

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ECO ASIA PANEL 29 July 2002

1. Background

ECO ASIA 2001, held in Tokyo, Japan on October 13-14, endorsed the launch of the Asia-Pacific Environmental Innovation Strategy Project (APEIS) and the establishment of the ECO ASIA Panel, based on its ten years of experience. This new ECO ASIA Panel will serve to further the ECO ASIA mission through the below stated objectives.

Note: ECO ASIA is the abbreviation for the Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific. ECO ASIA, hosted by the Japanese Ministry of the Environment yearly since 1991, aims to provide a forum for free and open exchange of views among environmental ministers in the region.

2. Objectives

The ECO ASIA Panel will serve as a forum for discussion and preparation on the following :

- (a) Project proposals which could help improve environmental policy and decision-making;
- (b) Experience and knowledge sharing concerning implementation of sustainable development policy and activities; and
- (c) Other substantive inputs to ECO ASIA.

3. Activities

Under the guidance of ECO ASIA, the Panel will:

- (a) Present policy option proposals for ECO ASIA ministerial discussions;
- (b) Develop, review and endorse implementation plans and coordinate scientific and policy aspects for projects endorsed at ECO ASIA ministerial meetings. The Asia-Pacific Environmental Innovation Strategy Project (APEIS) is an example of such a project;
- (c) Explore opportunities for cooperation and coordination between ECO ASIA endorsed projects and other relevant environmental projects;

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(d) Ensure proposed projects and/or sub-projects are effectively conducted in accordance with updated information from each country throughout the Asia-Pacific region;

(e) Provide input to the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED);

(f) Collect and disseminate information to promote sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific Region;

(g) Promote, wherever possible, exchange of updated information, taking note of new developments in regional fora; and

(h) Carry out other activities per request of the ECO ASIA ministerial meeting.

4. Membership

The Panel will be composed of:

(a) Senior officials from Asia-Pacific countries;

(b) Representatives from ECO ASIA endorsed projects; and

(c) Representatives from international organizations, programs and networks.

5. Secretariat

The Japanese Ministry of the Environment will serve as the Panel secretariat.