

**Ninth Asia-Pacific Seminar on
Climate Change
12- 15 July 1999, Hikone, Shiga, Japan**

Chairperson's Summary

1. The Ninth Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change was held in the City of Hikone, Shiga, Japan, from 12-15 July 1999. This Seminar was organized by the Environment Agency of Japan, Shiga Prefecture, Hikone City, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Japan and the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

I. Attendance

2. The Seminar was attended by experts from twenty-three countries, which included Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tuvalu, the United States of America, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. The Seminar was also attended by representatives of six international/intergovernmental organizations: namely the Asian Development Bank (ADB), ESCAP, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Secretariat of UNFCCC. All participants appreciated the efforts made by the organizing agencies for having arranged this important seminar on climate change.

II. Major objectives of the Seminar

3. The major objectives of the Seminar were to:
 - (a) review outcomes of COP4 and successive UNFCCC meetings and to consider their implications in regional cooperation on climate change;
 - (b) exchange scientific information, particularly on recent activities of the IPCC including the third assessment report (TAR) and the special reports on regional impacts and land-use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF);
 - (c) follow up actions agreed at the eighth Seminar in Thailand, "Proposed Initiatives to be Considered in the Asia-Pacific Region", through identifying the state of implementation of concrete measures taken to address climate change in countries of Asia and the Pacific, and discussing the implications of and problems in listing these measures.
 - (d) discuss how to further promote the regional information network on climate change,

III. Conduct of the Seminar

4. The Seminar commenced with an opening address by Mr. Kenji Manabe, the Minister of State and Director-General of the Environment Agency of Japan, followed by welcoming speeches by Messrs. Yoshitsugu Kunimatsu, the Governor of Shiga Prefecture, Hajimu Nakajima, the Mayor of Hikone City, and Dr. Rezaul Karim, the representative of ESCAP.
5. The Seminar elected Professor Shuzo Nishioka as Chairperson, Messrs. Tebao Awerika, Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Social Development, Kiribati and Attaullah Khan Afridi, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development, Pakistan, as Vice-chairpersons, and Mr. Duncan Marsh, Foreign Affairs Officer, Department of State, United States, as Rapporteur.

IV. Keynote addresses

6. In the keynote address on the outcomes of COP4 and the successive UNFCCC meetings and issues to be further addressed, Mr. Tahar Hadj-Sadok, Coordinator, Science and Technology Programme, UNFCCC, outlined the current status of negotiations under the UNFCCC and future plans. He emphasized the importance of successful implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, which was adopted at COP4. According to the plan, the Parties are to agree on various issues at COP6 in order to facilitate the early entry-into-force of the Kyoto Protocol and to further implement the Convention in a well-balanced manner. He stressed that the COP6 outcome must include a strong technical component and, thereby would increase demand for technical inputs from government experts and from the Convention Secretariat. He also mentioned that COP5 would offer a stepping stone for the COP6 success and could enable ministers to reach an understanding on the parameters of a politically acceptable COP6 package. In this sense, the importance of the political dialogue among ministers and senior officials was highlighted.
7. Dr. Hideo Harasawa, Section Head, Environment Planning Section, Social and Environment Systems Division, National Institute for Environment Studies (NIES), in his presentation titled "Scientific works on climate change: IPCC activities", introduced the ongoing activities of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as a scientific organization which has been contributing to address the climate change. He characterized IPCC activities by their wide coverage of fields, the involvement of a huge number of scientists and experts from all corners of the world, and their demanding schedule. He stressed that IPCC activities are still expanding and that more scientists and experts from the Asia-Pacific region should participate in its activities in order to cover the various issues of this largest and diverse region.
8. Dr. Rezaul Karim, Chief, Environmental Section, Environment and Natural Resources Development Division, ESCAP, in his presentation titled "Outcome of the COP4 and

regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific”, stressed that climate change is an issue of large complexity relating to many sectors and activities and should be viewed from a broad range of perspectives including social and economic ones. Strengthening of the regional network on climate change was emphasized and various regional activities for this purpose were presented. He also mentioned that CSD-9 will have atmosphere/energy as a sectorial theme, including the discussion on transport, for which there is a need to provide regional views and inputs. Finally, he announced the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in 2000 will be held in Kitakyushu City, Fukuoka prefecture, Japan, and a state-of-environment report will be prepared in order to provide a clear message to policy-makers, on what had been done and what will be needed. The participants noted the idea of a sub-regional approach would be appropriate given the vastness and diversity of the region.

V. Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and the Asia-Pacific region

9. Mr. Hadj-Sadok, UNFCCC, provided an update on international discussions on the CDM and laid out the range of CDM-related issues that need to be discussed further. Following this, technical challenges in designing CDM projects were presented by Ms. Jane Ellis, Administrator, Climate Change, OECD. She outlined the many technical challenges that need to be resolved before agreeing on the rules, modalities and guidelines of the CDM. These include emission baselines, eligibility criteria for projects, monitoring and reporting, leakage, gaming, and free-riders. She stressed that these challenges are inter-linked and will need to be advanced in parallel. The participants discussed various aspects of the CDM and agreed that appropriate baseline setting was critical for attaining the environmental effectiveness of the CDM. Discussion centered around the need to balance requirements for data, monitoring, reporting, verification and their consequent cost implications with the need to achieve a workable and meaningful CDM.

10. Experiences and views on AIJ and CDM were presented by the participants from Japan, China, Thailand and Indonesia. The ADB representatives made a detailed presentation on the GEF-funded ALGAS project which, apart from capacity building in twelve countries in the region, has helped them prepare lists of projects for support including through the CDM. The representative of UNEP also presented UNEP's activities relating to the CDM and informed participants of the Asian regional workshop focusing on the CDM to be organized by ADB, UNEP and other partners in Bangkok, Thailand in late September/early October in 1999. Following these presentations, various issues were discussed, including 1) the need to study how to promote the availability of financial resources, 2) the desirability for a comprehensive model able to accommodate joint ventures among countries and with multi-national enterprises, in order to enhance local technological capabilities, 3) the possible incentives to be provided to the private sector to ensure its effective participation, 4) the way to determine the project eligibility in light of sustainable development in a host country, 5) the feasibility and implications of developing portfolios of projects, 6) the potential for sinks activities to broaden future participation in the CDM for countries in the region, recognizing that the inclusion of sinks in the CDM is still an issue being discussed in the

FCCC process, and 7) the value of active participation in the CDM to all countries in the region. The idea was advanced that the development by countries of a portfolio of possible CDM projects consistent with their sustainable development objectives, in accordance with criteria on the CDM to be developed, would help to ensure environmentally effective implementation of the CDM.

11. The participants reaffirmed the need for finalizing the rules governing the Kyoto Mechanisms at COP6, as decided in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, in order to facilitate the entry-into-force of the Kyoto Protocol. The participants recognized that prioritizing work on the CDM would provide an opportunity to facilitate investments and technology transfer from developed countries to developing countries. Furthermore they also recognized that the experiences and lessons obtained from the AIJ pilot phase will be very useful in designing the CDM.
12. The participants of the Seminar noted with appreciation that the issues raised, the information and views provided by the participants and various international organizations would be very informative and useful in the future deliberation on the design of the CDM and the preparation for its implementation in the Asia-Pacific region.

VI. IPCC special reports on “regional impacts of climate change: An assessment of vulnerability” and “land-use, land-use change and forestry”(LULUCF)

13. Dr. Murari Lal, Indian Institute of Technology, informed the seminar, in his presentation titled “the Future climate change scenarios and their impacts over temperate and tropical Asia”, that highest monthly global mean temperatures for every month were recorded in either 1998 or 1997 and that the effects of the global warming were clearly observed. The changes of seasonal temperature and precipitation estimated by various global circulation models (GCMs) and various impacts predicted over temperate and tropical Asia were reported. It was stressed that adaptation would require anticipation and planning, and that failure to prepare systems for projected change in climate would lead to the missing of opportunities for low cost adaptation. In this context, the need to develop high resolution models for climate change scenarios on both regional and country scales was highlighted. These models would enable the planning of adaptation measures at the local scale. Two Data Distribution Centers (DDCs) have been set up in the United Kingdom and Germany. These provide data generated by seven state-of-the-art GCMs available on their web sites. There is a proposal made in the Group on Climate Impact Assessment (TGCI) of IPCC to develop two additional mirror web sites in Australia and India. It was suggested that the countries in the region may access these web sites to develop country-specific climate change scenarios.
14. Dr. Yoshiki Yamagata, Research Programme Manager, National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), Japan, provided information on ongoing discussions in the preparation of the IPCC special report on land-use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) with emphasis on and implications of the different definitions of “afforestation”, “reforestation” and “deforestation” on the global potential of carbon

sinks under Article 3.3 of the Kyoto Protocol. Dr. Yamagata also noted issue related to project-based activities. It was stressed that the deliberations on LULUCF activities should be continued, taking into account the ultimate objectives of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, with the aim of reducing scientific uncertainty.

15. The participants appreciated the policy-relevant work by the IPCC and reaffirmed the importance of this work through various special reports.

VII. Measures taken to address climate change in Asia and the Pacific: Follow-up actions of proposed initiatives to be considered in the Asia-Pacific region

16. The participants noted the overview of the preparation of initial national communications and related actions by non-Annex I Parties, presented by Mr. George Manful, Programme Officer, Implementation Programme, UNFCCC. Mr. Manful stated that while to date three initial national communications have been submitted from this region to the UNFCCC secretariat, a greater number are expected in 1999 and 2000.

He stressed the importance of providing accurate information in communications and establishing/strengthening national institutional arrangements such as a national climate change committee consisting of representatives of various ministries/agencies. The participants were informed that the UNFCCC secretariat had plans to organize a series of workshops on emission factors and activity data for the estimation of GHG emissions and removals, and that a workshop in Asia would be held sometime in the next year.

17. A number of policies and actions to address climate change were reported by the participants from Bangladesh, Fiji, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. Those policies and actions focused on their own national circumstances and priorities, and vary widely. Policies and actions include: 1) developing laws and regulations, 2) setting up economic incentives such as public loans and tax reduction for investment and energy-pricing policies, 3) initiating voluntary agreements between the government and private sectors, 4) supporting energy service companies, 5) enhancing public transportation use, 6) promoting of public awareness, 7) strengthening institutional arrangements of inter-departmental and/or inter-disciplinary committees, 8) setting up intensive training courses, 9) introducing alternative fuel vehicles and 10) developing general and/or sector-specific programmes. It was noted that many countries in the region have also taken climate change considerations into account in their social, economic and environmental policies. Participants noted with appreciation the detailed information provided in these presentations.

18. Some regional and national projects in the region have resulted in intensive work for inventories and policies and measures to address climate change. At the same time, many participants highlighted the lack of human and financial resources, information and transfer of technologies, and technical data such as GHG emission factors, particularly in the agricultural sector. In this context, the unique nature of the Pacific Island Climate Change Assistance Programme (PICCAP), which has developed a certificate training course, was noted.

19. Mr. Avani Vaish, Coordinator, GEF secretariat, briefly presented GEF's capacity building activities in general and in the Asia-Pacific region in particular. These activities have been implemented in the form of country-specific projects and global/regional projects through GEF's Implementing Agencies. Capacity building is being done both through substantive GEF projects and through free-standing enabling activities. The participants emphasized the need to intensify support from international organizations and Annex II Parties in order to address climate change, in particular through their efforts for financial assistance and technology transfer.
20. Bearing in mind that the implementation of projects for the sole purpose of addressing climate change cannot in practice be easily justified in developing countries, the participants recognized that:
 - (a) Explicitly specifying priority areas/policies would help countries focus efforts and resources on effective and beneficial ways to address climate change, while taking into account the situation and sustainable development strategy of each country;
 - (b) Designing and implementing concrete actions/projects generally have various additional benefits, such as capacity building through the establishment of organizations/committees for intensive discussions on scientific analysis, technological needs and options;
 - (c) The list of concrete actions/projects developed in accordance with the national goal for sustainable development may facilitate technology transfer and investment by the governments of developed countries, private sectors, multilateral and bilateral agencies, which may be enhanced through the CDM.

Developing such priorities is, therefore, recommended for the countries in the region, although they need not be exhaustive and could be expanded as appropriate.

VIII. Electronic information networks

21. The participants reiterated the importance of and need for intensified information dissemination, in particular, of scientific and technological information. The participants appreciated the detailed and concrete explanation by Mr. Manful, UNFCCC, on how to develop a CC:INFO/Web site by using a user-friendly kit.
22. The participants expressed their appreciation for the early establishment of the gateway web site of the Asia-Pacific Network on Climate Change (APNET) by the Environment Agency of Japan, following the discussions at the previous seminars particularly the recommendation at the eighth seminar in Thailand. Based on the study carried out by the Environment Agency of Japan, they discussed the future activities to facilitate information exchange within and among the countries in the region, in particular, future steps for APNET activities. They emphasized the need to establish national web sites on climate change, and to build capacity to generate,

disseminate and update relevant information. In this context, the participants noted the need to intensify support for these purposes. The participants explored ways to promote increased use of APNET. Noting the roles and ongoing activities of CC:INFO Web initiative by the UNFCCC secretariat, Environment Assessment Programme for Asia and the Pacific (EAP-AP) by UNEP, GEF, the Environment Agency of Japan and JICA, the participants stressed the importance of coordination among those activities in order to prevent any unnecessary duplication and to assist the developing countries in the region in an efficient manner.

IX. Measures taken by local governments

23. The participants appreciated the presentations by Shiga Prefecture, Hikone City and Kitakyushu City on their community-based activities. They recognized that local governments have a great potential to change the lifestyle of citizens, and the production/consumption patterns of the private sectors by these efforts on the purchase of “green” products and environmental awareness raising campaigns. It was noted that there were already various international cooperative initiatives by local governments and that these actions should be further promoted with the support of national governments and private sectors.
24. It was recommended that the major outcomes of the Seminar should be reported to the ECO-ASIA '99 in September this year in Sapporo, Japan. The Chairperson's Summary of the Seminar should also be disseminated as widely as possible.
25. The participants urged efforts to organize the Tenth Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change some time in the summer of 2000, and expressed their expectation that future seminars would be more action-oriented in promoting specific endeavours in the region.

Hikone, Shiga, Japan, 15 July 1999

Shuzo Nishioka
Chairperson

The Ninth Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change