

SUMMARY OF THE FIFTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: 23-29 MARCH 2005

The Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED 2005) took place from 23-29 March 2005, at the Hotel Lotte Seoul, Republic of Korea. The Conference was organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea. Over 500 participants, including delegates from 52 member and associate member states of ESCAP, as well as representatives of UN agencies, international organizations, academia, non-governmental organizations and business and industry, attended the 7-day gathering. The Conference comprised three elements: the Meeting of Ministers from 28-29 March, the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials from 24-26 March, and side events from 23-27 March.

This Conference represented the first environmental meeting in the region that focused on the synergy between environmental sustainability and economic growth. Given increasing environmental pressure from economic growth, the region is seeking to shift from unsustainable development patterns to environmentally sustainable economic growth – what this Conference labeled “green growth.” Participants noted some tools for promoting environmentally sustainable economic growth, including: internalizing environmental costs; improving eco-efficiency of production and consumption patterns; and encouraging the development of markets for green products and services and environmentally sound technologies. In pursuing green growth, some participants stressed the need for a paradigm shift in the way the relationship between the environment and economy is viewed, highlighting that: environmental policies should focus not only on pollution control but also on improving eco-efficiency; the environment should be regarded as a driver for growth in the economy and research and development, rather than a burden; and environmental challenges should be turned into opportunities. Appreciating the rapid economic growth in the region, participants emphasized that growth should be environmentally sound and socially equitable.

Participants approved a comprehensive work plan for environment and development for the next five years in the region, as presented in three documents: the Ministerial

Declaration on Environment and Development; the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2006-2010; and the Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth). They left Seoul with renewed commitment and enthusiasm for achieving development that is environmentally and economically sustainable as well as improving the quality of life for all those living in the region.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MCED

The Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED) has convened every five years since 1985. It is organized by ESCAP in cooperation with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the Asia Development Bank (ADB) and the governments in the region. MCED 1985 initiated a mechanism for strengthening cooperation in the field of environment and development in the Asia-Pacific region through ministerial deliberations. MCED 1990 discussed the state of the environment in the region and the region’s input to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). MCED 1995 assessed progress made in the promotion of sustainable development in the region and implementation of Agenda 21 and other UNCED decisions at the regional level.

MCED 2000: The Fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific was held in September 2000, in Kitakyushu, Japan. The conference reviewed commitments from previous conferences and those made at UNCED in 1992, and assessed the state of the environment and policies for sustainable development. The Conference’s major outcomes were the adoption of:

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the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development 2001–2005; the Vision for the 21st Century: the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development; and the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment, which seeks to improve the environment in urban areas of the region.

MILLENNIUM SUMMIT: The Summit, held from 6-8 September 2000, in New York, adopted the Millennium Declaration, which contains a number of development goals. These goals were elaborated and developed into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as contained in the September 2001 report of the UN Secretary-General on the Road Map towards the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (A/56/326). The MDGs comprise eight goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators, some of which are directly relevant to poverty reduction, natural disaster management, and protection of natural resources. The prime focus of the Asia and Pacific region is to achieve the goals of poverty reduction and sustainable development.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (WSSD): WSSD was held in 2002 and adopted the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). The Asia and Pacific region made its key input into WSSD through its Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific, which covered key issues and priorities for sustainable development and included seven priority regional initiatives, which were included in the JPOI.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONGRESS FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ECO Asia): ECO Asia is an informal meeting of environment ministers in the Asia-Pacific region that has been organized and hosted by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan since 1991. It has sought to provide a forum in which environment ministers can exchange views as well as to promote long-term cooperation in the environmental field with a view toward realizing sustainable development in the region. As a follow-up to the ECO Asia ministerial deliberations, the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED) was established. At its 6th substantive meeting in December 2004, APFED adopted its final report in principle, which made recommendations for achieving sustainable development in the region.

SUB-REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY DIALOGUE (SEPD): UNEP established this dialogue in response to the need for the region to reach a common position through policy dialogue to emphasize regional implementation through partnerships between governments and civil society. Its first meeting was held in September 2003 in Beijing, China. Actions have been taken to implement WSSD decisions on forming partnerships for sustainable development.

REGIONAL PREPARATORY PROCESS FOR MCED 2005: A Regional Preparatory Meeting for MCED 2005 convened from 29-30 November 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting reviewed the summary report on the state of the environment, heard an ESCAP Secretariat presentation on the synthesized

outcomes of the five sub-regional preparatory meetings for MCED 2005, and reviewed the draft documentation for MCED 2005. Sub-regional preparatory meetings for MCED 2005 were held in Northeast Asia, South Asia, South-East Asia, Central and North-West Asia and the Pacific. These meetings proposed initiatives for achieving sustainable development and provided input to MCED 2005.



Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP

REPORT OF MCED 2005

The Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific comprised three elements: the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials from 24-26 March, the Meeting of Ministers from 28-29 March, and side events from 23-27 March. This report of the Conference summarizes the proceedings of each of these three elements. The three outcome documents prepared by the Senior Officials and adopted by the Meeting of Ministers, a Ministerial Declaration, a regional implementation plan for sustainable development and an initiative targeting “green growth,” are summarized in the review of the proceedings of the Meeting of Ministers.

PREPARATORY MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS OF MCED 2005

The Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials for the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific met from 24-26 March 2005. Over 300 participants, including delegates from 52 member and associate member states of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, as well as representatives of UN agencies, international organizations, academia, non-governmental organizations, and business and industry, attended the 3-day meeting. Delegates met in plenary and a working group to consider: the recent tsunami and regional response strategy; the review of the state of the environment in Asia and the Pacific; an assessment of progress in the promotion of sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific; and the draft Ministerial Declaration, Regional Implementation Plan and Seoul Initiative.

At the opening session on Thursday, 24 March, Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, said the region’s fast economic growth has imposed increasing pressure on the environment and underscored the importance of shifting the paradigm to green growth. Noting that the region has 60% of the world’s population and that 1/5 is living in extreme poverty, Kyul-Ho Kwak, Korean



Minister of Environment, called upon delegates to consider the Seoul Initiative for Green Growth, which is designed to balance environmental sustainability and economic growth.

Delegates elected by acclamation the officers of the meeting: Young-Woo Park (Republic of Korea) as Chairperson; Liana Bratasida (Indonesia), Sudhir Mita (India), Luo Delong (China), Tu'u'u Ieti Taule'alo (Samoa) and Sergey Samoylov (Uzbekistan) as Vice Chairpersons; and Muhammad Zahir Shah (Pakistan) as Rapporteur. Delegates also adopted the provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/L.1 and L.2) without amendment.

BRIEFING ON THE RECENT TSUNAMI AND REGIONAL RESPONSE STRATEGY: On Thursday, 24 March, Hak-Su Kim outlined ESCAP's approach to disaster mitigation, including network building, technical cooperation, and partnerships with the UN and other organizations. He said the regional disaster reduction strategy should be based on the "Living with Risks" concept. Stanley Goosby, Pacific Disaster Center, US, demonstrated the use of computer simulation and modeling for tsunami prediction, preparedness and response. Kenji Suzuki, Japan Water Forum, spoke on reducing impacts of natural disasters through early warning. Indonesia, India and Thailand briefed participants on national efforts for relief and rehabilitation of tsunami stricken areas, as well as for raising awareness for disaster preparedness. The Republic of Korea noted its aid to tsunami-stricken countries and offered more technical assistance. The Asian and Pacific Coconut Community stressed tsunami impacts on the livelihoods of coconut farmers.

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: On Thursday, 24 March, the Secretariat presented the review of the state of the environment in Asia and the Pacific, 2005 (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED/(05)/1). Malaysia noted that the country has strengthened its institutional framework to improve environmental performance. The Philippines highlighted challenges faced by the country: widespread poverty, immature economies, and limited



Liana Bratasida, Indonesia

institutional capacity. Myanmar stressed the need for a systematic integration of environmental programs. Niue said achieving economic self-sufficiency is a priority for the country, and stressed regional partnerships to overcome limited technical and financial resources.

India said poverty reduction could only be pursued with environmental sustainability. China

said achieving economic growth and poverty reduction while increasing production efficiency is a great challenge to the region. Indonesia stressed capacity building for developing countries to achieve green growth. Uzbekistan suggested a multi-sectoral approach to environmental problems and called for regional cooperation. Citing the Northeastern Asia project on sandstorms, the



Kenji Suzuki, Japan Water Forum

Republic of Korea highlighted sharing know-how and learning lessons from each other. The Russian Federation stressed the need to take into account all environmental considerations in developing new strategies for sustainable development. The Asian and Pacific Coconut Community stressed the economic and environmental benefits of coconut products.

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS IN THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: On Thursday, 24 March, the Secretariat introduced the following documents: Review of the Implementation of the Outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific and the Recommendations of MCED-4 (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/2), and Review of the Implementation of the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/3).

Thailand highlighted that partnership is a key factor for regional initiatives and said poverty eradication is its top priority. Stressing the needs and concerns of the Pacific Island countries, Australia said initiatives for sustainable development should take into account other socio-economic considerations. Afghanistan outlined major environmental problems that the country faces and said progress has been made in strengthening environmental institutional and policy frameworks. Tajikistan highlighted national efforts towards sustainable development and poverty alleviation. India emphasized that the Phnom Penh Regional Platform is a significant input into a global process and stressed regional monitoring of national implementation. Japan commended successful progress and tangible outcomes in implementing the Kitakyushu Initiative.

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION: On Thursday, 24 March, the Secretariat presented the draft Ministerial Declaration



Kevin Keefe, Australia

(E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/4) and a conference theme paper on achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/4). On Friday morning, 25 March, delegates held a general discussion on the draft declaration. Chair Park requested delegates to consider the voluntary nature of the ministerial declaration in their

deliberations. Marshall Islands, supported by Niue and Australia, proposed that sustainable use of marine and coastal resources be highlighted in the declaration. Fiji supported strengthening environmental legislation and promoting effective partnership. China stressed balancing all aspects of sustainable development, and emphasized fulfillment of international obligations by donor countries. Samoa highlighted the importance of implementing the declaration in small island developing States. Japan proposed references to promoting the 3R (reduce, reuse and recycle) concept and engaging in multi-stakeholder dialogues to promote implementation of the declaration. Drawing attention to the voluntary nature of the declaration, India suggested it be amended accordingly. Viet Nam stressed: promoting environmental education; engaging all stakeholders; decentralization of authority to the local level; incorporating environmental considerations into socioeconomic plans at all levels; and promoting international cooperation, in particular, financial and technical assistance. Tajikistan suggested more emphasis on strengthening international cooperation. Australia highlighted language consistency with the Rio and Johannesburg Declarations. Indonesia highlighted the role of all stakeholders in achieving MDGs, regional cooperation and institutional capacity building. The Russian Federation said environmental services should be stimulated and bilateral cooperation emphasized. Cook Islands said that small island States' economic scale and vulnerability should be taken into consideration.

The International Council of Women and International Alliance of Women suggested references to gender equality and women's role in disaster management. The UN Development Programme said green growth should take into account the interests of the poor and women and children, which are both defined in the MDGs.

On Friday afternoon, 25 March, a working group was established to follow up the general discussion in plenary. One delegate proposed a new preambular paragraph stressing the

urgent need for financial and technical assistance and capacity building for developing countries. Another delegate suggested adding references in the preamble to changing consumption patterns in developed countries, and the importance of poverty eradication.

Some delegates suggested replacing "green growth" with "environmentally sustainable economic growth." In a paragraph regarding using economic instruments to support green growth, some delegations opposed a reference to "green accounting." Many countries supported a paragraph highlighting the importance of traditional and cultural values in promoting sustainable consumption patterns. Some suggested a reference to strengthening activities to mitigate adverse impacts of sandstorms, droughts and cyclones. Several countries suggested deleting paragraphs related to environmental compliance and timely and thorough implementation of multilateral environmental agreements. Regarding text on promotion of the environment as a driver of economic growth, delegates agreed to an amendment indicating that environment is not an obstacle to economic growth, but offers opportunities for sustainable growth.

On Saturday, 26 March, Chair Park opened the discussion on a revised text of the declaration prepared by the working group. He reiterated that the declaration is non-binding and does not contain new concepts.

Delegates agreed to add a paragraph in the preamble calling on donor countries to honor their commitments to provide financial and technical support to developing countries. Regarding a preambular paragraph recognizing that transboundary concerns in the North Western Asian region cause a substantial threat to environmentally sustainable economic growth, India and Indonesia suggested its deletion, while Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan supported its retention.

On environmental sustainability and performance, China suggested deleting references to green accounting and taxation in relation to application of economic instruments. Marshall Islands suggested including references to technology transfer in the context of capacity building for environmental technologies. On the role of major groups, Australia suggested highlighting the major role of civil society in encouraging environmentally sustainable consumption. China and the Russian Federation opposed it, noting that it might diminish government's role. The language agreed upon is "important role of civil society."



T.P. Seetharam and Sudir Mital, India



Li Yong and Luo Delong, China

Regarding the JPOI and the Regional Implementation Plan, Palau suggested taking into account children when integrating environmental concerns of vulnerable groups into national frameworks for poverty reduction. Indonesia and India proposed a reference to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building, urging donor countries to provide full support for the Regional Implementation Plan. Delegates agreed to a proposal by the Russian Federation calling for a final review report of progress in implementing the Plan to be submitted to MCED 2010. Uzbekistan, with some delegates opposing, proposed adding a new paragraph highlighting efforts of central Asian countries to strengthen cooperation to enhance the sustainable development process in the subregion.

With these amendments, delegates approved the draft declaration annexed to the report of the meeting (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/Rep) on Saturday afternoon, 26 March.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, 2006-2010:

On Friday, 25 March, the Secretariat introduced the draft Plan (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/5). On Saturday, 26 March, delegates considered a revised text of the Plan presented by Chair Park.

Australia stressed the voluntary nature of national activities for improving environmental sustainability. India proposed several amendments, including: highlighting extreme poverty as a major threat to sustainable development in the region; deleting a reference to globalization and the inconsistency between trade and environmental policy; deleting a reference to regional and subregional cooperation for solving transboundary environmental problems; and amending language on policy measures to encourage environmentally sustainable lifestyles. The Russian Federation suggested a reference to bilateral cooperation for considering transboundary environmental concerns. Japan proposed a reference to the 3R (reduce, reuse and recycle) concept as one of the action areas for promoting environmental protection for sustainable economic growth.

With these amendments, delegates approved the draft declaration annexed to the report of the meeting (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/Rep) on Saturday afternoon, 26 March.

THE SEOUL INITIATIVE ON ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH (GREEN GROWTH): On Friday, 25 March, the Secretariat introduced the draft Initiative (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/6).

Noting the importance of capacity building and exchange of best practices, the Republic of Korea proposed establishing a Seoul Initiative Network for Green Growth to support the implementation of the Initiative.

On Saturday, 26 March, delegates considered a revised version of the Initiative, as presented by Chair Park. Australia stressed that the Initiative has its origins in the Ministerial Declaration and should be read in the context of the Declaration. On the target to enhance environmental performance, Azerbaijan proposed adding a reference to “concerned stakeholders.” Throughout the text, some delegates preferred to use a “green growth approach” rather than a “green growth paradigm.” On improving energy efficiency, China suggested deleting specific references to power plants and dams and a paragraph on monitoring activities undertaken within the framework of the Initiative. Regarding policy areas, Australia stressed their voluntary nature. On funding for the Initiative, the Russian Federation stressed that mobilization of funding for follow-up activities to the Initiative should be on a voluntary basis. Delegates debated a paragraph on policy areas to internalize environmental costs into the price structure by employing economic instruments, with some suggesting deletion of specific references to “green GDP” and “eco tax,” while the Republic of Korea supported its retention. A compromise text was agreed with references to green GDP and taxation.

With these amendments, delegates approved the draft declaration annexed to the report of the meeting (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/Rep) on Saturday afternoon, 26 March.

CLOSING OF THE MEETING: During the closing plenary on Saturday afternoon, 26 March, delegates considered the draft report of the meeting (E/ESCAP/SO/MCED(05)/Rep), which contained three annexes: Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development, Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2006-2010, and Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth). With a number of minor amendments, delegates



Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP congratulates Rapporteur Muhammad Zahir Shah



adopted the report and agreed to submit it to MCED 2005 for its consideration and adoption.

In his closing remarks, Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, commended the meeting for achieving its objectives by identifying progress and gaps in the area of green growth and sustainable production and consumption patterns. Chair Park closed the meeting at 6:45 pm.

MEETING OF MINISTERS OF MCED 2005

The Meeting of Ministers of MCED 2005 convened from 28-29 March 2005. Over 300 participants attended the meeting, including delegations from 52 members and associate members of ESCAP with 23 ministers for environment and development, and representatives from United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

During the two-day meeting, delegates convened in plenary to hold: a special session on tsunami impacts and regional response strategy; a roundtable of major stakeholders; and a session on reporting from the side events. Delegates also held a discussion on policy perspectives in the region, and adopted the report of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials including the Ministerial Declaration, the Regional Implementation Plan, and the Seoul Initiative on Green Growth.

OPENING OF THE MEETING: Kyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea, opened the Meeting of Ministers on Monday, 28 March 2005. In welcoming delegates, he said the objective of the Conference is to find ways to achieve a win-win synergy between economic growth and environmental sustainability, and called for the world community to shift from a growth-oriented approach to a new chapter of environmentally sound economic growth.

Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, delivered a message from Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General, which highlighted the need for a paradigm shift to green growth and called for implementation of the JPOI and other international agreements to fulfill sustainable development. Following Kofi Annan's message, Kim delivered his welcoming statement and

noted the record number of ministers responsible for environment, planning and finance attending the Meeting, and commended the role played by civil society in addressing sustainable development issues.

In his inaugural address, Moo-Hyun Roh, President of the Republic of Korea, stressed that economic

growth without consideration for sustainable development will cause adverse effects to the environment. He said his country is turning from fast economic growth to green growth and will become a benchmark for the region.

Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP),

highlighted the importance of immediate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building recently adopted at the 23rd session of the UNEP Governing Council, as well as cooperation among UN organizations to assist developing countries to achieve green growth.

Haruhiko Kuroda, President of ADB, said the Bank has adopted environmental policies that focus on environmental protection, integration of environmental policies into economic growth, and fostering partnerships.

Hee-Beom Lee, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy, Republic of Korea, stressed that it is important to encourage voluntary action through incentives rather than imposing strict regulations, and to strengthen international cooperation for the adoption and commercialization of the Best Available Technologies.

Shoji Nishimoto, Assistant Administrator of UN Development Programme (UNDP), stressed the two issues UNDP considered to be at the core of achieving green growth: improving environmental governance and strengthening linkages between environment and poverty.

Delegates elected by acclamation the following officers of the meeting: Kyul-Ho Kwak as Chairperson; the 23 ministers attending the meeting as Vice-Chairpersons; and W.R.M.S. Wickramasinghe, Additional Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, Sri Lanka, as Rapporteur. Delegates adopted the provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/MCED(05)/L.1) and the annotated provisional agenda (E/ESCAP/MCED(05)/L.2) without amendment.

MINISTERIAL BRIEFING ON THE RECENT TSUNAMI AND REGIONAL RESPONSE STRATEGY:

On Monday morning, 28 March, the plenary held a special session on the recent tsunami and regional response strategy. Hak-Su Kim stressed the integration of emerging issues from the recent tsunami and other natural disasters into sustainable development plans. He stressed the need for, *inter alia*: implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action; a community-based disaster



Moo-Hyun Roh, President of the Republic of Korea



Kyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea



Mostafa Tolba, Chairman of the Eminent Scientists Symposium

risk management approach; and capacity-building and awareness raising.

Sálvano Briceño, Director of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, briefed participants on the UN's activities related to disaster reduction, in particular: the UN's

appeal for humanitarian response and tsunami early warning; the initiation of the international strategy for disaster reduction; and the outcomes of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Klaus Töpfer highlighted the environmental impacts of the tsunami and underscored that early warning systems should be developed for all types of natural disasters. Haruhiko Kuroda said the efficiency of rehabilitation and reconstruction work can be increased through improved assessment of impacts and enhanced cooperation and coordination.

Krasae Chanawongse, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Thailand, spoke on community-based disaster risk management and stressed the importance of community awareness and community-based early warning and preparedness systems based on precautionary measures.

Highlighting the economic and human losses from disasters, Masayuki Kitamoto, Asian Disaster Reduction Center, Japan, said disaster reduction must be integrated into national development agendas. He also stressed that awareness building is essential and requires considerable effort. Hideaki Oda, Japan Water Forum, briefed on an appeal for "halving human loss by water disasters by 2015" through effective early warning.

ROUNDTABLE OF MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS: This roundtable, held on Monday morning, 28 March, focused on achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth and convened with participation of the following eminent panelists: Ryutaro Hashimoto, former Prime Minister of Japan, Hirojiko Kuroda, Klaus Töpfer, Kiyo Akasaka, Deputy Secretary General of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, and Mostafa Tolba, Chairman of the Eminent Scientists Symposium.

Panelists discussed: how to achieve green growth without causing harm to the environment; how to deepen governments' commitment to environmental protection; how to make markets work for environmental sustainability; and how to change the way society produces and consumes. They also highlighted, in particular: the need for early warning systems to reduce water-related disasters; financing for environmental projects; the principle of common but differentiated responsibility; and economic and financial instruments for green growth.

REPORTING FROM THE SIDE EVENTS: On Monday afternoon, 28 March, the Chairpersons of the side events that took place during the Conference reported on outcomes of their respective events.

The Civil Society Forum delivered its recommendations for promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns and called on all stakeholders to undertake a sectoral approach to increase the eco-efficiency of consumption and production systems by, *inter alia*: promoting green consumption; increasing resource circulation; supporting the eco-design of products; and raising awareness on sustainable consumption and production. Forum participants also urged governments to work closely with civil society in realizing the recommendations of the forum.

The Eminent Scientists Symposium's message to the Conference highlighted the importance of: encouraging an evolving new economic paradigm based on all three pillars of sustainable development; enhancing education for sustainable development, and providing policy-makers with simple scientific information. Participants also stressed that the donor community needs to contribute to disaster preparedness and reduction efforts, including through the establishment of monitoring and early warning systems.

The Eminent Environmental Economists Symposium emphasized the relationship between economic growth and environmental sustainability, and policy measures for integrating environment into development plans to create win-win outcomes. Participants also highlighted that environmental policies need to focus more on promoting eco-efficiency of production and consumption patterns and, in this regard, emphasized the role of civil society.

The Private Sector Forum recommended that governments undertake measures to ensure productive public-private partnership, through, *inter alia*: fostering dialogue with the private sector; linking green accounting with tax systems; promoting mandatory green procurement; and facilitating transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

The Briefing on ADB-GEF Regional Technical Assistance Project for Prevention and Control of Dust and Sandstorms (DSS) in Northeast Asia recommended establishing a regional monitoring and early warning network for DSS in Northeast Asia, and mitigating DSS through piloting demonstration projects in DSS originating source areas.

The Special Session of Water Management for Food and the Environment focused on sustainable practices of food production, and established



Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP

a clear process to prepare the first Asia and Pacific regional committee meeting leading to the 4th World Water Forum.

The Multistakeholder Forum for an Equitable and Environmentally Sustainable Society discussed next steps to put into practice recommendations in the APFED final report, which was officially launched at the Forum. He also delivered the APFED appeal to MCED 2005, which contains the main message “a new era for sustainable development and a knowledge network.”

The Asia-Pacific Women’s Conference on Environment highlighted women’s role in promoting sustainable consumption and

urged governments to, *inter alia*: recognize the key role women play in environmental sustainability; allocate resources to support and strengthen women’s capacity; and create an enabling environment for women’s empowerment.

POLICY PERSPECTIVES IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION: On Monday afternoon, 28 March, and Tuesday morning, 29 March, delegates discussed policy perspectives in the region. Hak-Su Kim highlighted key policy concerns, including: achieving economic growth while ensuring environmental sustainability; taking into account the three pillars of sustainable development; and adopting policy approaches tailored to fit particular circumstances. Magda Lovei, the World Bank, stressed integrating and mainstreaming environmental problems into development policies, and highlighted the Bank’s policy objectives in this regard.

Many countries expressed their support for the concept of green growth and highlighted the importance of shifting to a paradigm of green growth. Several delegates urged donor countries to honor their commitment to provide financial and technical support to developing countries for facilitating the implementation of this regional initiative, as well as for addressing environmental issues such as climate change. Bhutan stressed that political will and commitment to implement should be the cornerstone of green growth in the region, with the Republic of Korea noting that green growth will generate opportunities for poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. Many delegates highlighted the importance of ensuring the full implementation of this initiative, and stressed poverty reduction as the most important policy priority for developing countries in the region. Many countries highlighted the urgent need for an early warning system to manage natural disasters.



Kazuko Nose, Japan

Some countries highlighted promoting regional and subregional cooperation and partnerships for addressing environmental concerns, with the Pacific Island countries calling for multilateral cooperation to protect marine resources and requesting strong support for the Pacific subregional initiative of the Regional Implementation Plan, and the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan stressing subregional cooperation for addressing transboundary environmental problems.

Many countries stressed the importance of awareness raising, technical and financial support, and technology transfer, with Pakistan proposing launching a regional campaign for public education on sustainable development. The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said that UNESCO’s recent launching of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development will help to solve environmental problems faced in the 21st century. Palau highlighted strengthening traditional use of natural resources and integrating traditional knowledge into science and technology.

Several delegates drew attention to integrating environmental considerations into development policies. China highlighted the trial implementation of green GDP in the country, which is used to measure environmental performance. Japan advocated the 3R (reduce, reuse and recycle) concept and said Japan is prepared to share its energy efficiency expertise with the region to deal with climate change. Macao, China said the rapid urbanization process has imposed pressure on the environment, and stressed the need for an holistic approach to strike a balance between environmental protection and economic growth. Australia noted outcomes of a policy case study on promoting environmentally sustainable agriculture, which highlight the importance of: promoting eco-efficiency; establishing good governance systems; allocating appropriate resources; and ensuring that policy is based on sound science and a market based approach. Iran emphasized the role of private-public partnerships in decoupling economic growth and environmental degradation. Stressing the role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), the Philippines said governments should ensure development of clean production technologies for SMEs.

Some delegates drew attention to environmental challenges faced in their countries. Myanmar spoke on the country’s challenges, including population growth, poverty, financial difficulties and natural disaster, and called for regional partnerships in meeting these challenges. Mongolia outlined environmental problems that the country faces, in particular dust and sandstorms, land degradation, droughts and natural disasters, and noted its green wall



Nay Win, Myanmar



zone forestation project. Afghanistan gave an overview of its geographical and environmental features and recent trends of environmental protection. Kazakhstan outlined its national legislation on waste management, and proposed establishing a new international agreement on drinking water. Lao People's Democratic Republic drew attention to obstacles facing the country, including institutional capacity and limited access to technology and finance, and called for international support in this regard.



Young-Woo Park, Republic of Korea, Chairperson of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials

Many countries highlighted their efforts to achieve sustainable development and strengthen environmental policies, and noted their participation in multilateral environmental agreements.

REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS AND CONSIDERATION OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, THE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND THE SEOUL INITIATIVE: On Tuesday afternoon, 29 March, Young-Woo Park, Republic of Korea, Chairperson of the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials, presented the report of the meeting (E/ESCAP/MCED(05)/1), which included three annexes: the Ministerial Declaration, the Regional Implementation Plan, and the Seoul Initiative.

France emphasized the role of local communities in achieving green growth by implementing Agenda 21 and providing services to local people, and proposed establishing an intergovernmental panel on early warning systems. He reiterated the French proposal to transform UNEP into a United Nations Environment Organization. The Republic of Korea appealed to countries in the region to actively participate in the Seoul Initiative Network for Green Growth. Delegates adopted the report and its annexes without amendment.

The Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2005 (Annex I): The Declaration is divided into three parts.

On environmental sustainability and performance in the context of economic growth, it recommends ways to improve environmental sustainability through: incorporating environmental costs into market prices and use of economic instruments; enhancing cleaner production; improving consumption patterns by linking them with traditional lifestyles and cultural values; developing early warning systems to aid management of disasters; and improving measures for protecting natural

resources. It also recommends ways to improve environmental performance through: enhancing environmental performance and accountability in the public and private sectors; ensuring implementation of multilateral environmental agreements; promoting effective enforcement of national laws, regulations and standards relating to sustainable development; and encouraging the use of an ecosystem approach to strategic planning and management.

Regarding the role of major groups, the Declaration recommends continuing to work with all major groups respecting their roles in promoting sustainable development.

On the JPOI and regional implementation plan, the Declaration decides to continue efforts to implement the JPOI along with other internationally adopted instruments. It supports the regional implementation plan and the Seoul Initiative and urges members of ESCAP to formulate policies for achieving green growth, emphasizes the "Common but Differentiated Responsibilities" principle, and calls upon donors to provide technical and financial support for the implementation of the regional plan for 2006-2010.

Through the Declaration, the Ministers agreed to convene the next MCED by the year 2010.

The Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and Pacific, 2006-2010 (Annex II): The Regional Implementation Plan charts the course of action to be undertaken by the region to realize the vision embodied in the Ministerial Declaration and to strengthen capacities for achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth in the region. The Plan comprises four sections: introduction; basis for action; programme areas; and implementation strategy.

The introductory section provides the background and rationale for concepts and policies of the plan. It also defines the main goal of the plan as further assisting the implementation of existing programmes and commitments by promoting regional and national capacities for achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth.

The section on basis for action summarizes key achievements and challenges in the further implementation of the sustainable development agenda, and provides information on the current status of environmental performance and sustainability in the region.

The section on programme areas provides a detailed description of objectives, action areas and activities at the regional, subregional and national levels for each programme area. The Plan focuses on four main programme areas, which include: improving environmental sustainability; enhancing environmental performance; promoting environmental protection as an opportunity for sustainable economic growth; and integrating disaster risk management into socio-economic development policies and planning.

The section on implementation strategy highlights the importance of: resource mobilization and partnership-building; capacity-building; access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies; and stakeholder involvement. It also emphasizes that government efforts should be supported and supplemented

by activities at the global, regional and subregional levels, in particular through regional and international organizations.

The Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth “Green Growth” (Annex III): This Initiative is aimed at addressing some of the major policy issues highlighted in the Ministerial Declaration and the Regional Implementation



Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Plan and furthering their successful implementation. It presents targets, policy areas and follow-up activities to realize green growth.

Target 1 is improving environmental sustainability. This target area focuses on the efficient use of environmental resources and on improving the ecological efficiency of economic growth of the

region, thus ensuring environmental sustainability. Policy areas include, in particular: incorporation of ecological efficiency and environmental sustainability into economic and social development planning; assessment of environmental pressure; promotion of sustainable production and consumption; and internalization of environmental costs into the price structure.

Target 2 is enhancing environmental performance. This target area focuses on improving the methods for managing environmental resources and controlling pollution. Policy areas include, in particular: promotion of the “polluter pays” principle; promotion of environmentally-friendly production processes; promotion of effectiveness of environmental governance; and promotion of best practices.

Target 3 is promoting the environment as a driver and opportunity for economic growth and development. This target area aims to create a win-win synergy between the environment and economy and to present the environment as an opportunity for economic growth and private sector business. Policy areas include, in particular: promotion of environment-related investment and environmental technology research; promotion and creation of a positive synergy between the environment and economy; promotion of the role of the private sector; and presenting environmental regulations and demands as an opportunity to promote the environmental industry and the market for environmental goods and services.

As a follow-up to the Conference, the Initiative will commence with the establishment of the Seoul Initiative Network for Green Growth. The Initiative invites governments and relevant organizations of ESCAP members to participate in the Network

to assist with implementation of the Initiative. In recognition of the contribution of the government of the Republic of Korea for funding of the Initiative, it requests the donor community to provide financial support to implement the Initiative.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE:

On Tuesday afternoon, 29 March, Rapporteur W.R.M.S. Wickramasinghe, introduced the report of the Conference (E/ESCAP/MCED(05)/Rep.).

On paragraphs relating to the relationship between economic growth, poverty reduction and environmental degradation, India and Malaysia proposed amendments highlighting: the importance of simultaneously addressing environmental protection and social development where economic growth is a prerequisite to reduce poverty; and stressing that green growth approaches should balance the three pillars of sustainable development. Malaysia proposed highlighting the severity and consequences of the recent tsunami and other natural disasters in the region. Delegates adopted the report with these amendments.

CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE: Hak-Su Kim delivered a closing statement. He commended delegations’ commitment and enthusiasm in promoting environmentally sustainable economic growth, and said the main messages of the Conference stress the need to: move away from business as usual policies; convert environmental challenges into opportunities; and engage stakeholders in the pursuit of green growth. He also said the Conference has paved the way towards sustainable development in the region.

In his closing remarks, Chair Kwak highlighted the important outcomes of the Conference: the Ministerial Declaration; the Regional Implementation Plan; and the Seoul Initiative. Chair Kwak gavelled the meeting to a close at 5:15 pm.

SIDE EVENTS

CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM: The Forum, co-organized by ESCAP, UNEP and the Civil Society Forum Korea Committee (CSFKC), was held from 23-24 March. It was designed to discuss the role of civil society in promoting green growth. At the opening ceremony on Wednesday, 23 March, Jai Ok Kim, CSFKC Chair, called on participants to focus their discussions on sustainable consumption and production and the role of civil society. Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, emphasized the importance of mobilizing all sectors in achieving sustainable



Chair Kyul-Ho Kwak gavelled the meeting to a close at 5:15 pm



From left to right: Kyeong-Jae Lee, Member of the National Assembly, Chairman of the Environment and Labor Committee, Republic of Korea; Hee-Beom Lee, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy, Republic of Korea; Hak-Su Kim, UNESCAP Executive Secretary; Kyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea and Jai Ok Kim, Chairperson, Civil Society Forum Korea Committee

development and changing production and consumption patterns. Kyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment, together with Hee-Beom Lee, Minister of Commerce, and Kyeong-Jae Lee, Member of the National Assembly, Republic of Korea, said that as the most economically dynamic region in the world, the Asia and Pacific region urgently needs a major paradigm shift in consumption and production patterns. They pledged to form partnerships with civil society in making such a shift.

In introducing the theme of the Forum, Rae Kwon Chung, ESCAP, said it should be connected with the theme of the Conference – achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth. He highlighted the importance of: promoting eco-efficiency; developing policies extending beyond pollution control; internalizing environmental costs; and encouraging a paradigm shift in consumption patterns.

Participants proceeded to offer views, ideas and success stories at various sessions throughout the two-day forum. During an overview session, participants noted that: the trends of sustainable consumption and production have led to the strengthening consumer organizations and implementation of programs at local levels; challenges in the region include poverty, fresh water scarcity, desertification and deforestation; the role of government includes initiatives to reduce the per capita environmental burden of consumption and development of master plans on green production, particularly eco-labeling; and civil society has a role to play in promoting information sharing, environmental education and communication, broader public participation in environmental decision-making, increased transparency and accountability of government and business activities, and stronger environmental governance.

On clean production, participants noted that: the concept that cleaner production leads to higher productivity through efficiency and waste reduction should be publicized and implemented; safe food and a more coordinated approach to organic farming are important; farmers and consumers should enjoy food sovereignty; multi-functionality is a principle for promoting cleaner production in agriculture; and the role of women in food sovereignty and cleaner production should be respected.

On green consumption, participants stated that: Green Purchasing can make significant contributions to the sustainable use of resources and create substantial economic benefits; there is a need to balance quality, cost and environmental considerations in promoting green purchasing; consumer rights should include the right to sustainable consumption; industries should produce eco-friendly products; the tasks of governments include policy making, implementing green consumption policies and promoting eco-friendly products; information sharing and green communication are important; and safety, accessibility and sustainability are three important principles in consumption.

On the circulation of resources, participants discussed: cases of zero waste, solid waste management system and fee systems with incentives for recycling, managing packaging waste and composting; the importance of establishing a monitoring system for reducing resource use through clean production; the need for producers to should share information with consumers; a “waste bank” system in Thailand for students to separate and recycle solid wastes; and recycling and disposal of polyethylene.

On green growth and energy efficiency, participants highlighted that: policy, technology and transparency are three key elements in developing and applying sustainable energy; and civil society organizations should encourage manufacturers to produce energy efficient products, consumers to use such products and the government to develop support programmes. Participants also presented efforts and plans in China to develop legislation for renewable energy including wind, solar and biomass energy, and a wind and solar power project that supplies electricity to North Korea.

On information and communication technology (ICT), participants noted that: growth of ICT affects the environment directly and indirectly through hazardous wastes, global warming and ozone depletion; any successful ICT project should have three basic principles – financial, social and ecological sustainability; and ICT should be used for environmental education.

On strategies for sustainable consumption and production, participants highlighted that: culture and tradition should be used for achieving sustainable consumption and production; developing countries should develop their own approaches, methods and strategies for confronting the challenges posed by market forces; sustainable development should be localized and



Rae Kwon Chung, ESCAP

methods and tools in mobilizing CSOs in local development planning should be developed and applied; there is a need for education and experience sharing on sustainable consumption and production, especially among youth; and renewable energy is a key issue in achieving green growth.

The Seoul Statement of the MCED Civil Society Forum was adopted by participants on Thursday, 24 March, and presented to the Meeting of Ministers of MCED 2005 on Monday, 28 March.

EMINENT SCIENTISTS SYMPOSIUM: This Symposium, organized by the Korea Environment Institute, ESCAP and the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program, was held from 24-25 March. On Thursday, 24 March, opening statements were offered by Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Hyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea, and Suh-Sung Yoon, Korean Economic Institute. Mostafa Tolba, the Symposium Chair, gave a keynote speech on scientific responsibilities in addressing climate change and other environmental issues. He highlighted a number of challenges facing scientists, including: scientific research for environmental problems, ecosystem restructuring, recycling, hydrological cycle, genetically modified organisms, carbon sequestering, chemicals, efficient energy and nuclear waste. He also stressed the importance of enhancing education and publicity to build trust among stakeholders.

Throughout the two-day event, scientists met in various sessions to discuss relevant environmental issues. On the question of science, the earth and its climate, participants focused on the role of science in reducing uncertainty in environmental research to better inform policy decisions. On the question of sustainable development, delegates focused on environmental problems arising from linkages between poverty, development, industrialization and environment. On the question of national and regional perspectives, participants focused on the issues of percentage of GDP to allocate to environment, who will pay, and how plans will be initiated.

On the question of water resources and sanitation, participants focused on case studies in South Asia. On the question of regional air quality, forestry and biodiversity, participants focused on the need for science to address air pollution effects on climate, health and biodiversity. On the question of responses to climate change and disasters, participants focused on the need for early warning systems and disaster management.



From left to right: Hak-Su Kim, UNESCAP Executive Secretary and Kyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea

On the question of environment industry, governance and tools for environment management, participants focused on implementation of the principles of environmental assessment and implementation in the public and private

In a panel discussion with invited scientists and ministers, participants discussed mainstreaming science into environmental

and developmental processes. They focused on information from scientists needed for policymaking, and the need to integrate science, politics and business, with education as a vehicle for conveying science into policy. Mostafa Tolba reinforced this message in his closing remarks.

Editor's note: Our on-line coverage of MCED 2005 includes the presenters' names and the topics they addressed:
<http://www.iisd.ca/sd/mced>.

BRIEFING ON ADB-GEF REGIONAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT FOR PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF DUST AND SANDSTORMS (DSS) IN NORTHEAST ASIA: This briefing was held on Friday, 25 March, and was chaired by Nessim Ahmad, Asian Development Bank (ADB). A welcome address was offered by Sun Sook Park, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea, who promoted early warning systems (EWS) for DSS. Opening Remarks were made by Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary, UNCCD Secretariat, who said that desertification is a regional problem involving all of China, Korea and Japan, and even Canada and the US. An overview was presented by Bindu Lohani, ADB, who said that the study involved four member countries, the China, the Republic of Korea, Japan and Mongolia, in establishing EWS with monitoring and forecasting capabilities. Surenda Shrestha, UNEP Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, called for regional cooperation to address DSS and said that UNEP is committed to continuing its partnership, with a focus on EWS. Presentations were made by: Fei Yue, ADB, on the ADB-GEF Regional Technical Assistance Project; Mylkvakanam Iyngararasan, UNEP Regional Resources Center for Asia and the Pacific, on the proposed program to establish regional monitoring and EWS against DSS; and Pak Sum Low, ESCAP, on an investment strategy for prevention and mitigation.

PRIVATE SECTOR FORUM: This Forum convened from 25-26 March with the theme of corporate and public policies to promote green growth. It was sponsored by the Korean Business Council for Sustainable Development (KBCSD) in cooperation with ADB and ESCAP.



Young-Sin Chun, Republic of Korea, participant to the Eminent Scientists Symposium



At the opening session on Friday, 25 March, Dong-Soo Hur, Chairman, KBCSD, said a new development paradigm is rising and business is expected to assume greater social responsibility. Sun-Sook Park, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea, said government and business should work hand in hand to promote green growth. Bindu Lohani, ADB, said



Tak Hur, Republic of Korea

government should create an enabling environment and the private sector should promote green growth and shoulder social responsibilities. Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, said corporations should take strategic measures to increase their business opportunities by adopting green growth policies. Albert Fry, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, outlined the environmental problems caused by industries such as paper making and coal-fired power plants and advocated use of renewable energy for reducing green-house gas emissions.

Participants met in various sessions during the Forum to consider corporate and public policies to promote green growth.

The need for environmental management and corporate responsibility: Tak Hur, Republic of Korea, spoke on environmental management and corporate responsibility, highlighting the life-cycle approach, improved resource productivity, realizing business benefits and creating sustainable enterprises. Hae-Bong Chung introduced Korea's Environment-friendly Company Certification System and its environmental labeling system. Peter King, ADB, introduced its "Asian Environment Outlook 2005" report, which focuses on corporate responsibility for environmental performance in Asia and the Pacific. During the discussion, participants focused on how small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) implement environmental management. ESCAP presented projects on public-private partnership for sustainable development.

Case Studies on Environmental Management and Green Business Opportunities: Yuhan-Kimberly, Hyundai Motor, LG Caltex Oil, and Samsung Everland, Republic of Korea, presented their vision, strategies, measures and plans for corporate environmental management for producing environmentally friendly products. They presented their belief that investment in sound environmental management and cleaner production will not only protect the environment, but also improve economic efficiency. They supported partnerships between government, private sector and CSO actors for a better environment and sustainable development.

Towards Corporate Responsibility for Environmental Management: Myung-Ja Kim, Republic of Korea, made the following recommendations: formulating coherent environmental management strategies; redesigning corporations' organizational setup for more effective environmental management; setting up cleaner production and recovery and recycling systems; establishing a sound evaluation system for environmental performance; and promoting green marketing and purchasing and environmental accounting. Samsung SDI, LG Electronics and Korea Electric Power Corporation, Republic of Korea, introduced their environmental activities: green purchasing; environmentally friendly auditing and environmental accounting; environmental performance assessment; ISO 14000 certification; installing environmentally friendly facilities; developing eco-friendly technologies and products; and operating eco-friendly recycling facilities and recovery system for wastes. Yong Seung Lee, Kookmin Bank, Republic of Korea, highlighted the bank's activities, including: signing UNEP's Declaration of Financial Institution on Environment and Sustainable Development; implementing the "Environmental Risk Evaluation Guidelines;" and investing in environmental projects and facilities. Yul Choi, Korea Green Foundation, made a presentation on the role of civil society for sustainability management. He said they are promoting changes in government policy and citizens' life style and monitoring companies' environmental performance.

EMINENT ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMISTS SYMPOSIUM: PURSUING GREEN GROWTH IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: This Forum, organized by Kangwon National University, Korean Association of Public Finance and Economics, and ESCAP, convened on Saturday, 26 March. Hak-Su Kim, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, opened the Forum and stressed the need for long-term sustainable development. Kyul-Ho Kwak, Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea, stated that sustainable development is a necessary condition for the survival of society. Ho-woong Lee, Korea National Assembly, Republic of Korea, and Hun Sub Choi, Kangwon National University, Republic of Korea, spoke on programs for training environmental economists as future leaders in Asia. A keynote address by Kook Hyun Moon, Yuhan-Kimberly Ltd., Republic of Korea, focused on eco-efficiency in business. Participants discussed economic aspects of sustainable development throughout the day at various sessions.



Peter King, ADB

Session 1 was chaired by Hoesung Lee, Kyemyung University, and featured presentations by: Akio Morishima, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan, on economic development and environment in Asia; Rae Kwon Chung, ESCAP, on achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth in Asia; and Philip Sutton, Green Innovations, Australia, on programs for ensuring that Asia Pacific economic growth is environmentally sustainable. The common theme was cooperation among sectors for eco-efficiency.

Session 2, which was chaired by Hee Yhon Song, Asia Development Institute, Republic of Korea, had presentations by: Tanja Srebotriak, Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy, US, on analysis of the Environmental Sustainability Index as a tool for environmental policymaking; Hyun-Hoon Lee, ESCAP, and Kangwon University, Republic of Korea, on the relationship between economic growth and environmental sustainability; and Pongvipa Lohsomboon, Thailand Environment Institute, on sustainable development indicators for Thailand. The common theme was the application of indicators to analysis of environmental sustainability.

Session 3 was chaired by Eui-Soon Shin, Yonsei University, and featured presentations by: Jean-Philippe Barde, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), on making markets work for sustainable development; A.D. Meister, Massey University, New Zealand, on achieving green growth and the role of economics; and Euston Quah, National University of Singapore, on conflicts in pursuing green growth. The common theme was measurement of costs and benefits of SD.

Session 4, chaired by Chung Mo Koo, Kangwon National University, Republic of Korea, had presentations by: David McCauley, ADB, on the importance of market signals in sustainable production and consumption; Dodo J. Thampapillai, National University of Singapore, on the value of nature in economic growth; and Jong Ho Hong, Hanyang University, on corporate sustainability. The common theme was accounting for environmental costs and benefits.

Session 5, chaired by Jean-Philippe Barde, OECD, featured presentations by: Olivia la O'Castillo, Asia Pacific Roundtable for sustainable production and consumption, on the effects of sustainable production and consumption on



Akio Morishima, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan

pursuit of green growth; KiHeung Kim, Kyeonggi University, Republic of Korea, on environmental regulation effects on competitiveness; and Akihisa Mori, Kyoto University, on regional cooperative approach for sustainable development in Asia. The common theme was environmental influences on decisions and costs in companies and societies.

MULTISTAKEHOLDER FORUM FOR AN EQUITABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY:

This forum was organized by the Ministry of Environment of Japan and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan, in collaboration with UNEP and ESCAP. It convened on Sunday, 27 March. Opening remarks were offered by Myung-ja Kim, Korean National Assembly Member, Kyul-Ho Kwak, Korean Minister of Environment, and Hak-Su Kim, ESCAP Executive Secretary. They highlighted the efforts of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Environment and Development (APFED) in promoting sustainable development in the region.

The keynote speeches by Yoriko Kawaguchi, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Japan, and Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, summarized the background and outcomes of APFED, highlighting its contributions to building a knowledge-based network through partnership among different stakeholders.

A panel, comprising APFED members and chaired by Emil Salim, Association for Community Empowerment, Indonesia, discussed the issues of how to cope with common challenges and the next steps to implement APFED recommendations.

Akio Morishima, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Institute for Global Environment Strategies, presented the final report of APFED, containing an extensive assessment of environment and development in the region and a set of recommendations, which was officially launched at the Forum. Participants also adopted the APFED appeal to MCED 2005, which delivers the main message "a new era for sustainable development and a knowledge network."

In his closing remarks, Ryutaro Hashimoto, former Prime Minister of Japan, said that APFED is a portfolio for good ideas, which all stakeholders can make use of.



Ryutaro Hashimoto, former Prime Minister of Japan

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SECOND SESSION OF THE TASK FORCE ON ENERGY TO PROMOTE ENERGY COOPERATION IN NORTH-EAST ASIA:

The Second Session of the Task Force on Energy to Promote Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia will take place from 6-7 April 2005, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. For more information, contact: Koji Iwakami, Energy Resources Section, ESCAP; tel: +662-288-1542; fax: +662-288-1059; e-mail: iwakami.unescap@un.org; Internet: <http://www.unescap.org>.

20TH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UN-HABITAT: The 20th session of the Governing Council for the UN Human Settlements Programme will take place from 4-8 April 2005, at UN-HABITAT's headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, contact: Joseph Mungai, UN-Habitat, External Relations and Interagency Affairs; tel: +254-2-23133/623132/623131; fax: +254-2-624175/624250; e-mail: habitat@unhabitat.org; Internet: <http://www.unhabitat.org>.

13TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The 13th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development will take place from 11-22 April 2005, in New York, NY. For more information, contact the Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-3170; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: dsd@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd13/csd13.htm>.

THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (UNCCD): The third session of the Committee for Review of Implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification will take place from 2-11 May, in Bonn, Germany. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898, email: secretariat@unccd.int, Internet: <http://www.unccd.int>.

UN SYMPOSIUM ON INTEGRATED IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: This symposium will take place from 11-13 May 2005, in Nanchang, China. It is co-sponsored by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the Provincial Government of Jiangxi, and will address the integrated implementation of sustainable development goals and targets. For more information contact: Zhu Juwang, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, DESA; tel: +1-212-963-0380; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: zhu@un.org; Internet: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/calendar/symposium_announcement.pdf.

WORLD URBAN FORUM III: This meeting will take place from 19-23 June 2006, in Vancouver, Canada. It is organized by UN-HABITAT and the Canadian government. For more information, contact: Lars Reutersward, Information Services Section, UN-HABITAT; tel: +254-20-623120; fax: +254-20-623477; e-mail: Lars.Reutersward@unhabitat.org; Internet: <http://www.unhabitat.org/wuf/2006/default.asp>.

WORLD WATER WEEK: This event, organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute, will be held in Stockholm, Sweden, from 21-27 August 2005. The event is a global gathering of leading experts from the business, civil society, governmental, inter-governmental, scientific and water

management sectors. The Stockholm Water Symposium forms a part of the event. For more information, contact the Stockholm International Water Institute; tel: +46-8-522-139-60; fax: +46-8-522-139-61; e-mail: sympos@siwi.org, Internet: <http://www.worldwaterweek.org> and <http://www.siw.org>.

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING OF THE 60TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOME OF THE MILLENNIUM SUMMIT: This meeting will take place from 14-16 September 2005, at UN headquarters in New York, NY. The meeting is expected to undertake a comprehensive review of progress made toward the commitments articulated in the UN Millennium Declaration. The event will also review progress made in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes and commitments of the major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields. For more information, contact: Office of the President of the General Assembly; tel: +1-212-963-2486; fax: +1-212-963-3301; Internet: <http://www.un.org/ga/>.

ASIA PACIFIC ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION: The roundtable will take place from 10-12 October 2005, in Melbourne, Australia. For more information, contact: Event Manager, APRCD; fax: +61-3-9596-4207; e-mail: 6aprscp@currentevents.com.au; Internet: <http://www.6aprscp.com>.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS: This congress will take place from 23-27 October 2005, in Geelong, Australia. For more information, contact: Congress Organizers; tel: +61-3-5983-2400; fax: +61-3-5983-2223; e-mail: mp@asnevents.net.au; Internet: <http://www.impacongress.org/>.

NINTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL/SEVENTH GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM, UNEP: This meeting will take place from 7-9 February 2006, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. For more information, contact: Secretary for UNEP Governing Council; tel: +254-2-623431/623411; fax: +254-2-623929/623748; e-mail: beverly.miller@unep.org; Internet: <http://www.unep.org>.



Traditional Korean dance and music before the opening session of MCED 2005

