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**REVIEW OF ISSUES PERTINENT TO THE SUBSIDIARY STRUCTURE OF
THE COMMISSION, INCLUDING THE PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE
REPORT FOR THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009 AND THE WORK OF THE
ESCAP REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

(Item 3 of the provisional agenda)

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009

Note by the secretariat

SUMMARY

The present report provides an account of the programme performance of ESCAP for the biennium 2008-2009 as assessed against the expected accomplishments set out in the strategic framework for each subprogramme for the biennium. The programme performance report consists of (a) highlights of programme achievements and (b) results, by subprogramme, for the biennium 2008-2009.

The present report is central to holding ESCAP accountable to its members and associate members in terms of the efficient use of resources and the delivery of mandated results. The assessment of programme achievements and results is supported by information collected from the end-users of the secretariat's products and services through surveys, interviews and evaluations or other reviews.

The present report will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR) at its 331st session, to be held on 24 March 2010. An addendum reflecting the outcome of the review by ACPR will, if necessary, be issued as E/ESCAP/66/4/Add.1.

The Commission may wish to review the present report and comment on the overall performance of ESCAP and its eight subprogrammes. Based on the lessons learned, the Commission may also wish to provide the secretariat with guidance on future implementation modalities that would improve the effectiveness of ESCAP.

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I. HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009

1. During 2008-2009, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) strengthened its position as a regional hub for promoting inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific through high-level policy advocacy and strategic analytical work. A major outcome was the commitment made by the Commission to implementing a regional action framework for addressing the food, fuel and financial crises. ESCAP flagship publications, including the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* and the *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific*, received unprecedented media coverage and increased readership, demonstrating their importance as references among policymakers and researchers throughout the region.

2. The Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway, two long-standing ESCAP initiatives, continued to catalyse a number of national and multilateral initiatives. High-level advocacy efforts led to the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia by the first Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport. The Declaration established immediate priorities for regional cooperation in the transport sector. Another major result of sustained advocacy efforts was achieved in the area of environment through the development of green growth strategies by eight member States.

3. The Commission continued its commitment to supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. *A Future within Reach 2008: Regional Partnership for the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific*, the much-praised joint publication of ESCAP, the United Nations Development Programme and the Asian Development Bank, assessed the prospects of reaching the Goals and targets, highlighted critical gaps and analysed measures towards the further achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. ESCAP also focused on the particular challenges pertaining to achieving the health-related Goals, producing analytical work in support of advocacy

efforts and providing a forum for the exchange of good practices. Support for the development of a Pacific regional strategy on disability, together with work to improve gender and disability statistics, further underpinned the efforts. At the subnational level, several cities committed to adapting the pro-poor solid-waste management approaches championed by ESCAP, and housing finance institutions from six member States decided to establish a network of formal, community-based and microfinance institutions to exchange innovative practices.

4. Partnerships between ESCAP and subregional organizations as well as other United Nations entities intensified during 2008-2009 in support of enhanced overall development effectiveness. For example, the post-Nargis Joint Assessment, conducted in partnership between the Government of Myanmar, the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), was central to fund-raising efforts for the cyclone victims. Furthermore, the study *Striving Together: ASEAN and the UN*, prepared by ESCAP with input from the Regional Coordination Mechanism, was key to taking the ASEAN-United Nations partnership to the executive level.

Challenges, obstacles and unmet goals

5. The major challenge faced during 2008-2009 was the urgent and continuous need for timely, effective and coherent responses by the region to multiple development crises related to food, fuel, finance and climate change. ESCAP contributed to addressing the challenge through supporting member States with appropriate policy analysis and recommended policy options.

6. Following the adoption by the Commission of a new conference structure,¹ the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary committees attracted more high-level Government officials. The shift from a broad-themed approach towards a more issue-oriented one facilitated focused and rich discussions, yielding outcomes of benefit to the ESCAP membership.

II. RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009*

A. Executive direction and management

Objective of the Organization: To ensure full implementation of legislative mandates and compliance with United Nations policies and procedures with respect to the management of the programme of work and of staff and financial resources of ESCAP.

Expected accomplishment 1: The programme of work is effectively managed and supported by staff and financial resources

Statement of accomplishments: At the end of 2009, 91 per cent of the planned outputs for the period 2008-2009 had been delivered, meeting the target set for the biennium. Regular budget delivery of just above 100 per cent was also in line with the target. The support by staff and other resources for full programme delivery has thus been provided and managed adequately for the biennium.

¹ Commission resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission.

* Outputs mentioned in the present section are listed in the proposed programme budget submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session (A/62/6 (Sect. 18)). The programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 was approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/237 of 22 December 2007. For the approved programme of work, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/62/6/Rev.1).

Expected accomplishment 2: Timely recruitment and placement of staff

Statement of accomplishments: Recognizing that recruitment is a shared responsibility of recruiting managers, human resources professionals, interview panel members and members of the central review bodies, a number of parallel initiatives were undertaken to speed up the recruitment of professional staff. ESCAP conducted training sessions on drafting vacancy announcements, preparing written tests, formulating interview questions and evaluating candidates. Meanwhile, nearly all interview panel members completed the mandatory competency-based interview training, and workshops were organized regularly to brief members of the central review bodies, as well as programme case officers, on their roles and responsibilities. To further streamline and speed up recruitment processes, the central review bodies at ESCAP met “virtually”, which facilitated and improved adherence to deadlines for review and decision-making. ESCAP also took advantage of secretariat workforce planning to support timely recruitment.

Expected accomplishment 3: Improved geographical representation and gender balance of staff

Statement of accomplishments: Numerous initiatives were devoted to improving the recruitment of staff on as wide a basis as possible in terms of geographical representation, and many efforts were made to ensure gender equity in the recruitment of professional staff at all levels. The strategy pursued included the wider distribution of information about career opportunities at ESCAP in order to attract potential candidates worldwide, in particular from unrepresented and underrepresented member States, to target specific areas of expertise and to promote a better gender balance. ESCAP initiated additional efforts in late 2009 using a more systematic approach and a variety of activities, including outreach. The first step, which proved effective, was to improve the geographical representation and gender balance of staff through the National Competitive Recruitment Exam. The results of those additional efforts and the achievements realized are expected to become apparent in the first quarter of 2010.

Expected accomplishment 4: Identification of emerging issues that require attention by member States

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP has repositioned itself as the leading regional platform for promoting inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. Many member States have committed themselves to making ESCAP strong and relevant in order to drive the development process in the region. The renewed commitment of member States has been reflected not only in increased involvement in ESCAP processes, but also in the intention expressed by some member States (including China, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation) to make greater financial commitments.

Expected accomplishment 5: Enhanced policy coherence in the management of the economic and social activities of the United Nations

Statement of accomplishments: The number of activities carried out in collaboration with other entities continued to increase. Joint activities addressed some of the most acute challenges in the region. The concerted efforts and the synergy achieved through collaboration with other United Nations entities, including within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, ensured that each contributed in its respective areas of expertise, achieving a greater combined impact in terms of the development work of the United Nations in the region.

Expected accomplishment 6: Mobilization and promotion of public information on the role of ESCAP in the Asian and Pacific region

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, the position of ESCAP as the primary forum for countries in the region to engage with each other and to formulate a regional voice in the face of global challenges was strengthened. Media commentators increasingly referred to ESCAP as a leading player in addressing issues of regional concern, including those pertaining to the economic, food and fuel crises, as well as the climate change crisis, through the development of policy options. The heightened media coverage of ESCAP was indicated by an increasing number of articles published on its work, including 17 opinion articles by the Executive Secretary in 54 newspapers across the region, and increased interest in information posted on the ESCAP website.

Expected accomplishment 7: Progress towards graduation of the least developed countries through mobilization of regional efforts to address the identified concerns of the least developed, landlocked and island developing countries in line with their global mandates

Statement of accomplishments: During the biennium 2008-2009, the Commission placed emphasis on addressing the needs of special groups of countries and adopted a number of related resolutions, including the following: resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission; resolution 64/6 on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region; resolution 65/1 on the implementation of the Bali Outcome Document in addressing the food, fuel and financial crises; and resolution 65/6 on support for the establishment of an international think tank of landlocked developing countries. This attention came about through the efforts of the Executive Secretary to place the Pacific more firmly at the centre of regional talks, and through preparatory sessions of the special bodies on Pacific island developing countries, the least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, which focused on development issues of special concern to these groups of countries.

B. Subprogramme 1: Poverty and development

<p>Objective of the Organization: To ensure progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals through the adoption and implementation of policies and programmes for economic growth, development and poverty reduction, by Governments, civil society and the private sector in Asia and the Pacific, particularly in the least developed countries.</p>
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Expected accomplishment 1: Increased national capacity to formulate and implement effective, sustainable and gender-responsive economic and development policies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the area of poverty reduction

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, ESCAP generated interactive policy dialogues on the main economic and social challenges faced by member States and supported increased capacity to formulate and implement strategies for economic development and poverty reduction policies through analytical and normative activities. As a result, a number of effective, sustainable and gender-responsive policy measures were reportedly taken by member States, including measures to strengthen social safety nets during economic downturns, establish a regional contingency plan to respond quickly to the problems faced by domestic banks and strengthen mechanisms for the regional coordination of macroeconomic policies. The results

achieved can be partly attributed to the unprecedented media coverage of the flagship publication *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* and other activities, which are increasing the visibility of the activities of ESCAP.

Expected accomplishment 2: Increased capacity of Governments, civil society and the private sector in Asia and the Pacific, particularly the least developed countries, to formulate and implement poverty reduction programmes that are effective, sustainable and gender-responsive and that focus on economically vulnerable groups

Statement of accomplishments: The capacity of Governments, civil society and the private sector to formulate and implement poverty reduction programmes continued to increase, as evidenced by 25 good practices adopted by member States during 2008-2009. Several cities committed to adapting the decentralized, pro-poor solid-waste management approaches championed by ESCAP. In addition, housing finance institutions from six member States decided to establish a network of formal, community-based and microfinance housing finance institutions in Asia and the Pacific to exchange innovative practices. Other practices and approaches promoted by ESCAP that were replicated or applied relate to community-based savings and credit schemes, the integration of the improvement of slums in national planning, water connection, integrated planning methodologies and rural development approaches.

Expected accomplishment 3: Improved national capacity to formulate and implement development policies, projects and/or research programmes that reduce rural poverty through the sustainable development of secondary crops

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP contributed towards improved national capacity to formulate and implement rural poverty reduction policies and programmes through its capacity-building activities in the area of secondary crops development. Feedback from participants in related ESCAP activities indicated the ability of 66 per cent of participants to apply the knowledge and skills gained, including in the certification of secondary crops to improve market access for the rural poor, and in the addition of value to fresh and processed produce through product certification.

C. Subprogramme 2: Statistics

<p>Objective of the Organization: To improve the production, dissemination and use of key demographic, social, economic and environmental statistics, including the Millennium Development Goal indicators, by national statistical systems in Asia and the Pacific, in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practices.</p>

Expected accomplishment 1: Increased national capacity in Asia and the Pacific, particularly the least developed countries, to provide data required for measuring progress towards achieving internationally agreed development goals

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, ESCAP continued to support national capacity-building for the collection of data in the areas of vital statistics, informal sector statistics and informal employment statistics, and for the development of international standards for disability measurement. The Committee on Statistics was recognized by member States as the leading forum for statistics development in Asia and the Pacific. Furthermore, a dialogue on gender statistics was initiated, which built a foundation for partnerships in this area, in particular for measuring violence against women. ESCAP also supported increased national statistical capacity through the activities of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, in particular through its contributions to statistical training networks. An increase in national capacity was

demonstrated by the increase in the number of countries with two or more data points for at least two thirds of all Millennium Development Goal indicators.

Expected accomplishment 2: Increased access to comparable development and short-term indicators for policymakers, the development community and the public at large

Statement of accomplishments: The region increased access to comparable development and short-term indicators for policymakers, the development community and the public at large: several new websites that publish the monitored key statistics were established. Access to survey microdata in Asia and the Pacific improved, and more countries in the region are now able to make survey and census microdata available for researchers and policy analysts in support of evidence-based policymaking. The *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific* was redesigned to be a reference on the region for a general audience. A multisectoral and participatory approach to the production of the *Yearbook* and the centralized management of key statistics harmonized datasets across the secretariat and contributed significantly to the quality of the analytical work of ESCAP.

Expected accomplishment 3: Increased knowledge and understanding of key national and regional socio-economic trends, especially progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, by national official statisticians and policymakers in the Asian and Pacific region

Statement of accomplishments: Knowledge and awareness of key national and regional socio-economic trends increased throughout the region. This was demonstrated in particular by the high degree of visibility of the *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific*: the website was accessed over 45,000 times and the publication was downloaded by more than 10,000 readers. In response to the socio-economic challenges faced by the region, in particular the food/fuel crisis and Cyclone Nargis, efforts focused on improving knowledge and the quality of statistical information in the area of food security and post-disaster data collection in order to ensure continued progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The work of ESCAP on natural disasters, which was conducted in close collaboration with United Nations entities, focused on the use of standardized statistical and geographic information tools for disaster risk preparedness and early recovery efforts.

D. Subprogramme 3: Development of Pacific island countries and territories

<p>Objective of the Organization: To develop and implement policies for the achievement of relevant development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in the Pacific, taking into account the special needs of the small island developing States, as contained in the Mauritius Strategy.</p>
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Expected accomplishment 1: Increased national capacities to develop policies and strategies to improve the lives of vulnerable groups

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, Governments in the Pacific increased their capacity to develop and implement measures aimed at improving the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, as demonstrated through the development of national coordination mechanisms for disabled persons. This led to the drafting of a Pacific regional strategy on disability, the endorsement or development of national policies on disability in three countries, the formulation of draft national action plans on youth employment, which will be integrated with national policies on employment

and labour in three countries, and the development of training materials on income and employment generation for youth. The least developed countries were provided with advisory services on youth employment and on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and of the Millennium Development Goals.

Expected accomplishment 2: Improved subregional cooperation to strengthen sustainable economic and social development of small island developing States

Statement of accomplishments: Bearing in mind the similarity of the development challenges faced by small island developing States, improved cooperation, including the sharing of experiences and analysis on how to address these challenges, was pursued and supported as a strategy for strengthened sustainable economic and social development. *Pacific Perspectives 2009: Crises and Opportunities* focused on key development issues in Pacific countries, and the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* highlighted common challenges pertaining to employment and to the impacts of the global financial crises, commodity price fluctuations and severe weather events on countries of the Pacific, as well as options for addressing them. A subregional workshop on Millennium Development Goal planning, costing and budgeting highlighted good practices among countries of the Pacific in implementing national sustainable development strategies. The work of the ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre provided a platform for cooperation and the sharing of experiences and good practices among countries of the Pacific, including in the areas of urban development, employment, connectivity, sustainable development, disability and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the Mauritius Strategy. The development of subregional mechanisms for mainstreaming gender into development policies was assisted through the provision of support for the formulation of indicators on the status of women in small island developing States in the Pacific.

E. Subprogramme 4: Trade and investment

<p>Objective of the Organization: To achieve a more equitable distribution of benefits from the globalization process through increased trade and investment in support of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.</p>

Expected accomplishment 1: Increased national capacity to effectively negotiate, conclude and implement multilateral and other trade agreements supporting the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, national capacities to effectively negotiate, conclude and implement multilateral and other trade agreements continued to increase, as evidenced by the progress achieved by States members of ESCAP that are observers in the World Trade Organization in conducting accession negotiations. One of the four member States considering membership in the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement applied for accession. Participants in ESCAP training activities reported improved capacity to design, negotiate and implement trade policies. Under the expanding Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade, regional trade research was promoted and published, and seminars were organized for policymakers and researchers. The Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Agreements Database, an analytical tool for measuring the performance of regional trade agreements, also expanded, thus improving the ability of ESCAP and its members to track progress.

Expected accomplishment 2: Increased capacity and regional cooperation to develop and implement trade efficiency policies and programmes to promote international competitiveness

Statement of accomplishments: Progress was made in contributing to the increased capacity in the region to develop and implement trade efficiency policies and programmes that promote international competitiveness, as evidenced in particular by the increased knowledge and capacity of ESCAP training participants. The United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, which was created in 2009 to increase capacity and foster regional cooperation, focused on supporting the implementation of single-window initiatives, providing local experts with a platform to access technical knowledge and expertise, and organizing capacity-building and training activities. In the area of trade information, an increased number of trade information users and E-TISNET subscribers allowed ESCAP to meet its performance target before the end of the biennium.

Expected accomplishment 3: Increased capacity to design and implement policies and programmes that create an enabling environment for investment and promote a competitive business sector

Statement of accomplishments: The contribution of ESCAP to the increased capacity in the region to design and implement policies and programmes that create an enabling environment for investment and promote a competitive business sector was evidenced during 2008-2009, in particular in the policy recommendations and the participant feedback that resulted from the activities carried out. Those activities, implemented by ESCAP in collaboration with various partners, focused on issues relating to corporate social responsibility and small and medium-sized enterprise value chains in the region. Activities related to the Global Compact strengthened the capacity of local network focal points, and participants committed to developing a community of practice, which could assist Global Compact signatories in its implementation. The communities' web portal attracted an average of 1,500 visits per month during the pilot implementation period.

Expected accomplishment 4: Increased capacity to design and implement policies and programmes that promote sustainable economic growth and rural poverty reduction through agrotechnology transfer and agro-based enterprise development

Statement of accomplishments: Through the United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery, ESCAP contributed to the region's increased capacity to design and implement policies and programmes that promote sustainable economic growth and rural poverty reduction. It did so through the following: (a) the subregional launch of a theme study on food security; (b) a regional training-of-trainers programme on hybrid rice cultivation technology; (c) an expert group meeting on agricultural machinery development for sustainable agriculture; and (d) a bioenergy development workshop. Capacity-building in the areas of bioenergy, food security and sustainable agriculture was evidenced by feedback from participants on their use of the knowledge and skills gained. Furthermore, capacity in agrotechnology transfer was enhanced through policy synthesis and normative research on green technology, research and development for agricultural engineering, conservation agricultural techniques, agricultural machinery development and clean development mechanism application.

F. Subprogramme 5: Transport and tourism

Objective of the Organization: To strengthen national policies that contribute to the development of an integrated, international, intermodal transport system and promote sustainable transport and tourism.

Expected accomplishment 1: Enhanced knowledge and capacity of national Governments, civil society and non-governmental organizations to develop and implement effective and sustainable transport and tourism policies and programmes, including those targeting the Millennium Development Goals, and road safety issues

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, Governments in the region demonstrated their capacity to develop transport policies and programmes, in particular through the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia by the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport. The Declaration established immediate priorities for regional cooperation in the transport sector towards realizing the long-term vision of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system. Furthermore, on the basis of the regional road safety goals, indicators and targets of ESCAP, a multitude of road safety initiatives were undertaken by member States. The ESCAP-developed analytical tool for the assessment of public-private partnership readiness provided an easy way to assess the ability of a country to implement public-private partnership projects and prepare an action plan to overcome deficiencies in related areas.

Expected accomplishment 2: Improved capability of national Governments and international financial institutions to use the Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway and other ESCAP-promoted initiatives for planning international intermodal transport linkages

Statement of accomplishments: The Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway, formalized through intergovernmental agreements, continued to catalyse region-wide road and railway development, triggering a number of national, bilateral and multilateral initiatives. The development of the networks was incorporated into national plans or strategies in several countries. The Asian Highway was used as the reference for the development of subregional cooperation programmes in the context of ASEAN, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Greater Mekong Subregion and the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia. By the end of 2009, the Asian Highway had connected all of the landlocked countries in the region, improving the ability of national Governments and financial institutions to use the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway. Furthermore, member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization reached a consensus on a draft agreement on the facilitation of international road transport, a process supported by the analytical work of the secretariat.

Expected accomplishment 3: Increased capacity of national Governments and industry to implement measures to improve the efficiency of international transport operations and logistics

Statement of accomplishments: Using the ESCAP time/cost distance methodology to evaluate transport routes of international importance, Governments took a number of initiatives to identify and remove efficiency bottlenecks. Through the Asian Development Bank, the methodology was applied to countries of the Asia Regional Economic Cooperation and the Greater Mekong Subregion. Under the Greater

Mekong Subregion Cross-border Transport Agreement, three countries officially opened cross-border traffic points and, in line with the Agreement, cross-border traffic was opened along the East-West corridor. The successful implementation of Trans-Asian Railway activities and the recognition of the Trans-Asian Railway as a tool for international trade were evidenced by the growing use of the Railway for the cross-border movements of container block trains. Three priority intermodal transport corridors connecting North-East and Central Asia were identified, and a draft memorandum of understanding and the terms of reference for corridor-based steering committees were agreed upon.

G. Subprogramme 6: Environment and sustainable development

Objective of the Organization: To improve the environmental sustainability of economic and social development, and natural resources management, in line with internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Expected accomplishment 1: Improved national capacity to develop and implement policies and programmes that contribute to green growth

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, significant strides were made by member States towards greening the economic growth of the region. By the end of 2009, at least eight countries had developed or were in the process of developing green growth strategies. Six countries requested related capacity-building support, and three countries expressed their interest in launching pilot projects on green growth. Efforts to advocate green growth as a strategy for environmentally sustainable development and to expand and strengthen related partnerships led to increased visibility, a deepening understanding of green growth and recognition from an increased number of stakeholders throughout the region.

Expected accomplishment 2: Increased national capacity to develop and apply socio-economic policy instruments to improve environmental management and performance

Statement of accomplishments: Efforts to ensure that economic development is complemented by environmental sustainability and appropriate socio-economic policies continued through a variety of policy advocacy and capacity-building activities. Through a number of established eco-efficiency programmes, ESCAP addressed the related capacity-building needs of specific country groupings, including members of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, as well as specific population groups within countries, such as urban dwellers. Through the sustainable urban infrastructure initiative, ESCAP supported the development and application of policies and related activities aimed at improving the urban environment.

Expected accomplishment 3: Enhanced national capacity to identify effective policies and programmes for efficient and cleaner production, management and use of energy resources at the national, subregional and regional levels

Statement of accomplishments: Enhanced national capacity in terms of policies and programmes related to energy security was evidenced by a number of measures adopted by policymakers. Member States supported the efforts of ESCAP to pursue strengthened subregional and regional energy security. In order to pursue the broader agenda of energy for sustainable development at the subregional level, ESCAP continued to support capacity-building among member States to address subregional

energy issues, including through the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia and activities under the Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia.

Expected accomplishment 4: Increased national capacity in formulating and implementing effective sustainable development policies and strategies on management of water resources and natural disasters, in particular in disaster-prone countries, in terms of preparedness, response and recovery

Statement of accomplishments: ESCAP improved national capacities on water resources management issues through a series of activities. As a result, six policy measures were adopted by countries in South-East Asia to integrate community-based disaster risk management into socio-economic development. The Commission also adopted resolution 64/2 on regional cooperation in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters in Asia and the Pacific. Progress was also made in introducing specific eco-efficiency terminology into a number of national plans relating to water resources management, including in a guideline for the planning and development of eco-efficient water infrastructure, a strategy on eco-efficient water infrastructure development, procedures for the application of storm water management and the integration of eco-efficient water infrastructure into five-year development plans.

H. Subprogramme 7: Information, communication and space technology

<p>Objective of the Organization: To improve equitable access to and use of information, communication and space technology so as to ensure that benefits are available to all, leading to the region's economic and social advancement and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.</p>

Expected accomplishment 1: Strengthened national capacity to design, develop and implement national information, communication and space technology policies and programmes, including development initiatives that facilitate equitable access to information, communication and space technology, with special emphasis on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, ESCAP contributed to the strengthening of national capacities in the area of information communication and space technology, as evidenced by the interest expressed by eight countries in improving their national regulatory frameworks on the basis of the work of ESCAP on broadband satellite communications. The countries expressed interest in utilizing the Wideband InterNetworking engineering test and Demonstration Satellite for communication and disaster management and as a supplement to fibre-optic cables to further expand information and communications technology (ICT) access in the Pacific and in South Asia. One country took measures to formulate a national ICT policy with support from ESCAP, and four countries applied ESCAP-developed tools in establishing community e-centres in rural areas.

Expected accomplishment 2: Strengthened national capacity, partnerships and regional cooperative mechanisms for the use of space technology for achieving internationally agreed development goals and disaster reduction

Statement of accomplishments: In close partnership with other United Nations entities, ESCAP continued to support regional cooperative mechanisms and capacity-

building for the use of space technology. Major developments during 2008-2009 included (a) the launch of a cooperation framework on disaster risk reduction, (b) support from space agencies within the region for a regional mechanism on drought disaster monitoring and early warning and (c) the establishment of a network focusing on space information access and the application of the Sentinel Asia Initiative, initially consisting of 10 national contact points. In addition, 16 countries joined the regional South-South cooperation mechanism for disaster risk reduction promoted by ESCAP, two member States provided training courses on geoinformatics and space applications for disaster risk management, and partnerships related to the Pacific regional component of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response were strengthened.

Expected accomplishment 3: Improved national and institutional capacity through training programmes in the use of information and communication technology for the purposes of socio-economic development

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, ESCAP contributed to improved capacity in the use of ICT for socio-economic development through the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development. The Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders was rolled out in 12 countries, and advisory support was provided for the institutionalization of the Academy in national capacity-building frameworks. A total of 87 per cent of participants in Academy training courses indicated an increased level of competency in the use of ICT for socio-economic development after completing the training. Capacity-building was further supported through targeted training workshops in the areas of e-governance, disaster risk reduction, gender, information security, ICT accessibility for people with disabilities and statistics on the information economy. In total, 1,105 participants from 66 countries benefited from the Centre's training courses during the biennium.

Expected accomplishment 4: Strengthened national capacity to nurture and promote national innovation systems to create an enabling environment for technology transfer in order for countries of the region to meet development challenges in the global economy

Statement of accomplishments: The technology transfer and innovation management capacity of 16 member States was strengthened through their participation in technology transfer mechanisms and other capacity-building programmes supported by the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and its regional networks. A total of 15 member States were involved in institutional cooperation mechanisms to strengthen capacity to promote the use of renewable energy resources. Furthermore, institutions in 3 member States were provided with advisory services on technology transfer to small and medium-sized enterprises, and 13 countries participated in a regional stakeholders meeting on the promotion of technology transfer networks for small and medium-sized enterprises.

I. Subprogramme 8: Social development, including persistent and emerging issues

<p>Objective of the Organization: To strengthen enabling institutions for the delivery of equitable social services and integration of social dimensions into the development process, in line with internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.</p>
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Expected accomplishment 1: Increased national capacity for gender mainstreaming in priority areas

Statement of accomplishments: During 2008-2009, national capacity for gender mainstreaming in priority development areas continued to increase, as indicated by the reports of Governments to the Committee on Social Development on a variety of gender equality measures undertaken at the national level. ESCAP contributed to this development, including through the organization of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and Its Regional and Global Outcomes, where 81 per cent of participants reported that they had gained new ideas for addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women in the region. Furthermore, 68 per cent of participants at the Expert Group Meeting on Gender Statistics and the Use of Violence against Women Indicators in Support of CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action reported that the meeting had increased their knowledge on tools for gender-responsive governance.

Expected accomplishment 2: Increased national capacity to build enabling institutions and to formulate and implement measures for improving health, in line with the Millennium Development Goals

Statement of accomplishments: Of the total number of participants in the meetings and workshops held in support of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals, 89 per cent indicated an increase in their knowledge of related effective policies and interventions. Participants valued in particular the role of the secretariat in providing a forum for the exchange of good practices and a source of analytical work that would support advocacy efforts. They also recognized the positive contributions made in capacity-building. Publications documenting the work undertaken by the secretariat on health-related aspects of the Millennium Development Goals were very well received by member States and other stakeholders.

Expected accomplishment 3: Increased national capacity to integrate social dimensions into diverse development sectors, including addressing population concerns and the needs of socially vulnerable groups

Statement of accomplishments: The results of ESCAP initiatives to integrate social dimensions into diverse development sectors were reflected at the Commission and committee sessions, intergovernmental meetings and workshops. These results were also reflected in responses to questionnaires, in which Governments reported that they had developed plans to integrate disability measures in ICT policies, to integrate the needs of vulnerable groups in economic policies and to mainstream gender in national development frameworks. Increased national capacity was identified by 90 per cent of participants in ESCAP meetings organized by the Social Development Division, who indicated that the meetings had provided them with a range of policy options. Furthermore, 95 per cent of respondents indicated that their understanding of the concerns and needs of socially vulnerable groups had improved as a result of their participation.

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