



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

Bangkok and online, 15–19 May 2023

Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda*

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 Commission: disaster risk reduction**Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its seventh session***Summary*

The seventh session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management was held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 7 December 2022. The Governing Council addressed the programmatic and technical activities and the administrative and financial issues of the Centre.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the activities of the Centre since the sixth session and expressed its appreciation for the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work of the Centre. It noted that, owing to insufficient financial resources, only some activities included in the Centre's programme of work for 2021–2022 could be implemented and endorsed the Centre's programme of work for 2023.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre. It expressed its appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the generous financial and in-kind voluntary contributions made to date for the establishment and operation of the Centre. The Governing Council expressed its thanks and appreciation to Cambodia, as well as to Macao, China, for their valuable financial contributions to the Centre. It took note of the financial status of the Centre and appreciated the verbal pledge made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding an upcoming disbursement of funds to the Centre in the amount of \$1.3 million and expressed the hope that all pending contributions would be disbursed as soon as possible.

The Governing Council encouraged the Government of the host country, the Islamic Republic of Iran, to continue providing its valuable support to the Centre. It also encouraged the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to mobilize financial and/or in-kind support for the Centre and to take an active role in the delivery of the Centre's programme of work.

The Governing Council elected the representative of Türkiye as the Chair and the representative of Tajikistan as the Vice-Chair for the seventh session to serve until the eighth session of the Governing Council.

* ESCAP/79/1/Rev.2.

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 are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP):

Decision 1

The Governing Council elects the representative of Türkiye as the Chair and the representative of Tajikistan as the Vice-Chair for the seventh session to serve until the eighth session of the Governing Council.

Decision 2

The Governing Council takes note of the report on the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management since the sixth session and expresses its appreciation for the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work of the Centre. The Governing Council notes that, owing to insufficient financial resources, only some activities included in the Centre's programme of work for 2021–2022 could be implemented and endorses the Centre's programme of work for 2023.

Decision 3

The Governing Council notes the endorsement by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, at its seventy-eighth session, of the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific, which had been prepared by the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management in close cooperation and consultation with the countries of the region and with regional and international experts, and requests the Centre to take the measures necessary to implement the Regional Plan of Action within the scope of its mandate and considering the availability of funds. The Governing Council encourages member States to implement the Regional Plan of Action with the aim of reducing the risk and negative impacts of sand and dust storms in the region.

Decision 4

The Governing Council notes the recommendations arising from the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management, held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022, and emphasizes the importance of effective risk assessments and of impact-based forecasting, monitoring and early warning to better prevent and reduce the risk of disasters, build resilience and support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The Governing Council recommends that the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management incorporate those recommendations into its future programme of work and activities within the scope and mandate given to it, taking into account the availability of funds.

Decision 5

The Governing Council takes note of the report on the administrative and financial status of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management. The Governing Council expresses its appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the generous financial and in-kind voluntary contributions made to date for the establishment and operation of the Centre. The Governing Council expresses its thanks and appreciation to Cambodia, as well as to Macao, China, for their valuable financial contributions to the Centre. The Governing Council takes note of the current financial status of the Centre and appreciates the verbal pledge made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding an upcoming disbursement of funds to the Centre in the amount of \$1.3 million and expresses the hope that all pending contributions will be disbursed as soon as possible.

Decision 6

The Governing Council, in the light of the report of the secretariat on the financial status of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, requests the secretariat of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to provide a written update on the financial situation of the Centre by 31 March 2023 so as to provide the most updated information to the Commission at its seventy-ninth session.

The Governing Council also requests the secretariat of the Commission to continue its consultations with the host country of the Centre with a view to further facilitating the disbursement of contributions and the mobilization of additional resources and to enhancing the Centre's visibility. The Governing Council encourages the members and associate members of the Commission to mobilize financial and in-kind support for the Centre and take an active role in the delivery and implementation of the Centre's programme of work.

Decision 7

The Governing Council, having reviewed the draft of the account of proceedings circulated to its members after the conclusion of the seventh session, endorses them and agrees to submit the final report on its seventh session to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, at its seventy-ninth session, for endorsement.

Decision 8

The Governing Council expresses appreciation for the offer made by the Government of Tajikistan to host its eighth session, on a date to be determined in consultation with the Chair and representatives of the host country. The Governing Council expresses its deep gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Türkiye for hosting the seventh session of the Governing Council and the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management.

II. Proceedings

A. **Activities of the Centre since the sixth session of the Governing Council, including progress made on the implementation of the Centre's strategic programme of work and its programme of work for the biennium 2021–2022 (agenda item 2)**

2. The Governing Council had before it the report on the activities of the Centre since the sixth session of the Governing Council. The secretariat briefed the Governing Council on progress made in the implementation of the Centre's strategic programme of work and its programme of work for the biennium 2021–2022, which included programmes and activities in three areas related to the long-term outcomes of the strategic programme of work: improving the availability of information on risks; building the capacity to collect and apply such information; and strengthening regional cooperation.

3. The Governing Council took note of the report on the activities of the Centre since the sixth session of the Governing Council.

4. The representative of India thanked the Commission, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management and the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of Türkiye for organizing the seventh session of the Governing Council of the Centre and congratulated the representatives of Tajikistan and Türkiye for their election as Chair and Vice-Chair of the session. The representative reported on the achievements of India in the area of disaster risk reduction and mentioned that the Disaster Management Act, the National Policy on Disaster Management and the Disaster Management Plan provided a framework for making India safe and resilient to disasters. Furthermore, the Government had established the National Disaster Response Force, the Indian Tsunami Early Warning System and the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services and was using the Common Alerting Protocol to integrate alert-generating agencies with disaster managers and telecommunications service providers for the dissemination of geotargeted alerts in vernacular languages by SMS on a near-real-time basis with the least human intervention. The Government was also implementing a large-scale programme called Aapda Mitra to strengthen the ability of local communities to prepare for and respond to disasters. Moreover, the Government was committed to achieving the priorities and objectives of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 through systematic and institutional efforts. The Government was also taking a leading role in strengthening cooperation among South Asian countries with the aim of reducing the losses due to disasters and had launched the Coalition for Disaster-Resilient Infrastructure at the 2019 Climate Action Summit.

5. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran extended its gratitude to Türkiye for hosting and chairing the seventh session of the Governing Council. The representative then highlighted the urgent need to take action for disaster risk reduction and highlighted the shared vulnerabilities of countries in the Asia-Pacific region, which had hindered the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and led to urgent humanitarian situations that required additional efforts to reduce the risk of disasters but that had also strengthened resilience at the local, national, regional and international levels. It was very important for ESCAP members and associate members to boost collaboration and partnerships, including by supporting the work and mandates of the Centre. The National Cartographic Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was a subsidiary body of the Plan and Budget Organization, was a

polycymaking body in the field of mapping and spatial information and related infrastructures and systems at the national level and played a leading role among the country's executive bodies. The representative suggested that the Governing Council could consider: establishing a regional spatial data infrastructure as an agreed-upon approach to sharing maps and spatial information on disaster risk management; preparing and presenting infrastructure and thematic maps using geospatial information systems to reduce the effects of hazards caused by disasters; taking multilateral international action aimed at reducing the factors causing sand and dust storms; sharing geospatial data to define different common geodynamics projects in the region; and developing a comprehensive database for sharing data, increasing the accuracy of flood prediction models and designing national and regional flood forecasting services. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran had demonstrated strong support for the work of the Centre, including through the provision of funds: \$1.3 million would be paid to the Centre before the end of 2022. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran encouraged ESCAP members to consider supporting the activities of the Centre, including through the provision of funds.

6. The representative of Türkiye and Chair of the seventh session of the Governing Council highlighted that the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022 had been a good opportunity for participants from different countries and organizations, including the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, to share experiences and learn from each other. The Government of Türkiye believed that cooperation in the region was important, not only in disaster management but also in other areas. On that subject, the representative of Türkiye announced that the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority had signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Disaster Management Authority of Maldives to cooperate on disasters and emergency situations. Türkiye had teams in Bangladesh and Pakistan and was providing humanitarian aid as part of the response to the floods that had taken place in Pakistan in 2022.

B. Report on the outcomes of the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management, held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022 (agenda item 3)

7. The Governing Council had before it the report on the key outcomes of the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022, which included a summary of the discussions held and the recommendations made at the high-level consultative meeting. The Governing Council took note of the recommendations (see annex II).

C. Report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre (agenda item 4)

8. The Governing Council had before it the report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre.

9. The Governing Council noted that the financial status of the Centre explained why the Centre had not been able to fully deliver on the approved programme of work for the biennium 2021–2022. The Governing Council noted that payment to the Centre of the full amounts pledged for 2021, 2022 and 2023 by the host Government would enable the Centre to continue its operations and activities in 2023 based on the proposed programme of work for that year. The timely and complete receipt of all outstanding pledges was essential for the Centre to carry out its mandated programmes and activities, recruit staff and contractors and ensure that all staff-related obligations and contingencies were met. The financial status at the time of reporting would not allow the Centre to continue its activities beyond mid-2023.

10. The Governing Council requested the ESCAP secretariat to provide a written update on the financial situation of the Centre by 31 March 2023 so as to provide the most updated information to ESCAP at its seventy-ninth session. The Governing Council also requested the ESCAP secretariat to continue its consultations with the host country with a view to further facilitating the disbursement of contributions and the mobilization of additional resources and to enhancing the Centre's visibility. The Governing Council encouraged the members and associate members of ESCAP to mobilize financial and in-kind support for the Centre and take an active role in the delivery and implementation of the Centre's programme of work.

11. The Governing Council was informed that on 16 November 2022 the ESCAP secretariat had received a note verbale from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in which the Government had reassured the secretariat of its commitment to pay its pledged contributions to the Centre in a timely manner, while also noting some difficulties in disbursing the funds due to circumstances beyond its control. The Government sought the support of the United Nations to facilitate the disbursement of its pledged contributions to the Centre, among others.

12. The Governing Council took note of the report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre.

D. Programme of work of the Centre (agenda item 5)

13. The Governing Council had before it the proposed programme of work of the Centre for 2023.

14. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that, based on the conclusions and recommendations arising from the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management, it would be good to include regional geodynamic studies in the work programme of the Centre to be implemented through transboundary collaboration and on the basis of scientific studies. Such studies could be conducted using existing data, so there was no need to gather new data, and would only require modelling and analysis among bordering countries.

15. In response, the secretariat noted that the proposal could be included under the approved multi-year strategic programme of work (2021–2030) but should be considered carefully given the shortage of financial resources. Partnerships and collaborations in this area should be considered whenever possible.

16. The Governing Council considered and approved the Centre's proposed programme of work for 2023.

E. Date and venue of the eighth session of the Governing Council (agenda item 6)

17. The Governing Council expressed appreciation for the offer made by the Government of Tajikistan to host its eighth session, on a date yet to be determined.

F. Other matters (agenda item 7)

18. The representative of Pakistan noted that, because of the shortage of financial resources, services could not be received from the Centre and suggested that it would be appropriate to ask States to commit to paying a minimum amount to enable the Centre to fulfil its potential.

19. In response, the secretariat recalled that the Centre was a regional institution of ESCAP and that it relied on the voluntary financial and in-kind contributions of its members. That said, the secretariat would certainly welcome any such contributions, which would demonstrate collaboration and engagement.

G. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council on its seventh session (agenda item 8)

20. The Governing Council endorsed the section containing the matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention. The Governing Council reviewed and endorsed the draft account of proceedings that were circulated to its members after the conclusion of the session. The final report of the Governing Council on its seventh session is to be submitted to ESCAP for endorsement at its seventy-ninth session.

III. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

21. The Governing Council held its seventh session in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 7 December 2022. The Deputy Secretary-General of the National Committee for ESCAP of Cambodia, Mr. Nou Keosothea, and the Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered opening statements.

B. Attendance

22. Representatives of the following members of the Governing Council attended: Bangladesh; Cambodia; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Macao, China; Mongolia; Tajikistan; and Türkiye.

23. Representatives of the following members of ESCAP attended as observers: Maldives; and Pakistan.

C. Election of officers

24. The Governing Council elected the following officers:

Chair:	Mr. Muhammet Maruf Yaman (Türkiye)
Vice-Chair:	Mr. Vafo Ashurzoda (Tajikistan)

D. Agenda

25. The Governing 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 sixth session of the Governing Council, including progress made on the implementation of the Centre's strategic programme of work and its programme of work for the biennium 2021–2022.
 3. Report on the outcomes of the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management, held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022.
 4. Report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre.
 5. Programme of work of the Centre.
 6. Date and venue of the eighth session of the Governing Council.
 7. Other matters.
 8. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council on its seventh session.

D. Other events

26. The high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management was held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022, in conjunction with the seventh session of the Governing Council.

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
	Report on the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management since the sixth session of the Governing Council	2
	Report on the key outcomes of the high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management, held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022	3
	Report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre	4
	Proposed programme of work of the Centre for 2023	5
ESCAP/APDIM/GC/2022/1	Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its seventh session	
<i>Limited series</i>		
ESCAP/APDIM/GC/2022/L.2	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
<i>Information series</i>		
	List of participants	1
	Information for participants	1
	Tentative programme	1

Annex II

High-level consultative meeting on disaster information management (Istanbul, Türkiye, 6 and 7 December 2022)

1. Building upon the outcomes of previous meetings, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, in cooperation with the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority of Türkiye, organized a high-level consultative meeting on disaster information management that was held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 6 and 7 December 2022. The objective of the meeting was to identify ways in which risk data governance and disaster information management could be strengthened to enhance disaster risk impact-based forecasting, monitoring and early warning.

2. Substantive presentations were made during three sessions on: disaster risk data governance and policy; risk data governance for monitoring, impact-based forecasting and early warning; and the role of data governance in hazard-specific monitoring, forecasting and early warning.

3. The participants in the first session recognized the importance of applying a common set of definitions and standards so as to facilitate collaboration at the national level among ministries, institutions and other stakeholders. In that connection, the participants also recognized the importance of formally integrating institutional arrangements and mechanisms for risk data governance into relevant national policies. At the regional level, it was necessary to collaborate more closely, on the basis of a common set of definitions and standards, to facilitate the transboundary monitoring and management of disaster risks. The representative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) invited Governments to consider adopting the OECD recommendation on the governance of critical risks.

4. Furthermore, the participants in the first session underscored the need to ensure that disaster risk data governance issues were included and reflected in the broader global policy discourse on data governance and noted the importance of pursuing, to the extent possible, open data policies based on principles of transparency and accountability. The participants also highlighted the importance of exchanging experiences and expertise among countries.

5. The participants in the second session reiterated the critical importance of establishing early warning systems, especially through a whole-of-society multi-stakeholder approach. In connection with impact-based forecasting, presenters stressed the importance of combining modelling, including climate change modelling, with impact-based analyses and forecasting at the national and regional levels. The participants recognized the importance of applying advanced technologies, including artificial intelligence, remote sensing and geospatial information systems, to all phases of the disaster risk management cycle.

6. The participants in the third session heard presentations on earthquakes, floods, forest fires, tsunamis and sand and dust storms. All the presenters referred to the critical importance of close coordination in gathering, sharing, analysing and applying data by different entities involved in disaster risk management and stressed the usefulness of solutions based on spatial data infrastructure. In that connection, emphasis was placed in all presentations on the relevance of socioeconomic data to assess vulnerabilities and issue

impact-based forecasts of events and warnings. Presenters also underscored the need for accurate accounting and reporting of disaster-related losses.

7. In conclusion, the participants in the meeting requested the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management to follow up, in consultation with relevant United Nations and regional entities, on all matters discussed at the meeting, within the scope of its mandate and subject to the availability of resources, placing special emphasis on the question of disaster risk data governance policy and guidance and stronger regional collaboration on disaster risk reduction, including on transboundary issues among relevant countries as appropriate. The participants also requested the Centre to facilitate the exchange of expertise and best practices on disaster risk information management among its members.

Annex III

Financial statement of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management for the year ended 31 December 2022

(United States dollars)

<i>Income</i>	
Contributions	14 000
Interest income	5 527
Total income	19 527
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	
	(905 540)
Net income over expenditure	(886 013)
Fund balance as at 1 January 2022	1 815 340
Refunds to donors	–
Fund balance as at 31 December 2022	929 327

Annex IV

**Financial statement of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the
Development of Disaster Information Management for the year
ended 31 December 2022, by project component**
(United States dollars)

	<i>Strengthening disaster information management in the Asia-Pacific region in the evolving post-2015 development agenda</i>	<i>Institutional support for the Centre (Multi-donor)</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Income</i>			
Contributions	–	14 000	14 000
Interest income	5 190	337	5 527
Total income	5 190	14 337	19 527
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	(905 540)	–	(905 540)
Net income over expenditure	(900 350)	14 337	(886 013)
Fund balance as at 1 January 2022	1 757 765	57 575	1 815 340
Refunds to donors	–	–	–
Fund balance as at 31 December 2022	857 415	71 912	929 327

Annex V

**Cash contributions to the Asian and Pacific Centre for the
Development of Disaster Information Management received for
the years ended 31 December 2021 and 31 December 2022**
(United States dollars)

<i>Country/area</i>	<i>Year ended 31 December 2021</i>	<i>Year ended 31 December 2022</i>
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1 211 850	–
Cambodia	2 000	4 000
Macao, China	10 000	10 000
Total	1 223 850	14 000