

			The Committee suggested that the Secretariat strengthen its work in capacity building, capacity building needs of urban local bodies, quality resource materials, trainers and data required for capacity development. Other key constraints noted were the inadequacy of public funds and innovative financing mechanisms including market based funds, land based sources and public-private partnerships (PPPs) to meet investment needs in urban areas.
i. Agenda item 6b, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in energy security	Expected outcome: Member States review the status of opportunities for and challenges to energy security and the sustainable use of energy in the region and will reflect the process leading up to the 2013 Asia-Pacific Energy Forum.	N=3/9(33%) agree to a greater extent and N=6/9(67%)agree to a good extent	The Committee continued in its support for addressing climate change which was viewed as a serious threat to sustainable development and required an adaptation of disaster risk reduction to be institutionalized and integrated into sectoral policy planning and implementation, including policies related to transport, energy, water, communications and social infrastructure, therefore requiring the models of low carbon development and green growth to be developed and pursued further.
ii. Agenda item 6c, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in water resource management	Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of why implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) continue to be crucial in managing water resources holistically, taking into cognizance the impact of rapid urbanization and impact of climate change which hit through changes in the hydrological cycle and water balance.	N=4/9 (44%) agree to a greater extent and N=4/9 (44%) agree to a good extent	The Committee recommended that the secretariat helps member countries at the regional and sub-regional levels to share experiences, best practices and technologies in managing water resources, and the Integrated water resources management (IWRM) remains an option in balancing the water needs of the economic, social and environmental sectors.
iii. Agenda item 6d, Trends and	Expected outcome: Member States discuss some strategies that could	N=4/9 (44%) agree to a greater	The Committee recognized the importance of formulating and implementing policies for sustainable production and

Annex III. Achievement of substantive outcomes

<p>progress in the field of environment and development: Emerging and persistent issues in sustainable urban development</p>	<p>achieve ESCAP's role in helping countries achieve inclusive and sustainable urban development.</p>	<p>extent and N=4/9 (44%) agree to a good extent</p>	<p>consumption and emphasized the need to enhance energy security by improving resource efficiency in general. The Secretariat was also encouraged to promote renewable energy resources while some delegations also called for active efforts in the area of integrated energy policy development, including the use if market mechanisms as well as dissemination of knowledge regarding new and renewable energy options.</p>
<p>iv. Agenda item 6e, Trends and progress in the field of environment and development: Progress in implementing outcomes of MCED6</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the progress in implementing outcomes of MCED6, with highlights on actions being undertaken in the 6 key areas of the Regional Implementation Plan on Sustainable Development in Asia and Pacific 2010-2015 (RIP), which member States agreed to work together during the next five years.</p>	<p>N=4/9 (44%) agree to a greater extent and N=4/9 (44%) agree to a good extent</p>	<p>The role of the Secretariat in providing support to member States un executing the Regional Implementation Plan (RIP), disseminating information and exchanging experiences was also emphasized.</p>
<p>v. Agenda item 7, Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States provide recommendations and guidance on the focus of the short- and longer-term work in the area of environment and development, taking into account the programme direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework for 2012-2013.</p>	<p>N=2/9(22%)agree to a greater extent and N=4/9(44%) agree to a good extent</p>	<p>One delegation recommended that the subprogramme addresses the challenges of poverty eradication and inclusive growth in its current work on sustainable development on the principles of the Rio Summit and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The delegation asked that the subprogram continue to conduct analytical studies and capacity building initiatives on sustainable consumption patters, technology transfers and financing for sustainable development as well as the exchange of best practices in urban management, water supply, disaster management, public-private partnerships, energy efficiency and power trading markets.</p>

Annex III. Achievement of substantive outcomes

<p>vi. Agenda item 8, Consideration of draft resolutions for submission to the Commission at its sixty-eighth session</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States consider possible draft resolutions relating to environment and development for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.</p>	<p>N=2/9(22%)agree to a greater extent and N=6/9(67%)agree to a good extent</p>	<p>The Committee had before it two draft resolutions submitted by the government of Japan for consideration (a). Asia –Pacific Years of Action for applications of space technology and Geographic Information System (GIS) for disaster risk reduction and sustainable development 2012-2017 and (b) a regional follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20).</p>
<p>vii. Agenda item 9, Other matters</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States are informed and decide on any other concerns related to the Committee on Environment and Development.</p>	<p>N=1/9(11%) agree to a greater extent and 3/9(33%) agree to a good extent and 3/9(33%) chose not to answer.</p>	<p>No other matters were raised.</p>