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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**Seventy-fourth session**

Bangkok, 11–16 May 2018

Item 3 (f) of the provisional agenda*

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of
the Commission, including the work of the regional
institutions: disaster risk reduction****Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific
Centre for the Development of Disaster Information
Management on its second session***Summary*

The Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management held its second session in Tehran on 31 January 2018.

The Council reviewed the Centre's work since its first session and expressed its appreciation to the Centre for fully implementing all the key activities of the approved workplan for 2017 on enhancing knowledge on policy options and programmes for strengthening disaster information management.

The Council also reviewed the governance and the administrative and financial status of the Centre. It commended the finalization of the host country agreement between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific establishing the Centre as a regional institution of the Commission, pursuant to Commission resolution 71/11, and noted that the Centre commenced its presence in Tehran in January 2018 in accordance with the decision of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its fifth session.

The Council endorsed the proposed workplan of the Centre for 2018 and its strategy for 2019 and the biennium 2020–2021, which were in line with the approved strategic plan of the Centre and its three pillars, namely (a) knowledge and information repository, (b) capacity development, training and knowledge-sharing in disaster information management and (c) information services on innovations for cross-border disasters. The Centre's key activities for 2018 would include initiation of a regional network and alert system for combating sand and dust storms, sharing of experiences in subregional transboundary seismic hazard mapping and a capacity development programme on disaster information management for disaster risk reduction and resilience, with a focus on multi-hazard activities. The Council also recommended that the Centre should incorporate the technical recommendations of the expert group meeting on sand and dust storms into its future programme of work within the scope and mandate given to it and taking into account the availability of funds.

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Council and provide the secretariat with guidance for the future work of the Centre.

* ESCAP/74/L.1/Rev.1.

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

1. The following decisions adopted by the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP):

Decision 1

The Governing Council endorses the report on the activities of APDIM since the first session of the Council.

Decision 2

The Council endorses the report on the governance and the administrative and financial status of APDIM.

Decision 3

The Council also endorses the workplan of APDIM for 2018 and its strategy for 2019 and the biennium 2020–2021, with a particular focus on multi-hazard activities.

Decision 4

The Council takes note of the technical recommendations of the expert group meeting on sand and dust storms contained in annex II to the present document and recommends that APDIM incorporate these recommendations into its future programme of work within the scope and mandate given to it and taking into account the availability of funds.

2. The Council commends the finalization of the host country agreement between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and ESCAP establishing the Centre as a regional institution of the Commission, pursuant to Commission resolution 71/11.

3. The Council commends APDIM for fully implementing all its key activities listed under output 1 (Policymakers and disaster risk reduction experts in Governments and related organizations obtain greater knowledge on policy options and programmes for strengthening disaster information management) of the workplan for 2017 as endorsed by the Council.

4. The Council recommends that APDIM also consider developing multi-hazard activities as part of its future programme of work. It notes the requests of observer countries to enhance partnerships with other regional centres on disaster risk reduction and management and to expand the future activities of APDIM in other vulnerable subregions, including the Pacific.

5. The Council expresses its appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for its generous financial contribution for APDIM. The Council also expresses appreciation to the government of Macao, China for its voluntary cash contribution to APDIM. In this regard, the Council strongly encourages ESCAP members and associate members to also provide financial contribution to APDIM.

6. The Council notes the temporary space for APDIM in the United Nations common premises and welcomes operationalization of APDIM in Sepand

Building in accordance with United Nations rules and regulations within three months.

7. The Council takes note of the forthcoming independent evaluation of APDIM in 2019 and urges all members to provide support to APDIM and its activities to ensure a positive outcome of the evaluation.

II. Proceedings

A. Activities of the Centre since the first session of the Governing Council

(Agenda item 2)

8. The Council had before it the report on the activities of APDIM since the first session of the Council (E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/1). The Officer-in-Charge of APDIM briefed the Council on the progress in the implementation of the decisions and recommendations made by the Council at its first session.

9. The Council noted that one of the standing agenda items of APDIM has been incorporated into that of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction of ESCAP. The Committee, at its fifth session, noted with appreciation the progress in the implementation of the programme of work of APDIM and recognized that APDIM acted as an important regional mechanism for the realization of the targets and priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

10. The Council noted with appreciation the efforts made by the secretariat, including the Executive Secretary, and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on enhancing awareness and visibility of APDIM in a number of high-level regional and international forums. Those efforts led to the recognition of APDIM and its role in the region in developing human and institutional capacities and strengthening regional cooperation and South-South cooperation in disaster information management.

11. The Council noted that South-South cooperation and cross-learning with regard to good practices and lessons learned in seismic risk reduction had been substantially enhanced through the technical assistance activities of APDIM.

12. The Council also noted that an analytical report of APDIM on regional cooperation for combating sand and dust storms and related disaster information management would be completed and published in 2018.

B. Regional cooperation and capacity development projects

(Agenda item 3)

13. In implementation of the recommendation of the Council that APDIM consider information management services for seismic risk reduction as a key priority programme area in its first year of activities, the secretariat briefed the Council on the progress of the technical assistance projects for reducing seismic risks, namely the seismic microzonation of Thimphu and retrofitting cultural monuments in support of post-earthquake recovery and reconstruction in Nepal, carried out with the partners of APDIM. The Council noted with appreciation the expertise offered by the APDIM partnership group, namely the Plan and Budget Organization and the Road, Housing and Urban Development Research Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for implementing those technical assistance projects.

14. The secretariat also briefed the Council on the Commission's approach with regard to regional cooperation for combating sand and dust storms in Asia and the Pacific, in line with Commission resolution 72/7, which APDIM implemented under the pillar on regional information on innovations for cross-border disasters of its programme of work. The Council noted that the analytical work had substantially contributed to promoting intergovernmental discussions on cooperation for addressing transboundary hazards.

C. Report on the governance and the administrative and financial status of the Centre

(Agenda item 4)

15. The Council had before it the report on the governance and the administrative and financial status of APDIM (E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/2).

16. The Council was apprised of the Centre's governance structure and administration, including current staffing capacity, which was set up in line with the recommendations of the evaluation of APDIM endorsed by the Commission in its resolution 71/11, as well as the financial status of the Centre.

17. The Council expressed appreciation for the generous contribution of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to APDIM comprising a first tranche of \$361,500 in 2016, including for the implementation of Commission resolution 72/7 on regional cooperation on sand and dust storms, and an additional cash contribution of \$2,683,973 in 2017.

18. The Council also expressed appreciation to the government of Macao, China for its voluntary cash contribution of \$10,000 for APDIM.

19. The Council noted that APDIM would commence its presence in Tehran in January 2018 in accordance with the decision of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction at its fifth session.

D. Programme of work for 2018 and beyond

(Agenda item 5)

20. The Council had before it the proposed workplan of APDIM for 2018 and beyond (E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/3).

21. Representatives of the following Council members made statements: Islamic Republic of Iran and Nepal. Representatives of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan attending the session as observers also made statements.

22. The Officer-in-Charge of APDIM briefed the Council on the outputs to be delivered by APDIM under subprogramme 5 on information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction and management of the programme of work of ESCAP for the biennium 2018–2019, as endorsed by the Commission, at its seventy-third session, in May 2017.

23. Under the workplan for 2018, key activities for 2018 would include initiating an Asia-Pacific sand and dust network, initiating a regional sand and dust alert system, updating seismic hazard maps in South and Central Asia, and initiating a capacity development programme on disaster information management. Subregional expert group meetings on information and knowledge for disaster risk reduction and resilience and regional workshops on information management for combating sand and dust storms and transboundary seismic hazards would be organized to advance the initiatives of APDIM.

24. The strategy of APDIM for 2019 and the biennium 2020–2021 would be driven by the key objectives and three pillars of APDIM – knowledge and information repository; capacity development, training and knowledge-sharing; and information services on innovations for cross-border disasters – that were approved by the Council at its first session. The strategy included further strengthening and expansion of APDIM partnerships with centres of excellence at national, regional and global levels and promoting regional cooperation and South-South cooperation.

25. The Council recommended that the secretariat should mobilize funds for APDIM operations from multiple donors. In that regard, the Council strongly encouraged ESCAP members and associate members to provide financial support for the development and delivery of the capacity development programme of APDIM.

26. The Council noted that other major activities of APDIM in 2018 would include continued consultations between ESCAP and the host Government regarding the agreement on administrative and financial arrangements for establishing APDIM as a regional institution of the Commission and bringing the Sepand Building premises, which will host the APDIM office, into compliance with United Nations minimum operating security and other standards.

27. The Council noted that the comprehensive independent evaluation of APDIM in 2019 would be submitted to the Commission at its seventy-sixth session, in 2020. The Commission would assess the performance of APDIM on the basis of the findings of the evaluation and determine whether APDIM would continue to operate as a regional institution of the Commission thereafter.

28. Representatives attending the session as observers invited APDIM to enhance partnerships with other regional centres in disaster risk reduction and management, such as the Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction based in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

E. Date of and venue for the third session of the Governing Council

(Agenda item 6)

29. The Council decided that its third session would be held in the fourth quarter of 2018. The exact date and venue would be decided at a later date.

F. Other matters

(Agenda item 7)

30. The representative from Sri Lanka made a statement. The representative of Fiji attending the session as an observer also made a statement and suggested that APDIM invite more participation from Pacific island countries and in the future expand its activities in the Pacific.

G. Adoption of the report

(Agenda item 8)

31. On 31 January 2018, the Council endorsed the matters calling for action or brought to the attention of the Commission. The Council reviewed and endorsed the draft of the proceedings that were circulated to its members after the conclusion of the session. The full report of the Council on its second session would be submitted to the Commission for its endorsement at its seventy-fourth session.

III. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

32. The Council held its second session in Tehran on 31 January 2018. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered the opening statement. Mr. Seyed Hamid Pourmohammadi Gelsefidi, Deputy Vice-President of the Plan and Budget Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran, delivered the welcoming remarks.

B. Attendance

33. The session was attended by representatives of the following members of the Council: Bangladesh; Cambodia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Nepal; Pakistan; Sri Lanka; and Turkey.

34. Representatives of Fiji, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan attended as observers.

C. Election of officers

35. The Council elected the following officers:

Chair: Mr. Seyed Hamid Pourmohammadi Gelsefidi
(Islamic Republic of Iran)

Vice-Chair: Brigadier Mukhtar Ahmed (Pakistan)

D. Agenda

36. The Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening statements;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Activities of the Centre since the first session of the Governing Council.
3. Regional cooperation and capacity development projects.
4. Report on the governance and the administrative and financial status of the Centre.
5. Programme of work for 2018 and beyond.
6. Date of and venue for the third session of the Governing Council.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the report.

E. Other events

37. The High-level Regional Conference on Information Management for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience was held in Tehran on 30 and 31 January 2018 in conjunction with the Council session.

Annex I**List of documents**

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/1	Report on the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management since the first session of the Governing Council	2
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/2	Report on the governance and the administrative and financial status of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management	4
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/3	Proposed workplan of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management for 2018 and beyond	5
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/4	Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its second session	
<i>Limited series</i>		
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/L.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/L.2	Draft report	8
<i>Information series</i>		
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/INF/1	Information for participants	
E/ESCAP/APDIM/GC(2)/INF/2	List of participants	1
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Annex II

Technical recommendations of the High-level Expert Consultation on Regional Cooperation for Combating Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific, Tehran, 30 and 31 January 2018

1. High-level experts from the Asia-Pacific region gathered in Tehran for the High-level Expert Consultation on Regional Cooperation for Combating Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific on 30 and 31 January 2018¹ under the aegis of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM). Two days of frank, informative, science-based and results-oriented consultations, together with an exchange of experiences and best practices as well as a review of lessons learned, generated profound insights for participants on the way ahead. Experts from across the region, including academics, practitioners and policymakers exchanged their views on the analysis of the situation, trends highlighted in recent surveys, needed scientific-policy measures, tools, projects and mechanisms regarding sand and dust storms.

2. After careful deliberations, the high-level experts requested that their recommendations be submitted to the APDIM Governing Council at its second session for further action. The high-level experts also expressed their understanding that efforts to combat sand and dust storms ought to be followed up on and addressed from both a disaster management and environment perspective. The recommendations were that the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management should:

(a) Promote, enhance and facilitate integration of a regional multi-hazard risk assessment and alert system, including for sand and dust storms, that would be linked with the Regional Cooperative Mechanism for Drought Monitoring and Early Warning;

(b) Develop and implement projects in partnership with member States and relevant international organizations, including to operationalize data and the knowledge network, including the sand and dust storm monitoring and alert system;

(c) Put in place a multi-stakeholder initiative comprising States, academia, civil society, United Nations specialized agencies and the regional economic commissions, including the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Europe, as well as the United Nations Environment Programme, utilizing relevant environmental instruments such as the Sand and Dust Storm Warning Advisory and Assessment System of the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and others, to promote a triangular South-North-South cooperation modality on knowledge- and data sharing and capacity development;

(d) Develop a set of sand and dust storm data indicators and an integrated data bank for empirical and periodic review, assessment, analysis and reporting;

¹ The Expert Consultation was held at the High-level Regional Conference on Information Management for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience, Tehran, 30 and 31 January 2018.

- (e) Encourage research and evidence-based studies at national and regional levels on the root causes, hotspots, accelerating factors and negative impacts of sand and dust storms and take appropriate preventive or mitigating measures;
- (f) Support awareness-raising and enabling campaigns to provide socioeconomic incentives for local communities to adapt their land and water resources management to the framework of sustainable development;
- (g) Identify an appropriate set of standards and indicators to prevent and reduce the impact of sand and dust storms on human health and livelihoods in the affected areas;
- (h) Identify and mobilize financial resources and voluntary contributions to support implementation of its activities.

Annex III

Financial statement of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management for the year ended 31 December 2017

(United States dollars)

Income

Contributions	2 693 973
Interest income	26 894
Total income	2 720 866
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	233 814
Net income over expenditure	2 487 052
Fund balance as at 1 January 2017	324 559
Refunds to donors/fund transfer	—
Fund balance as at 31 December 2017	2 811 612

Annex IV

**Financial statement of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the
Development of Disaster Information Management for the year
ended 31 December 2017, by project component**
(United States dollars)

	<i>Strengthening disaster information management in the Asia-Pacific region</i>	<i>Institutional support for the Centre (multi- donors)</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Income</i>			
Contributions	2 683 973	10 000	2 693 973
Interest income	26 894	—	26 894
Total income	2 710 866	10 000	2 720 866
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	233 814	—	233 814
Net income over expenditure	2 477 052	10 000	2 487 052
Fund balance as at 1 January 2017	324 599	—	324 599
Refunds to donors	—	—	—
Fund balance as at 31 December 2017	2 801 612	10 000	2 811 612