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Twenty-sixth Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of NEASPEC

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Seoul, Republic of Korea

REVIEW OF PROGRAMME PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

(Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda)

Air Pollution

Note by the Secretariat

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Annex I. BAT Review Paper

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I. BACKGROUND

1. Since its launch at the 22nd Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-22) of NEASPEC in 2018, NEACAP has been gradually institutionalized (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Institutionalization of NEACAP

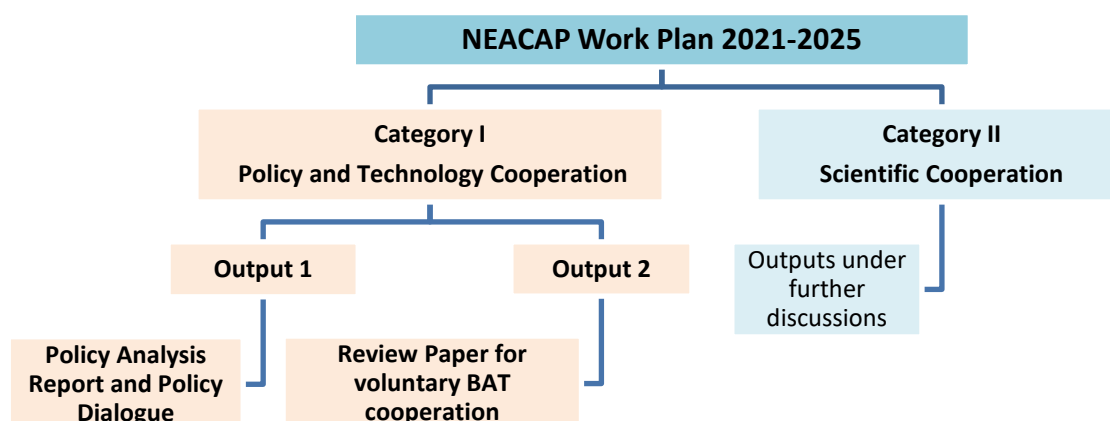


2. **NEACAP Work Plan 2021-2025** divides potential priority areas into Categories I and II. **Category I** refers to activities that can be initiated without specific intensive preparatory work and provide immediate benefits to member States. The priority area identified and agreed upon in this Category is “Policy and technology cooperation”. **Category II** pertains to activities that are of significant importance for developing scientific approaches to inform policy making. These activities require scientific and collaborative preparation, as well as the development of capacity of experts to initiate these activities. Methodological research in individual member States, focusing on (i) emission inventory and (ii) policy scenario and integrated assessment modeling, is considered a potential priority area within this Category. However, further discussions are needed to identify priority areas.

3. The SOM-24 in 2020 requested the Secretariat to initiate timely implementation of the Work Plan 2021-2025 (see Figure 2). Subsequently, the 3rd meeting of NEACAP Science and Policy Committee (SPC-3) in April 2021 agreed on

- **“Output 1”**: Policy analysis and policy dialogue will be implemented in a mutually supportive way, with the outcome of a “policy analysis report”, which could be prepared by 2022 and published by 2023; and
- **“Output 2”**: regarding collaboration on technology components, focusing on a review paper as a reference for understanding current processes and voluntary cooperation on Best Available Techniques (BAT).

Figure 2. NEACAP Work Plan 2021-2025



II. PROGRESS IN CATEGORY I: POLICY AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION

Output 1: Policy Analysis Report

4. **National expert nomination:** Following the development of the concept note and expert nomination guideline by the Secretariat for the policy analysis report, member governments completed the nominations of experts in February 2023 (see table 1).

Table 1. List of nominated national experts for the NEACAP Policy Analysis Report

	Nominated national experts	
China	Mr. Yixuan Zheng Associate Professor, Chinese Academy of Environmental Planning	
Japan	Mr. Eric Zusman Research Director Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)	Mr. Hiroaki Minoura Visiting researcher of Asia Center for Air Pollution Research (ACAP), Lecturer of Nagoya University of Commerce and Business
Mongolia	Ms. Gantuya Ganbat Assistant Professor German-Mongolian Institute for Resources and Technology	Mr. Batbayar Jadamba Director, Environment Monitoring Division, National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring
Republic of Korea	Mr. Ki-chul Choi Research Fellow Korea Environment Institute (KEI)	Ms. Seung-min Lee Research Fellow Korea Environment Institute (KEI)
Russian Federation	Mr. Alexander Romanov, originally nominated in August 2021, was replaced by Mr. Sergey Gromov, Principal Scientist, Institute of Global Climate and Ecology (IGCE) in May 2023.	

5. **Inception meeting:** When the Secretariat called for an inception meeting for the

policy analysis report in March 2023, they discovered that the originally nominated Russian expert had left his workplace and joined a UN agency. As a result, the Secretariat requested the government of the Russian Federation to re-nominate an expert. With plans to arrange a one-on-one meeting between the lead expert and the newly nominated Russian expert later, the inception meeting was conducted online on 31 March 2023. The meeting was attended by the lead expert, Mr. Zbigniew Klimont, Research Group Leader at IIASA and the national experts from China, Japan, Mongolia, and the Republic of Korea. During the meeting, the experts reviewed the preliminary report outline, discussed the inputs required from each expert, and established a timeline of preparing the report.

6. **Consultant engagement:** The six out of eight national experts have been officially appointed as consultants, in accordance with the ESCAP Rules and Regulations. However, there are two outstanding situations to note:

- *Mr. Eric Zusman* is currently in discussion with his organization regarding an individual consultancy contract with the UN.
- *Mr. Sergey Gromov* has not yet taken the necessary steps to register on the UN HR portal as a consultant.

7. **Collection of national inputs:** In accordance with the guidance note developed and provided by the lead consultant for the collection of national inputs, the national experts (except the two experts in the section of “consultancy engagement”) have submitted their respective inputs. Subsequent bilateral meetings between the lead consultant and each country expert(s) have been scheduled to verify and cross-check all the provided inputs.

Output 2: Voluntary Cooperation on BAT

8. The review paper on Best Available Techniques (BAT), drafted by Dr. Ram Lal Verma, Head, Air Pollution Cluster, Regional Resource Center for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Institute of Technology (RRCAP-AIT), underwent a thorough review process. The initial draft was shared with NEACAP SPC members in August 2022. Following the recommendations of SPC-4, an updated draft was distributed to SPC members and NFPs in July 2023. Throughout this review process, the Secretariat received substantial feedback from SPC members representing Japan (in both the first and second reviews), the Russian Federation (in the first review), and the government of the Republic of Korea (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Environment). The progress has been updated to the SPC-5 for its final recommendation prior to the SOM-26.

III. PROGRESS IN CATEGORY II: SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

9. Following the recommendation of SPC-4 and approval by SOM-25, the stock-taking study on the potential priority areas of Category II was developed to provide valuable insights for discussions at SPC-5 in 2023.¹

10. Additionally, the Secretariat collaborated with National Air Emissions Inventory Research Centre (NAIR) of the Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea, to organize the NEACAP Symposium “*Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory and Air Quality Management*” on 7 September in Seoul. This event was held in conjunction with the NEACAP SPC-5 and was attended by SPC members, TC Representatives, and NEACAP key resource persons. During the Symposium, discussions were initiated to explore potential areas or initiatives within Category II. These discussions continued throughout the networking session of the Symposium as well as in an ad-hoc dinner meeting, resulting in the generation of several ideas. The key outcomes of the SPC-5 can be found in the subsequent section. (See the annex II for the full report).

IV. OUTCOME OF NEACAP SPC-5

11. The Committee provided the following advice and recommendations on Category I activities:

- (a) **Policy analysis report and policy dialogues:** The efforts and progress shared by Mr. Klimont on the policy report was well noted with appreciation by the SPC-5 participants. The Committee highlighted the importance of the engagements of policymakers of member States in the process of developing the report and policy dialogues based on the report. Following the current progress in the report preparation, the Committee suggested to organize the first policy dialogue to review the draft during the first quarter of 2024 and the second policy dialogue in succeeding quarters in 2024. The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to prepare concept notes of the policy dialogues articulating details such as targeted participants, scope, objectives, and usage of the report, for the consideration of member States.
- (b) **Voluntary BAT collaboration.** The Committee appreciated the Secretariat’s effort in preparing the BAT report and noted that the Secretariat will present the BAT report in the NEASPEC 26th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-26) as a Secretariat output, which is a reference document for NEACAP activities, where applicable and appropriate.

¹ The stock-taking study is available at https://neaspec.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/Annex%20_NEACAP_SPC%205_reference%20updated.pdf

12. The Committee provided the following advice and recommendations on Category II activities:

(c) In preparation for the NEACAP Work Plan (2026-2030), the Committee initiated discussions on potential priority areas and activities for cooperation for Category II and noted the document prepared by the Secretariat on stock-taking study on potential priority areas and activities for cooperation for Category II. The Committee suggested the Secretariat to explore the possibility for the member States to undertake capacity building activities. The Committee noted of existing subregional activities that could be linked to the activities of NEACAP.

13. On this note, the Committee recommended the following work plan:

(a) Policy analysis report and policy dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of 1st policy dialogue (to review draft): Q1 2024 • Finalization of policy analysis report: Q2 2024 • Organization of 2nd policy dialogue: 2nd half 2024
(b) Voluntary BAT collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of the BAT report to SOM-26: Q4 2023 (See Annex I)
(c) Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of possibilities for the member States to undertake capacity building activities: 2024-2025

14. The Committee agreed to discuss further activities for 2024-2025 in the 6th SPC Meeting. The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to prepare draft programme of the NEACAP activities in line with the NEACAP Work Plan 2021-2025, for the consideration of SPC members.

V. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

15. NEACAP has contributed to implementing the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution (RAPAP)², adopted at the 7th session of the ESCAP Committee on Environment and Development in December 2022. NEACAP collaborated in the organization of the High-Level Forum on Clean Air (HLFCA), held from 2 to 3 March in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia to operationalize the RAPAP through further elaborating areas and modality of cooperation, strengthening connections among existing subregional initiatives, and creating a foundation of knowledge and expertise.

² [Ministerial Declaration on Protecting Our Planet through Regional Cooperation and Solidarity in Asia and the Pacific \(unescap.org\)](https://www.unescap.org/pacific)

16. The Secretariat has collaborated with the ESCAP-APCTT to organize a study tour on innovative technologies and good practices for air pollution control for city officials of Bangladesh, India and Thailand which was conducted from 18 to 21 September 2023 in the Republic of Korea.

VI. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

17. The Meeting may wish to request member States the following:

- (a) Seek further guidance on the policy analysis report and policy dialogues (Annex III);
- (b) For member countries requiring capacity building programmes, delineate the specific areas of need. For other member governments, consider suggesting potential assistance for capacity building initiatives, encompassing the provision of necessary resources, which may include, but are not limited to, in-kind contributions;
- (c) Indicate a willingness to host the next NEACAP SPC meeting, Policy Dialogues and other related meetings.

18. The Meeting may wish to review and approve the following:

- (a) The proposed activity plan for the years 2023-2024 (Annex IV).

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