

## **ESCAP at a Glance**

Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific (ESCAP)

Date established: 1947

Headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand, ESCAP has 62 members and associate members, of which 58 are in the Asia-Pacific region. ESCAP covers a vast geographical area that stretches from Turkey in the west to Kiribati in the east and from the Russian Federation in the north to New Zealand in the south. This is divided into five sub-regions where activities are implemented: Pacific; East and Northeast Asia; North and Central Asia; South and Southwest Asia; and Southeast Asia. ESCAP is the only regional commission that has all five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council in its membership.

## **Mission**

ESCAP's mission is to promote inclusive and sustainable economic and social development by fostering cooperation between its members and associate members. Its mandate derives from the Economic and Social Council resolutions 37 (IV) of 28 March 1947 and 414 (XIII) of 18, 19, and 20 September 1951. The mandate was further elaborated in GA resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977, which designated ESCAP as the main economic and social development centre within the UN system for Asia and the Pacific and as an executing agency for inter-sectoral, sub-regional, regional and inter-regional projects.

ESCAP has been tasked with addressing key and emerging priorities and needs, placing emphasis on access to opportunities for individuals, communities, and economies in the region. Enhancing institutional capacity development at the national level, within a regional framework, is also high on ESCAP's agenda, together with developing more strategic and operational partnerships with relevant stakeholders (including governments and regional cooperation mechanisms, donors and UN agencies). The internationally agreed development goals (including MDGs) provide the overarching framework for ESCAP's work.

## **Core Functions**

ESCAP fulfils its mandate through undertaking a combination of normative, analytical, and technical cooperation work:

- *Normative work*: Promotion of universal norms and values as well as setting standards at the regional level with a view to advancing economic and social development
- *Analytical work*: Research, analysis and measurement of regional economic and social development trends and issues as a basis for policy-making and programme development
- *Technical cooperation*: building national capacity through development of human resources and institutions in key economic and social development sectors (e.g. training and advisory services). Technical cooperation activities also include policy advocacy and dialogue, and regional knowledge networking.

## **Organisational structure**

The ESCAP secretariat comprises the Office of the Executive Secretary, Programme Management Division, Administrative Services Division, and the following substantive divisions as follows:

- Macroeconomic Policy and Development Division
- Trade and Investment Division
- Transport Division

- Environment and Development Division
- Information and Communication Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division
- Social Development Division
- Statistics Division

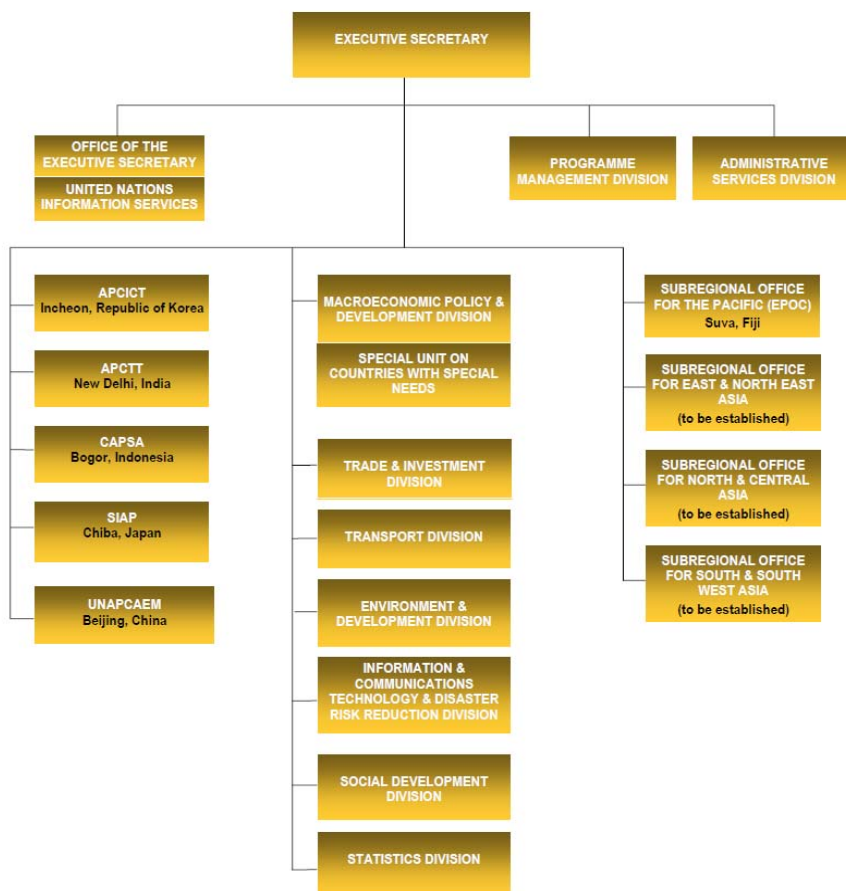
The delivery of ESCAP's programme of work is supported by five Regional Institutes which are located in the various subregions of ESCAP as follows:

- The Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT), Incheon, Republic of Korea
- The Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), New Delhi, India
- The Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific (CAPSA), Bogor, Indonesia
- The Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP), Chiba, Japan
- The United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (UNAPCAEM), Beijing, China

In addition to the existing subregional office for the Pacific (ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre), located in Suva, Fiji, three new subregional offices for East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia (which will be a joint office with the Economic Commission for Europe), and South and South-West Asia are being established during 2009. The activities for South-East Asia will be coordinated by ESCAP headquarters.

## ESCAP ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

(as of January 2009)



APCICT—Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development  
 APCTT—Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology  
 CAPSA—Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops' Development in Asia and the Pacific  
 SIAP—Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific  
 UNAPCAEM—United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery

### **The Commission**

ESCAP meets for sessions on an annual basis at the ministerial level to discuss and decide on important issues pertaining to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in the region, to decide on the recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and of the Executive Secretary, and to review and endorse the proposed strategic framework and programme of work.

ESCAP maintains close cooperation and consultation between its members and associate members and the Secretariat through the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR). The functions of ACPR include advising and assisting the Executive Secretary on strategy and programme, and on monitoring and evaluation of the Commission's work; receiving information on the functioning of the Commission; reviewing the calendar of meetings; and advising on the preparations for the sessions of the Commission and the committees.

### **Regional inter-agency coordination mechanisms**

ESCAP serves as secretariat to the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM). The RCM focuses on key regional/sub-regional policy issues and takes the lead in the normative and analytical work, with a view to enhancing system-wide coherence at the regional level. It is composed of 30 United Nations and affiliated regional and subregional entities, of which 25 are based in Bangkok.

The RCM works at two levels: at the *executive-level* with meetings to interpret and implement policy level consensus on opportunities for increased regional cooperation, recognizing the importance of the interaction between regional and country level development, and the interaction between humanitarian, security and development issues; and at the *operational-level*, with Thematic Working Groups to focus on specific operational and programmatic issues that could benefit from improved regional cooperation.

There are currently six RCM Thematic Working Groups: Education for All, Environment and Disaster Management, Health, Poverty and Hunger, International Migration and Human Trafficking, and Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women.

Focal Point

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