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**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific****Eightieth session**

Bangkok, 22–26 April 2024

Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda\*

**Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission: disaster risk reduction****Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its eighth session\*\****Summary*

The eighth session of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management was held in Dushanbe on 8 December 2023. The Governing Council addressed the programmatic and technical activities and the administrative and financial issues of the Centre.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the activities of the Centre since the seventh session and expressed its appreciation for the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work of the Centre. It noted that, owing to insufficient financial resources, only some activities included in the Centre's programme of work for 2023 could be implemented and endorsed the Centre's programme of work for 2024.

The Governing Council noted the measures taken for the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre. It expressed its appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the generous financial and in-kind voluntary contributions made to date for the establishment and operation of the Centre. It also expressed its appreciation for the verbal pledge made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding an additional financial contribution to the Centre in the amount of \$2 million, to be disbursed in the first half of 2024. The Governing Council expressed its thanks and appreciation to the Government of Cambodia, as well as to Macao, China, for their valuable financial contributions to the Centre.

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\* ESCAP/80/1.

\*\* The present document was submitted late owing to the need to include the most recent information.

The Governing Council encouraged the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to mobilize financial and/or in-kind support for the Centre and to take an active role in the delivery of the Centre's programme of work.

The Governing Council elected the representative of Tajikistan as the Chair and the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran as the Vice-Chair for the eighth session to serve until the ninth session of the Governing Council.

## **I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention**

1. The following decisions adopted by the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP):

### **Decision 1**

The Governing Council takes note of the report on the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management since the seventh session and expresses its appreciation for the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work of the Centre. The Governing Council notes that, owing to insufficient financial resources, only some activities included in the Centre's programme of work for 2023 could be implemented and endorses the programme of work for 2024.

### **Decision 2**

The Governing Council notes the measures taken for the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/78/12/Add.1), which was endorsed by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-eighth session, in 2022. The measures included the organization of a meeting on the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action, held in Bangkok and online on 24 and 25 July 2023 on the sidelines of the eighth session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, and a substantial contribution to the International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, held in Tehran on 9 and 10 September 2023. The Governing Council encourages member States to implement the Regional Plan of Action with the aim of reducing the risk and negative impacts of sand and dust storms in the region.

### **Decision 3**

The Governing Council notes the recommendations arising from the regional expert group meeting on disaster information management, held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023, and emphasizes the role of information management in the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into national development plans, in risk data governance and policy design and in the use of emerging new technologies and start-ups for disaster information management. The Governing Council recommends that the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management incorporate these recommendations into its future programme of work and activities within the scope and mandate given to it, taking into account the availability of funds.

## Decision 4

The Governing Council takes note of the report on the administrative and financial status of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management. The Governing Council expresses its appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the generous financial and in-kind voluntary contributions made to date for the establishment and operation of the Centre. The Governing Council also expresses appreciation for the verbal pledge made by the Vice-President and Head of Plan and Budget Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Davoud Manzour, regarding an additional financial contribution to the Centre in the amount of \$2 million, to be disbursed in the first half of 2024, and encourages the host Government to disburse the outstanding contributions to the Centre in accordance with the Administrative and Financial Arrangement between the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Governing Council expresses its thanks and appreciation to the Government of Cambodia, as well as to Macao, China, for their valuable financial contributions to the Centre.

The Governing Council encourages the members and associate members of the Commission to mobilize financial and in-kind support for the Centre and take an active role in the implementation of the Centre's programme of work.

## II. Proceedings

### A. **Activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management since the seventh session of the Governing Council, including progress made on the implementation of the Centre's strategic programme of work and its programme of work for 2023 (agenda item 2)**

2. The Governing Council had before it the report on the activities of the Centre since the seventh session of the Governing Council.

3. The secretariat briefed the Governing Council on progress made in the implementation of the Centre's strategic programme of work and its programme of work for 2023, which included programmes and activities in three areas related to the long-term outcomes of the strategic programme of work: improving the availability of information on risks; building the capacity to collect and apply such information; and strengthening regional cooperation.

### B. **Outcomes of the regional expert group meeting on disaster information management held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023 (agenda item 3)**

4. The Governing Council had before it the report on the regional expert group meeting on disaster information management held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023, on the theme "Advancing disaster resilience: harnessing data, technology and policy for a safer tomorrow", which included a summary of the discussions held and the recommendations made (see annex II).

**C. Administrative and financial status of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (agenda item 4)**

5. The Governing Council had before it the report on the administrative and financial status of the Centre.

6. The Governing Council noted that the financial status of the Centre explained why the Centre had not been able to fully deliver on the approved programme of work for 2023.

7. The Governing Council encouraged the members and associate members of ESCAP to mobilize financial and in-kind support for the Centre and take an active role in the implementation of the Centre's programme of work.

8. A verbal pledge was made by the Vice-President and Head of Plan and Budget Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Davoud Manzour, regarding an additional financial contribution to the Centre in the amount of \$2 million, to be disbursed in the first half of 2024.

**D. Programme of work of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (agenda item 5)**

9. The Governing Council had before it the proposed programme of work of the Centre for 2024.

10. The Governing Council noted with appreciation the offer made by the Government of India to make its impact-based forecasting products available to other countries, which the Centre will facilitate.

11. The Governing Council approved the Centre's proposed programme of work for 2024.

**E. Date and venue of the ninth session of the Governing Council (agenda item 6)**

12. The Governing Council expressed appreciation for the offer made by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host its ninth session, on a date yet to be determined.

**F. Other matters (agenda item 7)**

13. No other matters were raised.

**G. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council on its eighth session (agenda item 8)**

14. The Governing Council endorsed the section containing the matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention. The Governing Council reviewed and endorsed the draft account of proceedings that was circulated to its members after the conclusion of the session. The final report of the Governing Council on its eighth session is to be submitted to ESCAP for endorsement at its eightieth session.

### **III. Organization**

#### **A. Opening, duration and organization of the session**

15. The Governing Council held its eighth session in Dushanbe on 8 December 2023. Opening statements were delivered by: Chair of the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence, Tajikistan, Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda; Vice-President and Head of Plan and Budget Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Davoud Manzour; Executive Secretary of ESCAP (pre-recorded message); and Head of Foreign Relations Department, Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, Türkiye, Mr. Muhammet Maruf Yaman.

16. Mr. Nazarzoda said that the rate at which air temperatures were warming in Asia had surpassed the global average, raising the probability of droughts, floods, landslides and wildfires in various parts of the world, including Tajikistan. While expressing concern about those phenomena, emphasizing their impact on loss of life and damage to infrastructure, he stressed that the session could serve to help participating States to achieve the global goals related to disaster risk reduction.

17. Mr. Manzour stressed that disasters do not recognize borders and that it was imperative to adopt coordinated and integrated regional measures to address them. He underscored the need to leverage the collective capacities of countries in the region and reiterated the commitment of the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue supporting the Centre. He underscored the seriousness of sand and dust storms and the importance of executing the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific.

18. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP noted that Asia and the Pacific remained the region most affected by disasters, citing among the major incidents that occurred in 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan, floods in Pakistan and Afghanistan, typhoons in the Philippines and heatwaves in India. She expressed gratitude to the disaster management authorities in the affected countries for their commendable efforts. She thanked the Government of Tajikistan for the measures it had taken on early warning systems. She encouraged regional cooperation and the utilization of the Centre's services for disaster resilience. She expressed appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the Centre and acknowledged the financial contributions received from the Government of Cambodia, as well as from Macao, China, urging continued support for the Centre's work from ESCAP member States.

#### **B. Attendance**

19. Representatives of the following members of the Governing Council attended: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mongolia, Tajikistan and Türkiye, as well as Macao, China.

20. Representatives of the following members of ESCAP attended as observers: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan.

21. Representatives of the following organizations attended as observers: Economic Cooperation Organization and Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction.

**C. Election of officers**

22. The Governing Council elected the following officers:

Chair: Mr. Rustam Nazarzoda (Tajikistan)

Vice-Chair: Mr. Davoud Manzour (Islamic Republic of Iran)

**D. Agenda**

23. The Governing Council adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
  - (a) Opening addresses;
  - (b) Election of officers;
  - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management since the seventh session of the Governing Council, including progress made on the implementation of the Centre's strategic programme of work and its programme of work for 2023.
3. Outcomes of the regional expert group meeting on disaster information management held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023.
4. Administrative and financial status of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management.
5. Programme of work of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management.
6. Date and venue of the ninth session of the Governing Council.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the report of the Governing Council on its eighth session.

**E. Other events**

24. The regional expert group meeting on disaster information management, on the theme "Advancing disaster resilience: harnessing data, technology and policy for a safer tomorrow", was held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023 in conjunction with the eighth session of the Governing Council.

## Annex I

### List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
ESCAP/APDIM/GC(8)/1/Rev.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/APDIM/GC(8)/2	Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its eighth session	
	Report on the activities of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management since the seventh session of the Governing Council	2
	Report on the regional expert group meeting on disaster information management held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023	3
	Report on the administrative and financial status of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management	4
	Proposed programme of work of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management for 2024	5

## Annex II

### **Report on the regional expert group meeting on disaster information management held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023**

1. The regional expert group meeting on disaster information management held in Dushanbe on 7 and 8 December 2023 was organized by the Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defence of Tajikistan on the theme “Advancing disaster resilience: harnessing data, technology and policy for a safer tomorrow”.
2. Representatives of the following States members of the Governing Council participated in the meeting: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Tajikistan and Türkiye. Representatives of Macao, China, also attended.
3. Representatives of the following States not members of the Governing Council also participated: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan.
4. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies also participated: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.
5. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also participated: Economic Cooperation Organization and Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction.
6. Experts from the following non-governmental organizations, businesses, academic institutions and other entities also participated: Adenium Risk and Coaching, East West University, Environmental Management and Engineering Consultants, Kyoto University, Spectee, Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society and University of Twente.
7. In a session on synergy building and navigating the science-policy-action nexus through data-driven decision-making and policy design, participants acknowledged the dynamic interplay between risk data governance and policy design. They discussed the need for and possibility of establishing a robust data governance framework and the role of data in shaping informed policy decisions. The representative of the Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction shared experiences managing and using data to influence policies and strategies for disaster risk reduction in Central Asia. The findings and outcomes of the joint study by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on the emerging topic of risk data governance and policy design were presented. It was suggested that the Centre use that study to prepare capacity-building materials and conduct training and workshops. The session also explored how Governments and organizations could leverage data analysis and emerging technologies for better policy design and evaluation. Participants also heard about the importance of the Asia-Pacific disaster-related statistical framework.
8. During discussions on the role of information management in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into national development plans, the Early Warnings for All initiative and its implementation in Tajikistan were presented. Participants reiterated the critical importance of establishing early warning systems, especially through a whole-



of-society, multi-stakeholder approach. The initial findings of the Centre's study on integrating disaster risk reduction into national development plans were explained, and participants were invited to participate in the study by filling out an online questionnaire and requesting the Centre to organize national workshops.

9. In a session on the power of new technologies and start-ups in disaster information management to catalyse resilience, participants discussed how new technologies and entrepreneurial endeavours could contribute to enhancing disaster resilience through more effective data collection, analysis, communication and decision-making. Successful examples were showcased and best practices were discussed to inspire collaboration, foster knowledge-sharing and provide a deeper understanding of how start-ups and new technologies could catalyse resilience in the face of disasters. Speakers addressed key questions about the challenges and barriers that countries faced in adopting new technologies and working with start-ups for disaster information management, and how those challenges could be addressed. Moreover, discussions focused on how countries with limited resources and infrastructure could reap the benefits of such technologies and start-ups to strengthen their disaster resilience. Participants also emphasized the importance of leveraging advanced technology, including artificial intelligence, in all phases of the disaster risk management cycle, which could be accomplished through public-private partnerships, among others.

10. The Centre committed itself to collaborating with pertinent United Nations and regional entities to address the topics discussed during the meeting, within the limits of its mandate and available resources, placing particular emphasis on:

- (a) Developing disaster risk data governance policies and guidance;
- (b) Fostering enhanced regional collaboration for disaster risk reduction;
- (c) Addressing transboundary issues, including on impact-based forecasting;
- (d) Promoting information management for the integration of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into national development plans;
- (e) Supporting the exchange of expertise and best practices in disaster risk information management among member countries.

### Annex III

**Financial statement of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the  
Development of Disaster Information Management for the year  
ended 31 December 2023**  
(United States dollars)

<i>Income</i>	
Contributions	..
Interest income	89 527
<b>Total income</b>	<b>89 527</b>
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>	
	(887 037)
<b>Net income over expenditure</b>	<b>..</b>
Fund balance as at 1 January 2023	929 327
Refunds to donors	–
<b>Fund balance as at 31 December 2023</b>	<b>..</b>

## Annex IV

**Financial statement of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management for the year ended 31 December 2023, by project component**

(United States dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

	<i>Strengthening disaster information management in the Asia-Pacific region in the evolving post-2015 development agenda</i>	<i>Institutional support for the Centre (multiple donors)</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Income</i>			
Contributions	RIs 850 000 000 000 <sup>a</sup>	12 000	..
Interest income	86 126	3 401	89 527
<b>Total income</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>15 401</b>	<b>..</b>
<i>Less: Expenditure</i>			
	(887 037)	–	(887 037)
<b>Net income over expenditure</b>	<b>(887 037)</b>	<b>15 401</b>	<b>(887 037)</b>
Fund balance as at 1 January 2023	857 415	71 912	929 327
Refunds to donors	–	–	–
<b>Fund balance as at 31 December 2023</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>87 312</b>	<b>..</b>

<sup>a</sup> Since the contributions were remitted in Iranian rials instead of United States dollars, in accordance with the contractual terms of the agreement, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management is required to bear the losses related to currency conversion by the United Nations Headquarters treasury. Thus, the exact amount of the contribution in United States dollars is yet to be determined.

## Annex V

**Cash contributions to the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management received for the year ended 31 December 2022 and the period ended 31 October 2023**

(United States dollars, unless otherwise indicated)

<i>Country/area</i>	<i>Year ended 31 December 2022</i>	<i>Period ended 31 October 2023</i>
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	–	RIs 850 000 000 000 <sup>a</sup>
Cambodia	4 000	2 000
Macao, China	10 000	10 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 000</b>	<b>..</b>

<sup>a</sup> Since the contributions were remitted in Iranian rials instead of United States dollars, in accordance with the contractual terms of the agreement, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management is required to bear the losses related to currency conversion by the United Nations Headquarters treasury. Thus, the exact amount of the contribution in United States dollars is yet to be determined.