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Item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda*

Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission, including the work of the regional institutions: environment and development

Report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its fourth session

Summary

The Committee on Environment and Development held its fourth session in Bangkok from 11 to 13 November 2015. In the light of the adoption by Member States of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, and in order to support implementation of the Agenda in the region, the Committee considered emerging and persistent trends and issues in areas of critical importance to the region, focusing on implementation challenges related to the integrated and transformative nature of the new Agenda, and regional implementation strategies to build on the outcomes of regional dialogues.

The session began with an overview of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and priority areas of concern in the region with regard to environmental sustainability, including climate change mitigation and adaptation, energy security and the sustainable use of energy, water resource management and sustainable urban development. The Committee noted the need for strengthened regional cooperation mechanisms, including through development of a regional road map for implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and recognized the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as an appropriate and effective regional platform for processes, including following up and reviewing the 2030 Agenda. The Committee further recognized the important role of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in supporting effective follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and in forging a regional voice in the global arena.

Outcomes of key regional dialogues on sustainable development were shared, including the first and second sessions of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting to Habitat III for Asia-Pacific, the 2014 Policy Dialogue on Energy for Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific, the Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, and the workshop on water and green growth in Asia and the Pacific to prepare regional inputs for the Seventh World Water Forum. The Committee provided guidance on preparations for the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific. The Committee also requested the secretariat to take steps to ensure coordination and coherence across high-level forums in the region that address environmental and development issues.

With regard to the future focus of the subprogramme, the Committee expressed strong support for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, and called on the Commission to consider enhancing coherent and integrated activities under the auspices of that programme.

The Commission may wish to consider the matters calling for action or brought to its attention that are contained in the present report and provide the secretariat with further guidance.

* E/ESCAP/72/L.1.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

1. The Committee expresses support for the current format of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.
2. The Committee recognizes the role of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in conducting regional surveys on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which could be presented at the corresponding sectoral committees in ESCAP, with a view to introducing them at the future session of the Commission, and for further consideration by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Such surveys could be based on national presentations and voluntary reports by individual countries or by groups of countries within the same subregional grouping.
3. The Committee welcomes the expression of interest regarding the hosting of the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific by Bangladesh in 2016.
4. The Committee requests the secretariat to take steps to ensure coherence and coordination across high-level forums in the region that address environment and development issues.

5. The Committee expresses strong support for the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, characterizing the implemented projects as practically oriented and far-reaching, and calls on the Commission to consider enhancing coherent activities under the auspices of the Programme.

6. The Committee requests the secretariat to ensure that the documentation provided for its consideration at future sessions is broader and presents a comprehensive record of its work and analysis of regional trends, as well as practical proposals on future activities.

II. Proceedings

A. Transformation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: review of emerging regional trends and agenda-setting

7. The Committee had before it the document entitled “Transformation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: review of emerging regional trends and agenda-setting” (E/ESCAP/CED(4)/1).

8. The document, prepared under agenda item 4, was introduced by the Officer-in-Charge of the Environment and Development Division, who highlighted the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, implementation challenges related to its integrated and transformative nature and the initial steps taken to prepare a regional road map to support its implementation.

9. The Committee was invited to reflect on initiatives to respond to the 2030 Agenda on the role of regional cooperation in supporting responses at the national level. Delegations were invited to share their perspectives on the challenges, opportunities, requirements and stakeholder engagement in implementing sustainable development in a panel discussion.

10. In Bangladesh, where protection and improvement of environment and biodiversity was already a constitutional obligation, the 2030 Agenda had been reflected in the seventh five-year development plan and indicators and targets had already been identified. In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic legislative processes were described as moving at different speeds, but were in line with the sustainable development agenda. Tonga, as a small island developing State, faced considerable levels of risk related to climate change and financial gaps for alternative technology and infrastructure. A “least cost approach” had therefore been adopted with ambitious targets for renewable energy use. It was proposed that Governments and civil society could work together more effectively in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It was emphasized that collaboration should go beyond ad hoc associations to long-term strategic partnerships that would lead to societal transformation.

11. The panellist representing civil society organizations discussed the actions that were needed at the national, subregional, regional and global levels to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Those actions should include civil society organizations and other stakeholders, while paying attention to gender and human rights. The importance of subregional engagement was highlighted; in particular the importance of ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources in the Association Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community. Wide and persistent knowledge gaps should be addressed so as to ensure leadership for transformation. At the regional level, financing for sustainable development could be strengthened

by South-South solidarity; grants, rather than loans, should be provided and illicit financial flows tackled. A regional tax body could, inter alia, promote progressive tax policies.

12. A panellist shared his perspectives on the conclusions of the Expert Consultation on Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, highlighting, among other issues, regional action on tax regimes, the importance of financing the implementation of all the Sustainable Development Goals, the need to work with local businesses and small and medium-sized enterprises, engagement with academia and strengthening the science-policy interface. He also reflected on the need for ESCAP to work with more synergy and coherence in order to be able to support member States. Groups of member States acting together, he suggested, could spearhead the agenda; leadership from the Asia-Pacific region was important in the current global context.

13. Another panellist highlighted water security as a multifaceted and multidimensional concept, and the need for ESCAP to act as a facilitator of: tracking the interlinkages between the water- and sanitation-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and re-enforcing feedback mechanisms; regional and subregional high-level dialogue; earth observation tools for water resources and pollution monitoring; research on persistent pollutants; and knowledge- and data-sharing, capacity-building and technology transfer, in particular with a view to building water-resilient and sustainable cities.

14. Statements were made by the representatives of the following countries: Bangladesh; India; Japan; Nepal; Pakistan; Russian Federation; and Thailand. The following organizations also made statements: International Labour Organization (ILO); Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism; and Institute for Global Environmental Strategies.

15. The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress made by the region in promoting regional cooperation on sustainable development in the areas of environment and development policy, energy security and sustainable urban development and the use of energy and water, and called for further strengthening of such efforts.

16. The Committee welcomed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and the specific steps that had already been taken to implement the Goals. Those included mainstreaming the Goals in the planning process; consultations on the Millennium Development Goals, which had facilitated aligning the national vision with the Sustainable Development Goals; a public sector development programme that would establish a Goals centre; arrangements for financing innovative development initiatives to support the Goals and targets; and subcommittees to initiate monitoring sustainable development, capacity-building on the Goals and a database thereon. The importance of science and technology, in particular the application of information and communications technology and the need to engage stakeholders in its implementation, was noted.

17. The Committee noted the need to strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms in order to realize the vision of a new development agenda. Perspectives and proposals on a regional road map for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals, were shared. The Committee recognized the need to take into consideration different priorities and levels of social and economic development and challenges. The Committee welcomed the proposal that the regional road map should focus on the means of implementation through identifying gaps in cooperation in

science and technology, trade and investment, infrastructure, connectivity and institutional-building processes. One delegation stated that peer review would not be an acceptable means of reviewing progress on implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It was suggested that an analysis of gaps in achievement regarding the Millennium Development Goals and action through the 2030 Agenda framework would be useful.

18. The Committee welcomed the commitment of member States to implement the 2030 Agenda. The Committee emphasized the need to strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms to support implementation and to continue to work closely with the secretariat in that regard.

19. The Committee noted the proposal of several delegations for ESCAP to take the lead in the follow-up and review processes at the regional level regarding the 2030 Agenda. In addition, ESCAP should continue to support regional integration, promote South-South and North-South cooperation efforts and actively build capacity, including through technical assistance.

20. The Committee recognized the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as an appropriate and effective regional platform, including for follow-up and review regarding the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, and welcomed the perspectives and proposals made by member States.

21. The Committee further noted that the process of developing a regional road map in response to the conclusions of the second Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development had been initiated with the convening of the Expert Consultation on Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, which had been held on 9 and 10 November 2015.

22. One delegation requested the secretariat to provide further information on the process involved in developing the road map.

23. The Committee took note of various programmes initiated by the member States that would support their efforts to address the challenge of climate change in the context of sustainable development. Those included: initiatives related to strengthening regional cooperation through the Green Bridge Partnership Programme, taking into account the Green Bridge Partnership Programme conference held in Astana on 13 and 14 November 2015; urban governance, infrastructure development and energy use, such as strengthening urban governance and low-carbon city strategies; widening access to energy through a solar rooftop programme and solar farms; a coal tax; smart city programmes that seek higher levels of resource efficiency; developing a master plan for a mass transit system and railway; and global energy connectivity with more green power generation. Ambitious targets for renewable energy use and reductions in emissions and energy imports had also been set by certain member States.

24. Other important initiatives that were shared by member States included the promotion of sustainable consumption and production and the establishment of institutional frameworks for addressing climate change and for low carbon, green development. In one country, the concept of a sufficiency economy guided implementation of sustainable development, while in another a mission to clean up the country was an integral part of a green growth strategy. The concept of a “blue economy” had opened up new horizons for the economic development of coastal areas in the region.

25. Concerns were expressed regarding the trends in disasters, such as floods and drought, and the related degradation of land, water and forests.

Natural resources management initiatives with a particular focus on water were also highlighted, such as community-based resource management, reforestation programmes to augment water resources management for agriculture and hydropower and integrated water resources management.

26. The Committee welcomed the fact that the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization would start to report to it in the 2016-2017 biennium.

27. The Committee appreciated the perspectives and proposals of civil society participants. The Committee noted the importance of engaging civil society and major stakeholders in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

28. The Committee expressed appreciation to the secretariat for making the necessary preparations for the meeting, including its documentation. One delegation expressed its concern regarding the organization of the Committee session and pointed out that there was only one official document submitted by the secretariat for the consideration of the Committee, which lacked information on the major environment-related achievements of ESCAP, a comprehensive analysis of regional trends and practical proposals on future activities.

B. Outcomes of key regional dialogues on sustainable development

29. The Committee had before it the documents entitled “Outcomes of the first and second sessions of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development” (E/ESCAP/CED(4)/INF/4); “Outcomes of the Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum and the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting to Habitat III for Asia-Pacific” (E/ESCAP/CED(4)/INF/5); “Conclusion and recommendations of the 2014 policy dialogue on energy for sustainable development for Asia and the Pacific” (E/ESCAP/CED(4)/INF/6); “Report on the joint statement of the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions for the Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development” (E/ESCAP/CED(4)/INF/7); and “Experiences on water and green growth in Asia and the Pacific” (E/ESCAP/CED(4)/INF/8).

30. The secretariat made a presentation and highlighted the outcomes of a number of regional forums related to the subprogramme on environment and development. The first session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, which was held in Pattaya, Thailand, from 19 to 21 May 2014, had provided an opportunity for dialogue among member States and other stakeholders and informed the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development on perspectives, priorities and goals for sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region. The second session of the Forum, which had been held in Bangkok on 21 and 22 May 2015, had deliberated on regional sustainable development challenges, opportunities and perspectives on the 2030 Agenda, as well as the components and institutional structure of a regional mechanism for its implementation, follow-up and review.

31. The Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, which had been held in Jakarta from 19 to 21 October 2015 and organized by the secretariat in partnership with the Government of Indonesia and more than 30 partners, had adopted the APUF-6 Jakarta “Call for Action”, which provided recommendations from a multi-stakeholder perspective on priority issues to be considered in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the “New Urban Agenda”, which would be adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). The outcomes of the Urban Forum had been presented at the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting to Habitat III

for Asia-Pacific, which had been held on 21 and 22 October 2015 and organized by the Government of Indonesia and the Habitat III secretariat.

32. The 2014 Policy Dialogue on Energy for Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific had been organized by the secretariat and held in Bangkok, from 26 to 28 November 2014, to support the implementation of the outcomes of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum. The Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, held in Hammamet, Tunisia, from 4 to 7 November 2014 and organized by the five regional commissions, had resulted in a joint statement calling for the acceleration of the transition to sustainable energy. Lastly, the workshop on water and green growth in Asia and the Pacific had been convened by the secretariat in partnership with K-Water in Bangkok, from 23 to 25 February 2015, to prepare regional inputs to the Seventh World Water Forum.

33. Statements were made by the representatives of Indonesia and the Russian Federation, as well as by the representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

34. The representative of Indonesia expressed her Government's appreciation to the secretariat and partners for successfully convening the Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum in Jakarta and noted that the APUF-6 Jakarta "Call for Action" and the Jakarta Declaration for Habitat III, adopted at the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting to Habitat III for Asia-Pacific, provided important ground for any discussion on urban issues, including at the third Preparatory Committee Meeting for Habitat III to be held in Surabaya, Indonesia, in July 2016, as well as at Habitat III itself.

35. The Committee welcomed the outcomes of the Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum and called for ESCAP to continue its facilitation of regional inputs to Habitat III.

36. The Russian Federation and Indonesia welcomed the results and recommendations of the APUF-6 Jakarta "Call for Action", which had been formulated through a multi-stakeholder process.

37. One delegation emphasized that approaches to sustainable urban development, including green city development models, should be based on local circumstances and priorities. Moreover, the representative noted that the water-food-energy nexus approach had not been agreed at the intergovernmental level in any United Nations documentation.

38. One delegation noted that inclusion of Sustainable Development Goal 11 (to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable) in the 2030 Agenda would stimulate the efforts of all relevant parties towards the development of solutions and that Habitat III would define further orientations for urban development, while aiming to transform cities into centres of sustainable development.

39. The representative of the Russian Federation informed the Committee that his Government was actively working on the preparations for Habitat III, in cooperation with the Moscow office of UN-Habitat, including through its national report, and that the national policy of the Russian Federation up to 2020 was in alignment with the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 11.

40. The Committee expressed appreciation to the secretariat for its continued efforts to strengthen the work of the Commission on energy.

41. The representative of UN-Habitat informed the Committee about the contributions that had been made to the Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, in terms of organization of sessions and side events, as well as the organization of the first Asia-Pacific Urban Youth Assembly, organized in partnership with the Government of Indonesia, the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth, which had been held back to back in Jakarta on 17 and 18 October 2015. In highlighting the potential of urbanization to positively contribute to sustainable development, she expressed the commitment of UN-Habitat to support member States in the preparations for Habitat III and the implementation of its outcomes. She expressed appreciation for the long-standing partnership with ESCAP on a wide range of outputs, including *The State of Asian and Pacific Cities 2015*.

C. Preparations for the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific

42. The secretariat made a presentation. Advice from member States was sought on preparations for and the convening of the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, including themes, host country nominations and details of the regional preparatory processes. Advice was also sought on the format of the future sessions of the Conference.

43. The secretariat provided a historical overview of past Conferences since 1985 and outlined the modalities and outcomes of other high-level regional forums on environment and development, namely the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, organized annually by ESCAP, and the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific, organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) biennially.

44. Statements were made by the representatives of the following countries: Australia; Bangladesh; China; Japan; Kazakhstan; and Russian Federation. Statements were also made by the representatives of: ILO; UNEP; Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration; Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism; and Centre for Environment and Development.

45. The Committee thanked the secretariat for updates on preparations for the upcoming Conference, which came at an exciting time following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris. Considering the importance of the Ministerial Conference for addressing emerging environment and development challenges and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific, the representative of Bangladesh informed the Committee that Bangladesh would explore the possibility of hosting the seventh Conference in 2016.

46. A member of the delegation of China made a statement under the current agenda item expressing the country's support for ESCAP to play a positive role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. He also informed the Committee about his Government's proposal regarding the South-South Cooperation Fund on Climate Change and also its initiative on the Global Energy Internet.

47. The Committee noted the suggestions regarding the development of synergy and coherence among the Conference, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and the Forum of Ministers and Environment

Authorities of Asia Pacific. It was noted that the scope and objectives of the three conferences were similar. In light of that similarity, it was suggested that there should be coordination, coherence and rationalization across the conferences. Strong coordination and cooperation between ESCAP and UNEP as well as with other United Nations agencies, international/regional organizations and civil society organizations was emphasized as being critical for successful conference outcomes. The Committee noted the suggestion made by representatives of civil society and ILO that those regional forums should remain inclusive. One delegation recommended not to convene the Ministerial Conference on a regular basis after 2016, suggesting that it could be organized on an ad hoc basis as required by the member States.

48. The representative of UNEP emphasized the strong collaboration between ESCAP and his organization, citing as an example their joint organization of the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific and the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, which had been held back to back in May 2015. In his opinion, that arrangement enhanced coordination and saved resources. He underlined that the Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific provided an additional avenue for member States to develop consensus and bring their concerns to the global level. Noting that UNEP was a traditional partner in convening the Ministerial Conference, he said that linkages would be made between the 2016 Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific and the Ministerial Conference as far as possible.

49. The representative of the Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration and the Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism welcomed the collaboration between ESCAP and UNEP in the regional sustainable development processes to address the problem of silo approaches that presented an obstacle to sustainable development. The representative called for coherence across regional sustainable development meetings and platforms including themes, outcomes and processes in engaging civil society organizations and stakeholders. The representative commended the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development as an example of good practice for stakeholder inclusion and suggested that the Forum should serve as an umbrella platform and point of convergence for sustainable development processes in the region. It was suggested that different United Nations agencies should support the Forum through the Regional Coordination Mechanism under the leadership of ESCAP. The representative also recommended that the Conference should learn from the Forum and the stakeholder engagement conducted by UNEP as an approach to making the Conference inclusive.

50. The representative from the Centre for Environment and Development suggested that the Forum should reflect the structure of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development with regard to convening at the highest political level every four years.

D. Consideration of draft resolutions, recommendations and decisions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-second session

51. In introducing the agenda item, the secretariat provided an overview of the process whereby resolutions were adopted by the Commission and recalled the guidelines for draft resolutions, which had been adopted by the Commission in its resolution 71/1.

52. Member States had been invited to circulate, in advance, proposals and/or texts of draft resolutions for consideration by the Commission at its

seventy-second session, but no draft resolutions had been submitted for discussion by the Committee.

E. Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme

53. A representative of the Strategy and Programme Management Division of ESCAP presented information on the process for preparing the draft strategic framework 2018-2019, which would be submitted for approval to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session. The main features of the strategic framework were presented, including its foundation on mandates approved by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and ESCAP; the 2030 Agenda; the Addis Ababa Action Agenda; the programmes of action for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States; and thematic documents such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Advice from member States was sought regarding the future focus of the subprogramme.

54. Statements were made by the representative of the Republic of Korea and a representative of the Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism on behalf of the civil society organizations.

55. The representative of the Republic of Korea informed the Committee about recent activities conducted as part of the Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth, which had been implemented in partnership with ESCAP since 2005. In recalling that the Initiative had recently been extended for another five years at the seventy-first session of the Commission in May 2015, she informed the Committee that her Government was in the process of negotiating an agreement with the secretariat for the implementation of the third phase and invited all members and associate members to actively participate in the activities of the network.

56. The representative of the Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism urged members and associate members and all stakeholders to utilize all opportunities to move ahead with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. She emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder participation and the desirability of a United Nations special rapporteur on sustainable development to support an independent review mechanism for the 2030 Agenda.

F. Other matters

57. The Committee noted a recommendation to appoint a special rapporteur on sustainable development for the United Nations system.

58. A representative of the civil society organizations proposed the use of the human development index combined with the ecological footprint index as a composite indicator to measure progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

G. Adoption of the report

59. The Committee adopted the report on its fourth session on 13 November 2015.

III. Organization of the session

A. Opening, duration and organization

60. The Committee held its fourth session in Bangkok from 11 to 13 November 2015.

61. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered the opening remarks.

62. A keynote address was delivered by Ms. Araya Nuntapotidech, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand.

63. In her opening remarks, the Executive Secretary highlighted the progress made by the secretariat in responding to critical environment and development issues in the region and recognized the outcomes of key regional dialogues that guided the work of the secretariat, in particular the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development. The Executive Secretary noted that recent global mandates provided an opportunity for the Committee to become a more holistic platform for the coordination of the 2030 Agenda in the region and called for a review of its terms of reference, in order to reposition the Committee to best serve the implementation of the Agenda.

64. In her keynote address, Ms. Nuntapotidech recognized the importance of the Committee as a vital platform for regional cooperation and noted that the fourth session was being convened at a critical juncture after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. She informed the Committee of recent initiatives that had been taken by the Government of Thailand in the field of environment and development, including the establishment of a National Sustainable Development Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as initiatives related to integrated water resource management, climate change and waste management.

B. Attendance

65. The session was attended by representatives of the following members and associate member of ESCAP: Australia; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Maldives; Myanmar; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Thailand; Tonga; and Macao, China.

66. A representative of Switzerland attended as an observer.

67. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies attended: ILO; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization; UNEP; and UN-Habitat.

68. Representatives from 13 civil society organizations and other entities also participated in the session as participants and exhibitors at the Pavilion of Partnerships for Capacity Development.

C. Election of officers

69. The following officers were elected:

Chair:	Mr. Gopi Nath Mainali (Nepal)
Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Md. Afzal Hossain (Bangladesh) Mr. Karna Bahadar Samal (Bhutan)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Ahmed Wisam (Maldives)

D. Agenda

70. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Transformation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: review of emerging regional trends and agenda-setting.
5. Outcomes of key regional dialogues on sustainable development:
 - (a) First session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;
 - (b) Second session of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;
 - (c) Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum;
 - (d) High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting to Habitat III for Asia-Pacific;
 - (e) 2014 policy dialogue on energy for sustainable development for Asia and the Pacific;
 - (f) Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development;
 - (g) Workshop on water and green growth in Asia and the Pacific to prepare regional inputs for the Seventh World Water Forum.
6. Preparations for the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific.
7. Consideration of draft resolutions, recommendations and decisions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-second session.
8. Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme.
9. Other matters.
10. Adoption of the report.

E. Side events

71. A side event on valuing waste, transforming cities was organized by the secretariat on 11 November 2015.

72. A side event on the roles of ESCAP and the United Nations Environment Assembly on the review of and follow-up to the 2030 Agenda was held on 12 November 2015 in cooperation with UNEP.

73. A side event on capacity-building on e-learning for policymakers was organized by the secretariat on 13 November 2015.

74. A side event on “What Engagement? Civil society engagement on the 2030 Agenda in Asia-Pacific” was organized by the Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism on 13 November 2015.

75. A Pavilion of Partnerships for Capacity Development showcased the work of a wide array of partners and stakeholders, including civil society organizations, academia, think tanks and international organizations.

Annex**List of documents**

Document symbol	Document title	Agenda item
<i>General series</i>		
E/ESCAP/CED(4)/1	Transformation for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: review of emerging regional trends and agenda-setting	4
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<i>Information series</i>		
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E/ESCAP/CED(4)/INF/7	Report on the joint statement of the Executive Secretaries of the United Nations Regional Commissions for the Fifth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development	5 (f)
E/ESCAP/CED(4)/INF/8	Experiences on water and green growth in Asia and the Pacific	5 (g)