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Outcome of the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference)

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Note by the secretariat

Summary

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20, will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 4 to 6 June 2012, with a focus on two themes: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development.

The present document contains an account of the preparatory activities of the United Nations system, including ESCAP, for the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Conference, which will be held in Seoul on 19 and 20 October 2011. The Regional Preparatory Meeting will review key issues, challenges and opportunities for sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region, and formulate a regional input to the Conference. The Committee may wish to discuss further action to be taken collectively by the countries of Asia and the Pacific, and advise the secretariat regarding the possible coordinating role that it may play.

I. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

1. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development is being organized in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 64/236. The Conference will be held in Brazil from 4 to 6 June 2012 to mark the twentieth anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the tenth anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Conference will include participation at the highest possible level, including Heads of State.

2. The objective of the Conference is to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and address new and emerging challenges.

3. It will focus on two themes: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development. The Conference will result in a focused political document.

II. Regional Preparatory Meeting

4. The General Assembly has tasked regional commissions with leading the regional preparatory processes, and involving other regional organizations in doing so. Therefore, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Asian Development Bank, ESCAP will organize the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which is to be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea and held in Seoul on 19 and 20 October 2011.

5. The Meeting will complement and receive inputs from other preparatory events held within the region, including those convened by countries at the subregional level and by major groups, such as:

(a) Open Forum for the Rio+20 Pacific Preparatory Meeting, 21 and 22 July 2011, and the Pacific Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20, both held in Samoa and convened by the Government of Samoa in partnership with the Secretariat of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the United Nations system;

(b) North-East Asia consultation, to be held as part of the 16th Senior Officials Meeting of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, convened by the ESCAP Subregional Office for North-East Asia, in Incheon, Republic of Korea, on 1 and 2 September 2011;

(c) Subregional briefings or preparatory events in other subregions (South-Asia, South-East Asia, Central Asia) conducted by UNEP;

(d) Regional multi-stakeholder consultations, including one under the banner of “The Road to Rio 2012: Charting our Path”, to be convened by UNEP, in collaboration with ESCAP and the Asian Development Bank, in Seoul on 17 and 18 October 2011.

6. Based on the background paper prepared by the secretariat, the deliberation at the Regional Preparatory Meeting will focus on the formulation of an Asia-Pacific regional statement on sustainable development, which will address, inter alia, key issues, challenges and opportunities and action proposals for the further promotion of sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region. The outcome will be submitted to the Bureau of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development for consideration in the subsequent preparatory process at the global level.

7. The Committee will be briefed on the outcome of the Regional Preparatory Meeting,

III. Issues for consideration

8. The Committee may wish to discuss further actions to be taken collectively by the countries of Asia and the Pacific, and advise the secretariat regarding the possible coordinating role that it may play.