

## Annex II.

### Resolution 55/1 on sustainable development of inland water transport in the Asian and Pacific region

Adopted by

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific  
at its fifty-fifth session

*The Economic and Social Commission  
for Asia and the Pacific,*

*Recalling* its resolution 51/8 of 1 May 1995, the annex to which contained the New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific, in which inland water transport was accorded high priority,

*Bearing in mind* the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, as adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992, which provided general policy guidance and set out requirements for improvement of the global environment,

*Noting* the Vienna Declaration adopted at the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment convened by the Economic Commission for Europe and held at Vienna in 1997, in which countries were urged to promote a shift in passenger and freight traffic from roads to inland waterways and other more ecologically efficient modes of transport,

*Recognizing* the need for national coordination in the use of water resources,

*Recognizing also* that inland water transport is an integral component of the overall transport system of the region and is one of the most advantageous transport modes, having the least impact on the environment, the lowest cost for domestic and international transport, enormous capacity reserves and the least energy consumption,

*Recognizing further* the potential of inland water transport for encouraging and supporting increased economic and social development in rural areas and alongside waterways,

*Noting with satisfaction* the recommendations of the Regional Policy-level Meeting on Sustainable Development of Inland Water Transport, held at Nanjing, China, in September 1998,

1. *Urges* concerned regional members and associate members:

(a) To integrate inland water transport within intermodal transport systems to provide door-to-door services for the movement of domestic and international traffic, thereby responding to market demand for convenient and competitive service while optimizing the economic, financial, environmental and social benefits that can be derived from each mode in the entire transport chain;

(b) To undertake detailed examination of the technical and administrative issues related to bringing national waterways into operation with the objective of facilitating international traffic;

(c) To accord appropriate priority to inland water transport in policy, planning and investment based on detailed analysis of the economic, financial, social and environmental benefits, and to promote public awareness of such benefits, thereby encouraging a modal shift to inland water transport where appropriate;

(d) To enhance cooperation between national agencies responsible for inland water transport and water resources management for navigation purposes through coordinated national planning and the development and implementation of policies;

(e) To increase the public sector resources allocated to inland water transport to reflect the relative priority of such transport and to encourage partnerships between the

public and private sectors to improve the development, management and operation of inland water transport;

- (f) To encourage the following:
  - (i) The adoption of appropriate legislation and creation of a regulatory environment for the protection and effective utilization of inland waterways;
  - (ii) Safety in navigation, taking adequate care of the year 2000 problem;
  - (iii) Facilitation of cargo trans-shipment between seagoing ships and inland vessels for onward distribution;
  - (iv) The recognition and strengthening of the role in socio-economic development of country boats and small vessels operated by the informal sector, with particular reference to poverty alleviation in rural areas;
  - (v) The utilization of dredged materials, wherever economically advantageous and socially and environmentally acceptable, to raise and revitalize farmland, strengthen bank protection and reclaim land;
  - (vi) Development of statistical information systems to support policy, management and operational decision-making, taking adequate care of the year 2000 problem;
  - (vii) Development of tourism along inland waterways;

(g) To establish or strengthen appropriate centres and institutional capacity to undertake studies and research to identify physical and institutional bottlenecks that are hindering the efficient development and operation of inland water transport, and to promote human resources development to address those deficiencies;

## 2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To assist riverine members and associate members, on request, in formulating policies and strategies to foster the development of inland water transport and its integration with other transport modes, and to encourage a modal shift of cargoes to inland water transport where appropriate;

(b) To promote technological advancement of the inland water transport sector through the provision of technical assistance;

(c) To assist in increasing the awareness of policy makers and the public of the economic, social and environmental advantages of inland water transport, through the preparation and publication of informative and authentic materials for wide dissemination in the region;

(d) To promote human resources development in the inland water transport sector and experience sharing through networking among riverine members and associate members within the ESCAP region and also with countries outside the region;

(e) To organize, in close collaboration with the public and the private sectors, an international conference-cum-exhibition on inland water transport in conjunction with the third session of the Committee on Transport, Communications, Tourism and Infrastructure Development, to be held in 2000;

(f) To report to the Commission in 2001 on the implementation of the present resolution;

3. *Requests* donor governments and agencies to support projects that promote the integration of inland water transport within intermodal transport systems and its integration into comprehensive planning for water resources management.

28 April 1999