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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Eighty-first session
Bangkok, 21–25 April 2025

Annotated provisional agenda

The present document contains the provisional agenda for the eighty-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (sect. I) and the annotations thereto (sect. II).

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the session:

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4. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Small Island Developing States.

5. Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific:

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   (b) Social development;

   (c) Environment and development;

   (d) Disaster risk reduction;

   (e) Energy;

   (f) Transport;

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(g) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development;

(h) Trade, investment, enterprise and business innovation;

(i) Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation;

(j) Statistics.

6. Management issues:

(a) Proposed programme plan for 2026;

(b) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development;

(c) Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management;

(d) Evaluation of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization;

(e) Evaluation of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.

7. Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

8. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

9. Dates and venue of and theme for the eighty-second session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2026).

10. Other matters.

11. Adoption of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on its eighty-first session.

II. Annotations

1. Opening of the session

(a) Opening addresses

The Executive Secretary and high-level dignitaries will deliver opening remarks.

The detailed programme for the opening of the session will be made available once it has been finalized.

(b) Election of officers

According to rule 13 of its rules of procedure, the Commission shall, at its first meeting of each year, elect from among its representatives a Chair and two Vice-Chairs, designated as First and Second Vice-Chair, who shall hold office until their successors are elected. They shall be eligible for re-election.

If so decided in plenary, the rule may be applied differently to enable the Commission to elect more than two Vice-Chairs, as has been the practice at previous sessions, in which case the Commission may elect a bureau of officers composed of a Chair and several Vice-Chairs.

(c) Adoption of the agenda

Documentation

Provisional agenda (ESCAP/81/1)

Annotated provisional agenda (ESCAP/81/1/Add.1/Rev.1)

2. Current and emerging policy issues for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific

(a) General debate

Documentation

Current and emerging policy issues for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/2)

Developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region have experienced a series of adverse shocks in recent years, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the high cost of living and elevated levels of debt distress. These shocks have had multifaceted socioeconomic implications for several developing countries and are likely to cast a shadow over efforts to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in the region. In addition, several current and emerging developments and trends, including more frequent and more severe climate-induced disasters, energy transitions, demographic changes, rapid technological advancements, growing international trade fragmentation and fiscal consolidations, could hinder income and employment generation and widen socioeconomic disparities.

Protecting people's well-being while responding to adverse shocks, emerging and long-term challenges and policy-induced transitions should be the central focus of every country's strategy for achieving resilient and inclusive economic development. While some Asia-Pacific countries have implemented good practices in this regard, others are struggling, with the result that some people have been left behind.

In the document, the secretariat highlights selected approaches and policies that Asia-Pacific countries have adopted to protect people from the impacts of shocks, challenges and transitions. It also provides insights into the preconditions for enabling the development of people-centred policymaking processes, inclusive statistical systems, technological innovations and stronger regional cooperation, as well as the generation of adequate fiscal resources.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and the recommendations contained therein.

(b) Subregional perspectives

Documentation

Subregional perspectives on current and emerging policy issues for inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/3)

The Asia-Pacific region is currently not on track to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Although there has been notable progress in some areas across all subregions, none of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are on course to be met, highlighting the significant

challenges faced throughout the region. The Pacific, for instance, faces unique hurdles such as high debt vulnerabilities, while South and South-West Asia is contending with pressing issues like climate change, disasters, cross-border connectivity and gender inequalities. Similarly, South-East Asia has experienced setbacks in areas such as digital inclusivity and transition, and both North and Central Asia and North-East Asia are grappling with their own distinct obstacles, including climate-induced disasters and regional connectivity.

Addressing climate-induced disasters, energy transitions, demographic shifts, rapid technological progress, the increasing fragmentation of international trade and significant debt vulnerabilities, among other challenges, requires a detailed understanding of the specific conditions and barriers that exist in each subregion. Governments have examined these challenges to mitigate their impacts and identified the strategies and actions needed to drive meaningful progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific.

The document showcases some of the strategies and policies that have been implemented in the five subregions of Asia and the Pacific to safeguard populations during crises, challenges and transitions. In it, the secretariat offers insights into the essential conditions for effective policy actions, including people-focused policymaking, the use of technological advancements, sufficient fiscal resources, and enhanced regional collaboration.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat in that regard.

3. Theme: "Regional cooperation for resilient and sustainable urban development in Asia and the Pacific"

Documentation

Summary of the theme study on regional cooperation for resilient and sustainable urban development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/4)

In the document, the secretariat explores the future of urbanization in Asia and the Pacific, focusing on the dynamic shifts in the region's urban landscape. It highlights the region's demographic transformations, including population ageing, and the persistent challenges of urban poverty and inequality. The analysis covers urban areas of all sizes, from megacities to smaller towns, and emphasizes the need for innovative governance models and sustainable development strategies to meet the region's unique urban needs. Key vulnerabilities, such as economic volatility, climate risks and social disparities, are addressed, as are opportunities for cities to serve as testing grounds for new solutions.

The secretariat underscores the critical role of regional cooperation in overcoming the challenges faced by cities and identifies shared approaches to localizing global goals, enhancing multilevel climate action and fostering inclusive urban growth. It also emphasizes the importance of data, digital transformation and innovative financing in supporting sustainable urban development and ensuring cities are equipped to navigate the complex future ahead.

The Commission may wish to review the issues and recommendations contained in the document and provide the secretariat with guidance on its future work in that regard.

4. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Small Island Developing States

The discussions under this agenda item will focus on the programmes of action for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. The Commission will review the progress made, challenges faced and lessons learned from the previous programmes of action, discuss implementation strategies and identify specific areas where the international community, including development partners, transit partners of landlocked developing countries and entities of the United Nations system, can play a critical role in these implementation efforts.

Documentation

Summary of the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2025: Harnessing a New Generation of Programmes of Action for Sustainable Development Ambitions* (ESCAP/81/5)

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

Summary of the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2025: Harnessing a New Generation of Programmes of Action for Sustainable Development Ambitions* (ESCAP/81/5)

The *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2025* is focused on new international programmes of action designed to promote the sustainable development of countries in special situations, in other words least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. While these countries have made progress in implementing previous programmes of action, critical areas of work, including in terms of building productive capacities and enhancing economic, social and environmental resilience, remain unfinished.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of the new international programmes of action, the ways in which they are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, lessons learned from previous programmes of action and available support mechanisms. By establishing a baseline for tracking progress and proposing strategic actions, the report is designed to assist countries in special situations in integrating programme principles into their national policies and effectively addressing their unique development challenges.

The Commission may wish to consider the findings, possible solutions and recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat in that regard.

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of various Commission resolutions, including resolution 79/3 on supporting the sustainable development of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the effective implementation of the resolution.

5. Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The agenda item is focused on: (a) the work of the nine subprogrammes, including the work of the regional institutions, in the context of the globally agreed development agendas, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals; (b) the reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission that have held sessions since the eightieth session of the Commission; (c) the reports of other intergovernmental bodies; and (d) progress in the implementation of Commission mandates.

The sub-items have been grouped for discussion on the basis of the subsidiary structure of the Commission and along the lines of the thematic areas identified in the regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II), starting with the outcomes of the Twelfth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

The documents listed below cover the work of the subprogrammes and the relevant sections of each will be discussed under each sub-item, as appropriate.

Documentation

Decisions taken by the Governing Council of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia at its nineteenth session (ESCAP/81/7)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/8)

Decisions taken by the Governing Council of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia at its nineteenth session (ESCAP/81/7)

The secretariat hereby transmits to the Commission the decisions taken by the Governing Council of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia at its nineteenth session. The Commission may wish to review and take note of the decisions and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Special Programme.

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/8)

The secretariat hereby transmits to the Commission the annual reports of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia, the Mekong River Commission, the Panel on Tropical Cyclones and the Typhoon Committee. The Commission may wish to take note of the annual reports.

(a) Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development

Documentation

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

Report on the Twelfth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (ESCAP/RFSD/2025/6)

Summary of round-table discussions (ESCAP/RFSD/2025/6/Add.1)

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of various Commission resolutions, including resolution 79/4 on accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for a better future for all in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the effective implementation of the resolution.

Report on the Twelfth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (ESCAP/RFSD/2025/6)

Summary of round-table discussions (ESCAP/RFSD/2025/6/Add.1)

The Twelfth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development will be held in Bangkok from 25 to 28 February 2025 under the theme "Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals for leaving no one behind in Asia and the Pacific". The Asia-Pacific Forums on Sustainable Development have served as platforms to inform, empower and support Asia-Pacific countries, especially least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. They have facilitated the identification of regional trends and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned. In alignment with the focus of the 2025 high-level political forum on sustainable development, the participants in the Twelfth Forum will assess progress made on Goal 3 (Good health and well-being), Goal 5 (Gender equality), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), Goal 14 (Life below water) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). At the Twelfth Forum, dedicated sessions will be held to support Governments in preparing their voluntary national reviews ahead of the 2025 high-level political forum on sustainable development.

The Commission may wish to endorse the report on the Twelfth Forum, take note of the summary of round-table discussions and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the implementation of, follow-up on and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(b) Social development

Documentation

Report of the Committee on Social Development on its eighth session (ESCAP/CSD(8)/6)

Report on the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review (ESCAP/MCBR/2024/5)

Chair's summary (ESCAP/MCBR/2024/5/Add.1)

Report on the Second Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (ESCAP/GCM/2025/5)

Key social development priorities for Asia and the Pacific in the context of the Second World Summit for Social Development (ESCAP/81/9)

Report of the Committee on Social Development on its eighth session (ESCAP/CSD(8)/6)

The Committee on Social Development held its eighth session in Bangkok from 8 to 10 October 2024. During the session, the Committee reviewed opportunities to accelerate progress on social development, including by strengthening social protection systems, addressing demographic trends and intergenerational relations and focusing on disability-inclusive development and disability rights. The Committee adopted four decisions, to be brought to the attention of the Commission.

The need to build inclusive and adaptive social protection systems that leave no one behind was emphasized and the Committee renewed its commitment to the implementation of the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific. Furthermore, the Committee requested the secretariat to support members and associate members in strengthening their capacity to develop inclusive policies that could address rising poverty, unemployment and widening inequalities in view of the multiple socioeconomic and environmental challenges faced by the region, to foster more resilient societies and promote a just transition to a sustainable future.

Noting the need to strengthen intergenerational relations, the Committee requested the secretariat to continue its work on population and development issues, with a focus on intergenerational relations. The Committee noted the progress made in the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023–2032, and requested the secretariat to continue to support member States in implementing the Jakarta Declaration.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters brought to its attention contained in the report of the Committee and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Report on the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review (ESCAP/MCBR/2024/5)

The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review was held in Bangkok from 19 to 21 November 2024. At the Ministerial Conference, which was organized by the secretariat in partnership with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), two decisions were adopted, to be brought to the attention of the Commission. The participants in the Ministerial Conference requested the secretariat and other entities of the United Nations system in the region to continue to support members and associate members of the Commission in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of their reviews. They also requested the secretariat to organize, in collaboration with UN-Women and all other relevant partners, a regional intergovernmental meeting to review the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in 2029.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters brought to its attention contained in the report on the Ministerial Conference and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Chair's summary (ESCAP/MCBR/2024/5/Add.1)

The Ministerial Conference built momentum for actionable commitments to be taken to empower women and girls and make progress in achieving a more inclusive and sustainable future. Moreover, the Ministerial Conference provided a platform for Governments and other key stakeholders to explore policy options, forward-looking strategies and innovative approaches to address key issues that continue to hinder gender equality, such as economic disparities, gender-based violence, unpaid care work and the disproportionate impact of global crises on women and girls. The document contains a non-negotiated summary of the discussions and various views expressed during the Ministerial Conference. The report on the Ministerial Conference and the Chair's summary will feed into the global review to be held at the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2025, which will focus on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and on the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

Report on the Second Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (ESCAP/GCM/2025/5)

The Second Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration will be held in Bangkok from 4 to 6 February 2025. At the meeting, which is being organized by the secretariat in partnership with other members of the Regional United Nations Network on Migration for Asia and the Pacific, participants will take stock of progress made in the Asia-Pacific region with regard to the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration since the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration held in Bangkok and online from 10 to 12 March 2021. They will identify key challenges, opportunities, gaps and emerging issues, as well as promising practices and lessons learned, and discuss regional priorities and potential areas for regional cooperation on international migration in line with the vision and guiding principles of the Global Compact for Migration.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained in the report on the meeting and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Key social development priorities for Asia and the Pacific in the context of the Second World Summit for Social Development (ESCAP/81/9)

In the document, the secretariat highlights the key social development priorities for Asia and the Pacific that would be relevant for consideration at the Second World Summit for Social Development, to be held in November 2025. It draws upon analyses contained in recent Commission publications, including those in the *Social Outlook* series, and on the interventions and submissions made by member States at intergovernmental forums, including the eighth session of the Committee on Social Development, the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+30 Review and the Second Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

(c) Environment and development

Documentation

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/8)

Report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its eighth session (ESCAP/CED(8)/6)

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its twentieth session (ESCAP/81/10)

Regional cooperation to enhance multilevel action and raise climate ambitions (ESCAP/81/11)

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of various Commission resolutions, including resolution 79/1 on accelerating climate action in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable development, resolution 79/2 on regional cooperation to accelerate climate action on oceans in Asia and the Pacific for sustainable development and resolution 79/7 on advancing regional cooperation for sustainable urban development and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the effective implementation of the resolutions.

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/8)

The document contains links, inter alia, to the reports of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia and of the Mekong River Commission. The Commission may wish to take note of those reports.

Report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its eighth session (ESCAP/CED(8)/6)

The Committee on Environment and Development held its eighth session in Bangkok from 16 to 18 October 2024. During the session, the Committee noted the progress made in implementing the Ministerial Declaration on Protecting Our Planet through Regional Cooperation and Solidarity in Asia and the Pacific since it was adopted in 2022. It also focused on reviewing priority areas, including the urban aspects of environment and development; mobilizing additional commitments; providing advice to the

secretariat; and identifying new areas for regional cooperation. The Committee adopted seven decisions, to be brought to the attention of the Commission.

The Committee noted the need to localize the Sustainable Development Goals to enhance sustainable urban development and requested the secretariat to continue to promote cooperation at all levels on enabling climate-sensitive urban development as per national priorities and circumstances. It encouraged member States to enhance their domestic plans and actions, as well as regional cooperation. Furthermore, the Committee encouraged members and associate members to enhance their climate strategies and requested the secretariat to continue to support climate action.

The Committee noted the key role of the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum and invited members and associate members to consider submitting a proposal to host the ninth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, to be held in 2027. The Committee welcomed the initial discussions of the Technical Expert Group on Environment and Development and invited members and associate members to nominate experts to membership in the Technical Expert Group. The Committee took note of the launch of the Asia-Pacific SDG Localization Platform as a medium for sharing best practices and exchanging knowledge on localization, voluntary local reviews and local climate action.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters brought to its attention contained in the report of the Committee and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its twentieth session (ESCAP/81/10)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization, endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained therein and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Regional cooperation to enhance multilevel action and raise climate ambitions (ESCAP/81/11)

Effective and ambitious climate action requires engagement at all levels of government and society, and robust and coordinated action among stakeholders. Coherent climate strategies must take into consideration national climate strategies, cross-sectoral cooperation and the engagement of local communities, which is where most of the Asia-Pacific region’s emissions are generated. Multilevel climate governance can enhance the vertical integration of policies, ensure the efficient allocation of resources and help to accelerate the transition to low-emission development and enhance climate resilience.

In the document, the secretariat draws on its analysis of nationally determined contributions and on its consultations with Governments, local and subnational authorities, stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities to enhance multilevel climate governance and accelerate climate action at the national and local levels and in the private sector. Furthermore, the secretariat identifies regional and transboundary cooperation opportunities to support multilevel climate action and promote low-emission and climate-resilient development.

The Commission may wish to take note of the priorities and recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat in that regard.

(d) Disaster risk reduction

Documentation

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/8)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its ninth session (ESCAP/81/12)

Advancing multi-hazard early warnings for all through regional cooperation (ESCAP/81/13)

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of various Commission resolutions, including resolution 79/8 on consideration of the modalities for the establishment of the United Nations special programme for the Aral Sea basin.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the effective implementation of the resolution.

Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/8)

The document contains links, inter alia, to the reports of the Typhoon Committee and of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones. The Commission may wish to take note of the reports.

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its ninth session (ESCAP/81/12)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained therein and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Advancing multi-hazard early warnings for all through regional cooperation (ESCAP/81/13)

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami has highlighted the significant vulnerabilities of the Asia-Pacific region to coastal and other natural hazards. In the 20 years since that tsunami, substantial progress has been made in developing tsunami and multi-hazard early warning systems, including with the support of the ESCAP multi-donor trust fund for tsunami, disaster and climate preparedness. However, the region continues to face increasingly complex challenges related to disaster preparedness and climate resilience.

In the document, which was prepared in line with Commission resolution 79/1, the secretariat explores the region's varied risk landscape, highlighting successes and showcasing the transformative potential of strengthened regional collaboration in science, technology and innovation along the early warnings for all value chain as a cornerstone for the development of effective disaster and climate adaptation strategies. Furthermore, the secretariat provides targeted policy recommendations to address gaps and maximize opportunities for regional and subregional collaboration, mindful of the region's varied riskscape.

The Commission may wish to take note of the findings and policy recommendations contained in the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

(e) Energy

Documentation

Promoting just energy transitions to support sustainable urban development (ESCAP/81/14)

Continuing urbanization is one reason why Asia and the Pacific consumes more energy than any other region. Promoting just energy transitions is therefore crucial for achieving sustainable urban development, which represents an ongoing, complex and multisectoral challenge for members and associate members. Implementing such transitions involves rapidly transforming technologies and systems used to supply energy, deploying smart grids and changing behaviours. As urban areas are expected to contribute significantly to the growth in the demand for energy, choices regarding urban infrastructure, building regulations, transport planning, and water and waste management must be aligned with national sustainable energy goals, the targets under Sustainable Development Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy) and the Paris Agreement.

In implementing just energy transitions, Governments need to develop policies and strategies that balance the needs of communities, including vulnerable groups, with the need to maintain a healthy environment and a strong economy. The secretariat has supported members and associate members in addressing the urban energy challenge, including in respect of city-level Goal 7 road maps, national cooling action plans and passive cooling strategies. Additional efforts and greater regional cooperation are needed to support members and associate members in confronting the challenges before them.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide guidance on the future work of the secretariat in that regard.

(f) Transport

Documentation

Report of the Committee on Transport on its eighth session (ESCAP/CTR(8)/9)

Enhancing the resilience and sustainability of urban public transport systems in Asia-Pacific cities (ESCAP/81/15)

Report of the Committee on Transport on its eighth session (ESCAP/CTR(8)/9)

The Committee on Transport held its eighth session in Bangkok from 5 to 7 November 2024. The Committee reviewed the status of implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026) and discussed the following major issues in transport: (a) efficient and resilient transport and logistics networks and mobility for economic growth; (b) environmentally sustainable transport systems and services; and (c) safe and inclusive transport and mobility.

The Committee noted the progress made in the implementation of the Regional Action Programme and urged member States, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders and partners, to scale up cooperation and complete its implementation by the end of 2026. The Committee called for strengthened collaboration to address the connectivity needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States in Asia and the Pacific. The Committee requested the secretariat to initiate a consultative process for the development of the draft of the next phase of the Regional Action Programme, to be considered at the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Transport, in 2026, building on the outcomes of the current Regional Action Programme and on General Assembly resolution 78/148, in which the 10-year period starting on 1 January 2026 was proclaimed as the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters brought to its attention contained in the report of the Committee and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Enhancing the resilience and sustainability of urban public transport systems in Asia-Pacific cities (ESCAP/81/15)

The frequency and intensity of natural and human-induced climate events are increasing in Asia and the Pacific, seriously affecting the transport infrastructure, services and human life. While it is crucially important for the transport sector to become more resilient, sustainability too must be pursued. This requires a shift towards accessible, inclusive, safe and environmentally friendly urban transport systems that prioritize low-carbon solutions. Such an approach not only mitigates climate-related impacts but also ensures equitable mobility options for all residents, fostering sustainable urban growth in the region.

In the document, the secretariat provides information on the current state of urban public transport systems in Asia-Pacific cities and describes recent developments and emerging trends, as well as ways in which the secretariat has helped member States to improve the accessibility, sustainability, safety and resilience of such systems.

The secretariat proposes various measures and policies that could further improve public transport systems while implementing the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Commission may wish to take note of the findings and policy recommendations contained in the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

(g) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development

Documentation

Macroeconomic prospects, challenges and policy issues for the Asia-Pacific region (ESCAP/81/16)

Note verbale dated 13 February 2025 from the Embassy of Nepal in Bangkok addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/31)

Macroeconomic prospects, challenges and policy issues for the Asia-Pacific region (ESCAP/81/16)

Economic growth in Asia-Pacific developing countries is projected to remain steady in 2025 and 2026. Lower inflation owing to declining global energy and food prices is expected to ease the cost of living and open space for a more accommodative monetary policy stance. Lower borrowing costs, in turn, could allow proactive fiscal policy measures to support household consumption and capital investments in some countries. To boost long-term economic prospects and ensure adequate job creation, countries will need to focus on boosting productivity.

While developing long-term economic strategies that promote structural transformation for sustained and inclusive economic development, policymakers cannot ignore the headwinds in the near-term macroeconomic outlook. The escalation of trade tensions attributable to additional restrictions and the continuing technological fragmentation could disrupt regional value chains, posing a risk to the region's exports and near-term economic outlook. At the same time, geopolitical tensions remain a source of uncertainty, may disrupt shipping routes and push up global commodity prices. For many developing economies in Asia and the Pacific, the fiscal resources needed to support vulnerable people remain constrained and public debt distress levels remain high. Moreover, improvements in labour productivity have moderated in recent decades, which does not bode well for sustaining economic prospects.

In the document, the secretariat highlights the near-term economic prospects and discusses the main challenges and risks faced by macroeconomic policymakers in Asia and the Pacific. It also highlights the importance of increasing economy-wide productivity, which is necessary for sustained and inclusive economic development.

The Commission may wish to take note of the findings contained in the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

Note verbale dated 13 February 2025 from the Embassy of Nepal in Bangkok addressed to the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/31)

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 78/271, the High-level Regional Consultation on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific was held in Bangkok and online on 17 and 18 December 2024. The outcome of the consultation, which will provide perspectives from Asia and the Pacific for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Seville, Spain, from 30 June to 3 July 2025, is annexed to the note verbale in the form of a summary of the Chair, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Nepal, Mr. Bishnu Prasad Paudel.

The Commission may wish to take note, in particular, of the potential actions and ways forward set out in the annex, which has been shared with the co-facilitators of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development as perspectives from Asia and the Pacific.

(h) Trade, investment, enterprise and business innovation

Documentation

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its twentieth session (ESCAP/81/17)

Reimagining private sector engagement for urban development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/18)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its twentieth session (ESCAP/81/17)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology, endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained therein and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Reimagining private sector engagement for urban development in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/18)

The document contains information on how innovative and circular economy principles could be applied to transform urban centres in Asia and the Pacific into private sector-led, energy efficient and inclusive cities. It provides policy analysis and strategies for integrating private sector perspectives to make cities in the region more sustainable. The key elements of the document are based on the discussions and outcomes of recent ESCAP Sustainable Business Network activities in the region.

Circular economy principles are gaining traction as ways of enhancing the sustainability and resilience of urban environments. Energy efficiency, digital technologies and infrastructure financing, among other issues, need to be taken into consideration by policymakers when planning for sustainable urban development and committing to achieving net-zero emissions targets. Sustainability-focused businesses can contribute to making cities more resilient by using their expertise in closed-loop systems in the areas of renewable energy, transportation, logistics, water and waste management, construction and infrastructure. The integration of digital technologies with circular economy concepts can drive innovation and help mobilize sustainable financing opportunities and thus ensure that cities operate in a manner that is both environmentally responsible and socially inclusive.

In the document, the secretariat advocates for stronger and smarter partnerships among private sector entities, Governments and other stakeholders and for the promotion of engagements to identify common challenges and formulate policy recommendations for sustainable urban development.

The Commission may wish to take note of the findings and policy recommendations contained in the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat in that regard.

(i) Information and communications technology, science, technology and innovation

Documentation

Report on the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Digital Inclusion and Transformation (ESCAP/MCDIT/5)

Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/MCDIT/5/Add.1)

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its nineteenth session (ESCAP/81/19)

Strengthening cooperation on emerging digital technologies through the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative and the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/20)

Report on the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Digital Inclusion and Transformation (ESCAP/MCDIT/5)

At the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Digital Inclusion and Transformation, held in Astana from 3 to 5 September 2024, the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific was adopted.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained in the report and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/MCDIT/5/Add.1)

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific and provide the secretariat with guidance on its implementation.

Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its nineteenth session (ESCAP/81/19)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development, endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained therein and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Centre.

Strengthening cooperation on emerging digital technologies through the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway initiative and the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/20)

Emerging technologies offer significant opportunities and challenges for accelerating digital inclusion and transformation in Asia and the Pacific.

In the Astana Ministerial Declaration on Digital Inclusion and Transformation in Asia and the Pacific, which sets out a regional vision on strengthened regional cooperation, the Executive Secretary was requested to commission an independent feasibility study on the role, structure and financing of a digital solutions centre for sustainable development to be established in Kazakhstan, to establish an ad hoc working group to review the outcome of the independent feasibility study and recommend a road map for strengthening the sharing of practical digital solutions for the Asia-Pacific region and to report on progress to the Commission at its eighty-first session.

In the document, the secretariat highlights promising practices and cooperative actions for promoting innovative digital solutions for sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, it provides information on the progress made in implementing the above-mentioned requests contained in the Ministerial Declaration.

The Commission is invited to take note of the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration.

(j) Statistics

Documentation

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

Report of the Committee on Statistics on its ninth session (ESCAP/CST(9)/6)

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its twentieth session (ESCAP/81/21)

Whole-of-society approach to building agile statistical systems (ESCAP/81/22)

Summary of progress made in the implementation of the resolutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/6)

The document contains a summary of the progress made in the implementation of various Commission resolutions, including resolution 71/14 on the Asian and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade, 2015–2024, and resolution 75/9 on the implementation of the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind.

The Commission may wish to review the progress made and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the effective implementation of the resolutions.

Report of the Committee on Statistics on its ninth session (ESCAP/CST(9)/6)

The ninth session of the Committee on Statistics was held in Bangkok from 11 to 13 December 2024. The session was held in conjunction with the twentieth session of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and the nineteenth Management Seminar for the Heads of National Statistical Offices, as well as expert group meetings on big data for official statistics and on data and artificial intelligence for sustainable development, as part of Asia-Pacific Statistics Week.

At the session, the Committee decided to promote a whole-of-society approach to advance the implementation of the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind. It also decided to advance the development of national data partnerships and the establishment of data user advisory groups to advise chief statisticians and to support the development of strategic visions for data. It further decided that building agile statistical systems should be among the priorities of its work. Recognizing that national statistical offices need the support of the whole of government, the Committee recommended that the Commission call upon its members and associate members to increase political and financial support for inclusive statistical systems; requested the Commission to acknowledge that the successful implementation of the Declaration required a whole-of-society approach; and also requested the Commission to encourage Governments to develop strategic visions for data. Furthermore, the Committee decided to replace its groups and communities of practice with more flexible task teams.

The Commission may wish to consider and endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained in the report of the Committee and provide the secretariat with guidance in that regard.

Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its twentieth session (ESCAP/81/21)

The Commission may wish to review the report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, endorse the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention contained therein and provide the secretariat with guidance on the future work of the Institute.

Whole-of-society approach to building agile statistical systems (ESCAP/81/22)

Governments in Asia and the Pacific have committed themselves to advancing official statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the collective vision and framework for action by the Asia-Pacific statistical community (E/ESCAP/CST(5)1/Rev.1) and in the Declaration on Navigating Policy with Data to Leave No One Behind, which was endorsed by the Commission at its seventy-fifth session, in 2019 (see resolution 75/9).

National statistical offices are facing growing demands for real-time granular data on diverse topics. Obtaining access to such data is essential for monitoring national and global commitments, especially those set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the ambition to leave no one behind. Meeting these complex demands, which are by their very nature multifaceted, requires a multi-stakeholder approach.

In the document, the secretariat emphasizes the need for a whole-of-society approach to building agile statistical systems and explores how statistical offices can engage a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that data collection, analysis and usage reflect the needs and perspectives of all sectors of society.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide further guidance to the secretariat on the achievement of the shared vision.

6. Management issues

Under this agenda item, the secretariat is submitting, for the consideration of the Commission, documents on a range of management issues relevant to the continued effectiveness of the work of the secretariat.

(a) Proposed programme plan for 2026

Documentation

Proposed programme plan for 2026 (ESCAP/81/23)

In addition to presenting the proposed programme plan for 2026, the document contains information on programme performance in 2024.

The proposed programme plan contains an overall orientation of the programme of the secretariat, legislative mandates, evaluation activities and a programme plan for each of the subprogrammes. Each subprogramme plan comprises information on the following: objective of the subprogramme; strategy; programme performance on a selected topic in 2024; planned results for 2026, including result 1 – programme performance in 2024 and target for 2026, as reflected in the proposed programme budget for 2024 (A/78/6 (Sect. 19)), result 2 – programme performance in 2024 and target for 2026, as reflected in the proposed programme budget for 2025 (A/79/6 (Sect. 19)), and result 3 – proposed programme plan on a selected topic for 2026; and deliverables for the period 2024–2026.

As subsidiary bodies of the Commission, the committees provided the secretariat with guidance on the future focus of the subprogrammes under their purview, as appropriate. In addition, the proposed programme plan was reviewed by the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

The Commission may wish to review and endorse the proposed programme plan.

(b) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development

Documentation

Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development (ESCAP/81/24)

The document contains an overview of the secretariat’s partnerships in 2024, including with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, which facilitated the efforts of the United Nations at the regional level in delivering capacity-development support to member States.

The document also contains an overview of the extrabudgetary resources mobilized to implement the Commission’s programme of work.

Individual members and associate members may wish to announce their intended contributions for 2025.

The Commission may wish to take note of the document and provide the secretariat with further guidance on the development of partnerships and the mobilization of additional resources, including through the enhancement of South-South cooperation.

(c) Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management

Documentation

Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (ESCAP/81/25)

In its resolution 71/1, the Commission decided to review the continued substantive relevance and financial viability of each regional institution every five years. To inform that review, the secretariat commissioned an independent evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management. The document contains the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation, and the secretariat's response thereto.

The Commission may wish to endorse the recommendations contained in the document.

(d) Evaluation of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization

Documentation

Evaluation of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (ESCAP/81/26)

In its resolution 71/1, the Commission decided to review the continued substantive relevance and financial viability of each regional institution every five years. To inform that review, the secretariat commissioned an independent evaluation of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization. The document contains the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation, and the secretariat's response thereto.

The Commission may wish to endorse the recommendations contained in the document.

(e) Evaluation of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific

Documentation

Evaluation of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/27)

In its resolution 71/1, the Commission decided to review the continued substantive relevance and financial viability of each regional institution every five years. To inform that review, the secretariat commissioned an independent evaluation of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. The document contains the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation, and the secretariat's response thereto.

The Commission may wish to endorse the recommendations contained in the document.

7. Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Documentation

Midpoint review of the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/81/28)

In its resolution 78/2, the Commission decided to review its conference structure at its eighty-third session, in 2027, with a midpoint review at its eighty-first session, in 2025, and requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report in both cases, with a focus on the programme areas of the Commission, which would serve as a basis for the review. The document contains recommendations on the conference structure of the Commission pertaining to the subsidiary bodies of the Commission.

The Commission may wish to consider the recommendations contained in the document and provide guidance on any changes to be made to the conference structure.

8. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

Documentation

Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ESCAP/81/29)

The report includes a summary of the main activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission since the eightieth session of the Commission, including support provided by the Advisory Committee to the Executive Secretary on matters related to programme planning, implementation and monitoring.

The Commission may wish to take note of the report, comment on the role of the Advisory Committee and provide further guidance on its work.

9. Dates and venue of and theme for the eighty-second session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2026)

Documentation

Dates and venue of and theme for the eighty-second session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2026) (ESCAP/81/30)

The Commission may wish to decide on the dates and venue of and theme for its eighty-second session.

10. Other matters

The Commission may wish to consider other matters brought to its attention.

11. Adoption of the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on its eighty-first session

The Commission will consider and adopt the report on its eighty-first session. Pursuant to its resolution 78/2 on a conference structure of the Commission to advance sustainable development, the report of the Commission will be composed of its decisions and resolutions. The draft record of proceedings, prepared by the secretariat, will be circulated among members and associate members for comments within 15 days after the conclusion of the session.