

Seventy-ninth session of the Commission Bangkok, 15-19 May 2023

SUMMARY REPORT

Scaling up climate change adaptation technology applications for a resilient future in Asia and the Pacific

[Side event of the 79th session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)]

Jointly organized by:

Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, and Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) of the United Nations ESCAP

19 May 2023 (Bangkok and online), Time: 12:45-13:45 (Thailand time: GMT +7.0) Venue: CR-4, Level 1, United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand

A. Introduction

1. The side event identified actions to enhance regional cooperation for scaling up climate adaptation technologies and their applications, with a focus on early warning systems and hazard monitoring.
2. Key discussions were based on impact of climate change, innovative technologies and their application for climate adaptation, the opportunities to enhance regional cooperation to upscale them in Asia and the Pacific, implemented government schemes, and expectations from collaborative efforts.
3. The side event was attended by about 48 participants. Of which 28 were government officials from the Ministry of Science and Technology in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines and a few participants from ministries of disaster management and forest agencies. The event was also attended by representatives from NGOs, UNESCAP and APCTT's members.
4. The event opened with Welcome Remarks by Dr. Preeti Soni, Head, APCTT-UNESCAP and Opening remarks Sri Surinder Pal Singh, Joint Secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India (online). Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific delivered the Special address. The

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Keynote presentations was delivered by Mr. Rajendra Ratnoo, Executive Director, National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India (online). Thematic Discussions on Opportunities and role of regional cooperation for upscaling climate adaptation technologies in Asia-Pacific brought out the perspective of experts from the region namely: Mr. Sefanaia Nawadra, Director General, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), H.E. Amenatave V. Yauvoli, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Fiji and Dr. Ramanuj Banerjee, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. (online). This session was moderated by Dr. Preeti Soni, Head, APCTT .

B. Summary of discussions

5. The role of regional cooperation and its impact on the development of effective early warning systems were acknowledged. Events and discussions that alter the fast- approaching grave threat of climate change are important. Strategic cooperation, the development of an internationalized institutional framework, and a strong implementation-level framework are required in Asia and the Pacific.
6. The Government of India has undertaken significant efforts, scaling from G20 (2023) to the National Policy on Disaster Management. These efforts are designed to address critical challenges due to climate change, such as intense cyclones and droughts, heat waves, etc. Such severe weather- related disasters have a negative impact on health, food and water security. New technologies to combat such situations were explained, such as robots and drones in flood-prone regions.
7. The Indian Prime Minister's 10-point agenda on disaster risk reduction, the National Disaster Management Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Policy, National Action Plan for Climate Change, the International Solar Alliance, and Startup India were some of the frameworks of India that were highlighted. India is an active member of global and regional climate change forums and has been leading by example.
8. The importance of climate change and DRR integration was discussed in detail. A holistic systems-based approach enhances resilience and understanding of the risks. Founded on climate change principles, a risk resilience framework minimizes climate-related disasters and economic and social burdens in the long term.
9. With new innovative technologies, including the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), advancements have been made in the field of climate adaptation. Affordability, accessibility, and reliability depend on the involvement of a global community, thus coming back to the idea of climate technologies as a global effort. Improving the understanding of knowledge and experiences about mainstreaming innovative and emerging technologies is needed. Collaborative research and public-private partnerships can also strengthen collaboration across borders.
10. Along with technological development and innovations, lifestyle changes in India were also analyzed. India is promoting a circular economy that aims to eliminate waste and pollution. This is in line with India's commitment to a sustainable future.
11. The event also underscored that the alleviation of poverty is one of the most important sustainable development goals, but it cannot be achieved until everyone comes together. The

developed world needs to provide financial support and affordable, accessible technologies to the developing world to help them mitigate climate change. This is because the developing world is often the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Identifying technological needs and gaps across sectors in countries will also help in shaping policies against this.

12. Before scaling up, existing technologies need to be seen and assessed. Traditional knowledge already available could help boost adaptation messages, to cope with climate impacts. Building climate-resilient infrastructure or houses or using unique farming methods are some of the solutions mentioned at the community level.
13. In the context of the Pacific nations, it was highlighted that the any or new technologies need to be cost effective, environmentally sustainable and culturally compatible. The impact of climate change on vulnerable communities, for adaptation, and Fiji's policy named Climate Vulnerability Assessment.
14. Discussions were held about the Pacific region facing a triple global crisis in the environment, climate change, pollution, and the loss of biodiversity. Its leaders have chosen to address this through the 2050 strategy for the Blue Pacific continent. The Blue Pacific strategy has two thematic areas: climate and disasters, and ocean and environment, led by SPREP. It, along with the contributing countries, explore solutions to help develop the Pacific's pool of researchers and translate knowledge into policies and actions. SPREP addresses four key themes under the Pacific Climate Change Center. The first is research, the second is knowledge brokerage, capacity building and innovation. The work here looks at the four streams- strategy and governance, forecasts and warnings, and infrastructure
15. Multilateral organizations like ESCAP and APCTT may catalyze technological resources, intellectual resources and financial resources in the Asia Pacific by supporting planning and developing a strategic framework for implementation of climate technologies.

C. Recommendations for the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology:

16. The centre should continue to foster linkages between the sub-regions in Asia Pacific and facilitate developing a strategic framework on scaling climate adaptation technologies for resilience to disasters.
17. The centre may catalyse technological resources, especially 4IR and digital technologies to scale up early warnings and help strengthen international cooperation for knowledge, information and technology sharing.
