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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Environment and Development

Eighth session
Bangkok, 16–18 October 2024

Report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its eighth session

I. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission

1. The following decisions adopted by the Committee on Environment and Development are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific:

Decision 1

The Committee on Environment and Development takes note of the need for localization of the Sustainable Development Goals to enhance sustainable urban development, including by promoting integrated urban planning, strengthening policy and governance, increasing financing and building capacity at the national and local levels, taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and levels of development and in alignment with national priorities and policies, in order to scale up actions to address the multiple environmental challenges faced by the region, and encourages member States to enhance their national and regional cooperation efforts to support the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Decision 2

The Committee on Environment and Development requests the secretariat, as appropriate within its existing mandate, to continue to promote cooperation at all levels on enabling climate-sensitive urban development as per national priorities and circumstances. The Committee also requests the Technical Expert Group on Environment and Development, as appropriate and within available resources, to consider options for better integration of urban components into national climate strategies and submit its conclusions on the subject to the Committee at its ninth session for further consideration and possible action.

Please recycle

Decision 3

The Committee on Environment and Development notes the progress made in implementing the Ministerial Declaration on Protecting Our Planet through Regional Cooperation and Solidarity in Asia and the Pacific and encourages member States to enhance their domestic plans and actions, in accordance with national priorities and circumstances, as well as regional cooperation, taking into account the thematic areas highlighted in the Ministerial Declaration. The Committee also invites members and associate members to submit proposals to the secretariat, including on partnerships, aimed at accelerating progress.

Decision 4

The Committee on Environment and Development encourages members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to enhance their climate strategies and requests the secretariat to continue to support the actions of members and associate members, upon request and within existing mandates and available resources, to mitigate and adapt to climate change, while avoiding duplication of efforts.

Decision 5

The Committee on Environment and Development notes the key role of the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum in facilitating cooperation on sustainable urban development in the region with the involvement of multi-stakeholders and invites members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to consider submitting a proposal to host the ninth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, to be held in 2027.

Decision 6

The Committee on Environment and Development welcomes the initial discussions of the Technical Expert Group on Environment and Development and invites members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific who have not yet done so to nominate experts to membership in the Technical Expert Group in accordance with the terms of reference adopted at the seventh session of the Committee, and requests the secretariat to clarify the theme and topics of discussions at least 42 days ahead of such meetings to enable members and associate members to decide on the participation of the appropriate experts beforehand.

Decision 7

The Committee on Environment and Development takes note of the launch of the Asia-Pacific SDG Localization Platform, developed by the secretariat as a medium for sharing best practices and exchanging knowledge on localization, voluntary local reviews and local climate action, and invites all interested parties to utilize it.

II. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

2. The Committee held its eighth session in Bangkok from 16 to 18 October 2024. The session was opened by the Chair of the senior officials segment of the seventh session of the Committee and the Executive Secretary. The Secretary-General of United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific

and representatives of the Asia-Pacific Youth Development Forum made statements.

B. Attendance

3. Representatives of the following member States attended: Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, France, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

4. Representatives of the following Permanent Observers attended: Chile, Finland and Germany. Representatives of the Holy See, an observer to the United Nations, also attended.

5. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds also attended: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Organization for Migration, International Telecommunication Union, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

6. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also attended: Asian Productivity Organization, Asian Reinsurance Corporation, Centre for Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle Subregional Cooperation, and International Union for Conservation of Nature.

7. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also attended: Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Asia-Pacific Water Forum, Family Health International, German Agency for International Cooperation, Global Youth Biodiversity Network, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mahidol University, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia, Stockholm Environment Institute, United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific, and Voluntary Service Overseas.

8. In accordance with rule 12 of the Commission's rules of procedure, the bureau examined the credentials of the representatives of member States and reported upon them to the Committee. The credentials of the representatives of 30 member States were found to be in order. Acknowledging the report of the Credentials Committee to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session,[1] and in line with Assembly resolution 396 (V) of 14 December 1950, the bureau decided to defer any action on the credentials pertaining to the representatives of Myanmar at the eighth session of the Committee pending a decision by the Assembly on the representation of Myanmar.

9. The Committee took note of the oral report of the bureau on credentials.

[1] A/78/605.

C. Election of officers

10. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chair:	Ms. Norliza Hashim (Malaysia)
Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Amenatave Yauvoli (Fiji) Mr. Hyungsup Lee (Republic of Korea)

D. Agenda

11. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:

   (a) Opening addresses;

   (b) Election of officers;

   (c) Adoption of the agenda.

2. Pursuing sustainable urban development to address regional environment and development crises.

3. Review of the programme of work of the secretariat to address environment and development challenges.

4. Strengthening regional cooperation to address environment and development challenges: modalities and emerging areas of cooperation.

5. Other matters.

6. Adoption of the report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its eighth session.

E. Other events

12. The following seminars, side events and special sessions were held in conjunction with the eighth session of the Committee:

(a) 16 October 2024, side event on the launch of the Asia-Pacific SDG Localization Platform and its role in bridging global goals and local action, organized by the secretariat, the Governments of Bangladesh and Malaysia, the United Nations Development Programme, UN-Habitat, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific;

(b) 17 October 2024, side event on regional collaboration for smart cities, organized by the secretariat and the Governments of Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Thailand;

(c) 17 October 2024, side event on the status of air quality and related actions in Asia and the Pacific, organized by the secretariat and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center;

(d) 18 October 2024, side event on new paradigms of energy efficiency, transportation and urban infrastructure planning for low-carbon cities, organized by the secretariat, the Governments of Germany and India and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific;

(e) 18 October 2024, side event on enhancing adaptive capacities through water cooperation, organized by the secretariat, the Governments of Bangladesh and Tajikistan and the Asia-Pacific Water Forum.

III. Account of proceedings

13. The discussions held during the session have been summarized in an account of proceedings (see annex II).

Annex I

List of documents

Symbol	*Title*	*Agenda item*
General series		
ESCAP/CED(8)/1	Provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/CED(8)/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/CED(8)/2	Cities at the forefront of regional environment and development challenges	2
ESCAP/CED(8)/3	Creating the conditions for enabling climate-sensitive urban development	2
ESCAP/CED(8)/4	Review of the programme of work of the secretariat to address environment and development challenges	3
ESCAP/CED(8)/5	Strengthening regional cooperation to address environment and development challenges: modalities and emerging areas of cooperation	4
ESCAP/CED(8)/6	Report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its eighth session	
Limited series		
ESCAP/CED(8)/L.1	Draft report	6

Note: The information for participants, the list of participants and the tentative programme are available at www.unescap.org/events/2024/ced8.

Annex II

Account of proceedings of the eighth session of the Committee on Environment and Development

I. Introduction

1. The account of proceedings contains a summary of the discussions and proceedings of the eighth session of the Committee on Environment and Development.

II. Summary of discussions

A. Pursuing sustainable urban development to address regional environment and development crises (agenda item 2)

2. The Committee had before it two notes by the secretariat: one on cities at the forefront of regional environment and development challenges (ESCAP/CED(8)/2) and another on creating the conditions for enabling climate-sensitive urban development (ESCAP/CED(8)/3).

3. The secretariat delivered a presentation highlighting environmental challenges in urban areas.

4. The discussions of the Committee were informed by a panel discussion on navigating development and environmental crises in cities to achieve sustainable development. The panel comprised Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development, Department of Housing and Urban Development, United States of America, Ms. Marion Mollegen McFadden; Director, Land and Development Office, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, India, Mr. Suvasish Das; Deputy Director, Environmental Management Division, Ministry of the Environment, Japan, Ms. Yumi Yasuda; and the Chief of the Bangkok office of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). The panellists discussed various strategies to address urbanization challenges, focusing on housing, land use and environmental sustainability, as well as policies in areas including community-driven planning, investments in climate resilience and affordable housing, supported by partnerships with local governments and civil society. The topic of improving air quality and reducing emissions through cross-sector collaboration and data-driven approaches was also discussed. Calls were made for integrated urban planning, multi-level governance and collaboration to drive meaningful progress in climate action and urban sustainability.

5. The discussions were also informed by a panel discussion on leveraging localization efforts for sustainable development. The panel consisted of the Mayor of Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand, Mr. Kanop Ketchart; Senior Program Manager, Mekong Australia Partnership – Water Energy Climate, Australia, Ms. Rutmanee Ongsakul; and Programme Director, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Ms. Yatsuka Kataoka. A video message was played from Deputy Director General, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Ms. Bannanseng Syphoxay, and the panel discussion was moderated by Regional Governance Adviser, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangkok Regional Hub, Ms. Diana Torres.

6. During the panel discussion, panellists highlighted the importance of community collaboration, local knowledge and innovative technologies in addressing urban challenges in areas such as climate resilience and sustainable development. A case study was shared on the use of a smart city platform and disaster early warning system to mitigate flooding, showcasing the effectiveness of integrating collaborative approaches with low-cost, resilient technology. Another initiative was shared to emphasize the role of nature-based solutions and the need for cross-departmental cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships to strengthen climate resilience in urban areas, ensuring alignment with national policies. The discussion also covered the use of voluntary local reviews as a valuable tool for engaging local stakeholders, making progress towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and promoting regional networks to share best practices. In addition, the role of integrated urban planning and resilient infrastructure was highlighted, with an emphasis on data platforms for ensuring accountability and inclusivity.

7. Representatives shared experiences on local initiatives, highlighting topics including challenges related to the collection and analysis of data, the use of data to reduce risks and the effectiveness of local smart city applications for providing access to city services.

8. The secretariat presented a review of the current state of sustainable urban development to address regional environment and development crises.

9. The discussions of the Committee were informed by a panel discussion on opportunities to enhance climate actions in the region through an initiative focused on the alignment of urban climate action with national climate strategies, including nationally determined contributions. The panel consisted of Director, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, India, Ms. Shalini Pandey; Senior Officer, Sector Development, Housing Policy and Coordination Department, Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Housing, Mongolia, Mrs. Bayardulam Baasanjav; Governor of National Capital District, Papua New Guinea, Mr. Powes Parkop; Professor of Energy and Climate Policy, Asian Institute of Technology, Mr. Shobhakar Dhakal; and Director for Urban Development, Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities, Philippines, Ms. Maria Golda P. Hilario.

10. The panel discussion was focused on the urban content of national climate strategies, including nationally determined contributions. Topics that were discussed included reducing the carbon intensity of urban centres and adopting a whole-of-government approach to integrate climate actions across ministries and with city governments. Opportunities that were highlighted included taking urban climate action in the transport and construction sectors and building resilience in the infrastructure and housing sectors.

11. During the panel discussion and in the interventions that followed, support was expressed for an initiative to strengthen local climate targets in urban areas, including through a whole-of-government approach. Some representatives emphasized the need to decentralize climate governance through subnational and local action plans to empower cities and achieve national climate goals. The need to reinforce regional multi-stakeholder platforms and partnerships to leverage innovative financial solutions and facilitate horizontal and vertical integration for localizing nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement was also emphasized.

12. Representatives of the following member States made statements: China, Fiji, India, Japan, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand and United States.

13. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds made statements: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and UN-Habitat.

14. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Stockholm Environment Institute and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific.

15. Representatives discussed data integration and management as an important aspect of urban development and climate change initiatives. Several representatives spoke about the importance of aggregating data from various sources, the use of digital tools and smartphones for data collection and the benefits of using data and tools for projecting climate change impacts in communities.

16. Several members noted the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote climate resilience in urban areas, acknowledging the existential threat that climate change posed to small island developing States in particular. Members reported on efforts to implement and update nationally determined contributions, providing examples of successfully implemented measures through the urban components of those contributions.

17. Several representatives discussed climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, as well as various approaches to sustainable urban development. Representatives emphasized the importance of building climate resilience and reducing emissions. They shared their efforts related to national climate change adaptation strategies and pilot projects for climate-resilient cities and emphasized commitments to low-carbon development and improved air quality. In addition, the importance of a circular economy in reducing emissions and resource use in cities was stressed, as was the importance of efforts to achieve net-zero emissions and promote carbon neutrality in municipalities.

18. Many members noted the importance of considering nature-based solutions and environmental conservation interventions and cited examples of private sector involvement in mangrove restoration and plastic waste management initiatives. Some members outlined efforts to promote sustainable cities and shared sustainable urban planning initiatives on topics including green infrastructure, energy-efficient design and sponge city development projects.

19. The Committee members acknowledged the importance of regional cooperation and knowledge-sharing and expressed their willingness to share experiences and best practices among Governments in the region. They noted that voluntary local reviews and national platforms were tools for reporting progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. Representatives also highlighted the humanitarian impacts of climate change in the region and emphasized the need for implementing low-carbon strategies, reducing air pollution, conserving the environment in urban contexts and collaborating with Indigenous communities. One representative emphasized the importance of inclusive development in order to ensure that marginalized groups, such as informal workers, were not left behind in sustainable urban development efforts and suggested inclusive nature-based solutions in urban areas. Another representative mentioned the importance of the bioeconomy and landscape restoration.

B. Review of the programme of work of the secretariat to address environment and development challenges (agenda item 3)

21. The Committee had before it a note by the secretariat containing a review of its programme of work to address environment and development challenges (ESCAP/CED(8)/4).

22. The secretariat presented a review of its programme of work to address environment and development challenges as outlined in the Ministerial Declaration on Protecting Our Planet through Regional Cooperation and Solidarity in Asia and the Pacific.

23. The Committee was briefed by the Chair of the Technical Expert Group on Environment and Development on its activities since its inception meeting in January 2024. He outlined the terms of reference and membership of the Technical Expert Group and informed the meeting that a Vice-Chair was to be elected. He detailed the engagement of Technical Expert Group members in activities on low-emission development strategies, air quality management and integrated adaptation and mitigation approaches. He informed the Committee about initiatives being developed by the presidency of the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and invited member States to provide their support. He invited members and associate members that had not nominated members to the Technical Expert Group to do so.

24. The discussions of the Committee were informed by a panel discussion on the work of the secretariat to address environment and development challenges and seize related opportunities. The panel comprised the Regional Director and Representative of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); Chief Executive Officer, Urbanice Malaysia, Ms. Norliza Hashim; Deputy Director General of International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea, Mr. Lee Hyungsup; and Representative of Thailand to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and Chair of the ASEAN Environmental Rights Working Group, Ms. Amara Pongsapich.

25. The panellists highlighted the instrumental role of the secretariat in the Regional Collaborative Platform for Asia and the Pacific and the need for a paradigm shift in the approach of the United Nations development system in addressing environmental challenges, as well as the need for increased collaboration through regional programmes. Partnerships in several other areas of work were noted, including those related to sustainable urban development, the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution and ocean conservation. The panellists discussed the engagement of member States in technical cooperation through the Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth, one of the long-standing voluntary technical cooperation programmes supported by members and associate members in collaboration with the secretariat. They outlined the partnerships that supported sustainable urban development and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in ASEAN member States.

26. During interventions in response to the panel discussion, the importance of the role of local governments in shaping the future of sustainability was highlighted, as was the importance of supporting the work of the secretariat in building the capacity of local governments and leaders through the Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy and the Integrated Urban Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities (Urban-Act) project.

27. Representatives of the following member States made statements: Bangladesh, India, Japan, Republic of Korea and Russian Federation.

28. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia, Family Health International, Global Youth Biodiversity Network and Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform.

29. The Committee noted the progress made in the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration. One member noted the importance of generating global environmental benefits efficiently, including by promoting synergies among multilateral environmental agreements, as noted in the note by the secretariat on the review of its programme of work. One member also emphasized the importance of public participation in environmental decision-making.

30. One representative pointed to the need to consider issues addressed in the Ministerial Declaration beyond climate action, as well as other issues, for example: sustainable consumption and production; biodiversity protection; marine and terrestrial ecosystems; and sustainable agriculture practices. Some members remarked that, in Committee documentation and in the naming of United Nations initiatives, it was important to use internationally agreed language aligned with that used in multilateral environmental conventions.

31. The secretariat noted the efforts by some members to operationalize the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution, highlighted the role of the Regional Action Programme in helping to scale up collective actions to improve air quality and urged member States to continue supporting its implementation. The importance of collaboration with expert bodies in addressing air pollution in the Asia-Pacific region was emphasized, as was the importance of such collaboration for promoting inclusion, protecting health and fostering sustainable development.

32. Some representatives expressed support for the voluntary initiative for regional cooperation on ocean-based climate action proposed by Fiji, Indonesia and Maldives, and highlighted the importance of partnerships, including with the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia, in advancing ocean conservation in the region.

33. The Committee noted the efforts and commitments of several member States to balance economic growth with environmental conservation, as well as national strategies for transitioning to a low-carbon economy, including renewable energy and emissions reduction targets. The need to enhance international efforts in climate finance and technology transfer was also raised.

34. Several members noted with concern the vulnerability of member States to the increasing frequency and severity of disasters related to climate change, and some noted the importance of climate vulnerability assessments.

35. Some representatives remarked on enhanced youth engagement in the activities of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, including through participation in Commission sessions, contributions to joint policy briefs and youth engagement events. The importance of youth-led initiatives and the need for greater representation of young people in decision-making processes were also noted. Some participants noted the need for greater inclusion of Indigenous people, young people and women in environmental

and development actions and highlighted the importance of leveraging traditional knowledge and practices in nature-based solutions.

C. Strengthening regional cooperation to address environment and development challenges: modalities and emerging areas of cooperation (agenda item 4)

36. The Committee had before it the note by the secretariat on modalities and emerging areas of cooperation for strengthening regional cooperation to address environment and development challenges (ESCAP/CED(8)/5).

37. Representatives of the following member States made statements: Bangladesh, China, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea and Tajikistan.

38. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and funds also made statements: UNEP and UN-Habitat.

39. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also made statements: Asian Productivity Organization and Centre for Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle Subregional Cooperation.

40. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also made statements: German Agency for International Cooperation and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific.

41. The Committee benefited from a two-part discussion. The first part was on the topic of strengthening regional cooperation on climate action and the Sustainable Development Goals, and the second was on regional cooperation on water-related climate issues.

42. The secretariat presented an overview of the background note and the following speakers took the floor: Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Indonesia in Thailand, and Chair of the regional dialogue on ocean-based climate action held on 19 September 2024, Mr. Fuad Adriansyah; Deputy Secretary-General, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, and Co-Chair of the Asia-Pacific Localization Partnership for Sustainable Cities, Mr. Emani Kumar; and the Chief of the Environment and Development Policy Section of the Environment and Development Division.

43. Speakers emphasized the importance of adopting a regional initiative on ocean-based climate action and building partnerships to bridge gaps in efforts to localize the Sustainable Development Goals. They suggested ways to accelerate the implementation of the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution through strategic action and improved coordination and communication among stakeholders.

44. During interventions on the panel discussion, the high exposure of people in the region to air pollution was noted, as were the transboundary nature of the problem and the co-benefits of measures to improve air quality for climate change. The relevance of the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution for addressing challenges was also noted. Several representatives briefed the Committee about initiatives aligned with or in support of the Regional Action Programme. The importance of promoting smart and resilient cities was emphasized.

45. During the discussion on regional cooperation on water-related climate issues, the Committee benefited from a round-table discussion with the following panellists: Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Tajikistan in Malaysia, Mr. Najmuddin Bekov; Programme Officer, International Union for Conservation of Nature Asia Regional Office, Mr. Vishwa Ranjan Sinha; and Chair of the Governing Council of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum, Ms. Changhua Wu.

46. The panellists highlighted the importance of an approach based on nature conservation, sustainable management of shared water resources and equitable benefit sharing. They stressed the need for Governments, private entities and individuals to take urgent action for the preservation of glaciers. They also underscored the role of networking platforms to promote solutions for water security and climate resilience. The panellists highlighted several priorities for strengthening regional collaborative action on water-related climate issues for the consideration of the Committee.

47. Some representatives noted with concern the vulnerability of the region to the impacts of climate change, including coastal erosion and sea level rise. Others noted concerns about ocean plastic pollution and underscored the need for strengthened regional cooperation in that regard.

48. Representatives noted that climate-induced water scarcity, floods, glacier degradation and unpredictable rainfall patterns, among other risks, pose significant threats to water, energy and food security, as well as to livelihoods and resilience, especially in certain parts of the region. Representatives observed the need to strengthen collaboration on water resources, including in transboundary river basins, improve integrated water resources management, develop early warning systems and adopt ecosystem-based solutions. Responses to climate-related water challenges highlighted by representatives of member States included the application of digital technologies, such as big data, artificial intelligence and remote sensing.

49. Several representatives noted the challenges faced by urban areas in the region, such as solid waste, pollution and sinking cities, and highlighted the opportunities provided by the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals to advance sustainable urban development and promote integrated actions for cities across the region. A few representatives also noted initiatives and networks in support of sustainable urban development in the region, such as the Asia-Pacific SDG Localization Platform, the ASEAN Smart Cities Network and the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle.

50. Some members noted other issues that could warrant regional support, including biodiversity loss; sand and dust storms; energy efficiency transitioning towards renewable energy; enhanced access to climate finance; technology transfer; and knowledge-sharing. One representative proposed the creation of a platform for regional technology transfer to address key environmental problems in Asia and the Pacific.

D. Other matters (agenda item 5)

51. No matters were raised under agenda item 5.

E. Adoption of the report of the Committee on Environment and Development on its eighth session (agenda item 6)

52. On 18 October 2024, the Committee adopted the report on its eighth session.