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Multistakeholder dialogue

Partnership to promote sustainable solutions in Asia and the Pacific (challenges and opportunities)

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Information Note

1. The Asia-Pacific region plays a pivotal role in shaping global environmental and development outcomes. As home to nearly 60%¹ of the global population and accounting for almost half of global GDP, actions taken in this region significantly influence the trajectory of climate, nature, and pollution responses worldwide. The *Pact for the Future*, adopted at the 2024 Summit of the Future, reinforces the importance of multilateralism and partnerships in advancing the 2030 Agenda and responding to the three planetary environmental crises.
2. Transitioning to sustainable green and blue economies presents both opportunities and challenges in the region. Multistakeholder partnerships—engaging governments, private sector, civil society, academia, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, as well as youth—are critical to delivering inclusive and sustainable outcomes. These partnerships facilitate policy alignment, resource mobilization, technology transfer, and capacity building, particularly in areas such as climate action, nature action, sustainable consumption and production, and pollution reduction.
3. Climate change remains a pressing concern, with the region contributing over 55% of global greenhouse gas emissions and facing disproportionate climate risks². While efforts to decarbonize are underway, more ambitious action is required to strengthen Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), implement National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and enhance early warning systems. A just transition, especially in energy and high-emitting sectors, is essential to secure livelihoods and promote equity.
4. The region also faces biodiversity loss at alarming rates. Home to 17 biodiversity hotspots and 7 megadiverse countries, Asia-Pacific's natural capital is under threat from unsustainable land use, pollution, and climate impacts³. Accelerated implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), ecosystem restoration, sustainable food systems transformations, and integrated water resource management are among the key nature-related priorities.
5. Pollution challenges, including air pollution, plastic waste, nutrient overload, and antimicrobial resistance (AMR), require a holistic, circular, and source-to-sea approach. Transboundary cooperation and partnerships are essential to strengthen monitoring, policy enforcement, and the scaling of sustainable solutions, especially in urban and coastal environments.
6. Advancing science-based decision-making through a strengthened science-policy interface is central to achieving environmental goals. The development of the Global Environmental Data Strategy (GEDS), alongside contributions from global science-policy bodies (IPCC, IPBES, and IRP), and the establishment of the new Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (ISP-CWP) provide an evolving foundation for informed multilateral action.
7. Robust environmental governance, grounded in environmental rights and the rule of law, remains critical. Gaps in institutional capacity, coordination, and legal frameworks persist across the region. Initiatives such as the Montevideo Programme and the creation of

¹ [Statistics in Asia and the Pacific: The lives behind the numbers | ESCAP](#)

² ESCAP (2023) Protecting Our Planet through Regional Cooperation and Solidarity in Asia and the Pacific, [content](#)

³ IPBES (2018) Regional Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Asia and the Pacific
<https://ipbes.net/assessment-reports/asia-pacific>

environmental law clinics offer avenues to enhance national capacity and access to justice. Regional commitments—such as the proposed ASEAN Declaration on the Right to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment—signal growing momentum toward inclusive governance.

8. Financing the transition to Net Zero remains a key barrier. Estimates suggest that USD 7.5 trillion per year is needed globally by 2030 to address climate change alone⁴. Member States must align public and private finance by adopting budget tagging and taxonomies as well as reporting on climate finance, reforming harmful subsidies, scaling up sustainable finance strategies through use of blended finance including leveraging international public finance in developing countries, using carbon pricing tools, and incentivizing circular economy practices in high-impact sectors.
9. Digital transformation offers emerging opportunities but also poses environmental risks. Digital tools, including AI and satellite systems, are being increasingly deployed to close data gaps and support SDG monitoring. At the same time, countries must address the environmental footprint of digital infrastructure and ensure the sustainable sourcing of critical minerals needed for green technologies.
10. Regional and subregional cooperation platforms—including Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), Mekong River Commission (MRC), and Regional Seas Programmes—play a critical role in facilitating policy coordination, knowledge exchange, and cross-border action. Their alignment with regional visions such as the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the Pacific 2050 Strategy offers a pathway to integrated solutions.
11. Key Issues for Discussion under Agenda Item 9:
 - a. Strengthening multistakeholder partnerships to deliver on global environmental goals and accelerate implementation of the SDGs and MEAs.
 - b. Enhancing regional cooperation to scale up climate action, nature action, and pollution prevention through inclusive and cross-sectoral collaboration.
 - c. Mobilizing public and private finance for sustainable solutions, including through use of taxonomies, blended finance, carbon pricing, and circular economy incentives.
 - d. Empowering Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, women, youth, and environmental defenders as core actors in governance and implementation frameworks.
 - e. Leveraging science-policy interfaces and digital innovation to enhance environmental data systems, early warning capacities, and evidence-based policymaking.
 - f. Multistakeholder engagement is critical to enable legal empowerment and the achievement of good environmental governance. There are many good practices through capacity-building, policy coherence, and regional legal mechanisms that showcase inclusive and rights-based environmental governance.
 - g. Addressing transboundary and urban pollution challenges through source-to-sea approaches and regional monitoring systems.
 - h. Fostering collaboration among regional institutions and mechanisms to align environmental action with regional and global agendas and frameworks.

⁴ <https://www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Assessing-Top-Down-Climate-Finance-Needs.pdf>

- i. Air pollution has turned into a major humanitarian crisis in the region. Multistakeholder engagement is needed to address the crisis with improved policies and their implementation, innovations and technology transfer, financing mechanisms and investments, institutional arrangements, awareness-raising and advocacy, and stakeholders' roles and responsibilities. To support multistakeholder engagement, regional mechanisms are effective due to the transboundary nature of air pollution.
- j. Plastic pollution is getting worse with exponential production and consumption of plastics, littering, and leakages to the environment. Stakeholders at local, national, and regional levels must come together to support the efforts for a "pollution-free planet." Environmental education, policies, and green jobs will be a couple of key factors for stakeholders' engagement.
- k. Raising ambition and advancing climate action through strengthened NDCs and NAP implementation, and fostering just transitions to low-carbon, climate-resilient economies.
- l. Accelerating implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) through a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach as well as strong regional cooperation.
- m. Promoting ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management to address land degradation, enhance resilience, and deliver co-benefits for biodiversity, climate, and livelihoods.