



United Nations to strengthen national academies of science in Asia and the Pacific

Press Release

3 February 2020, Bangkok – Science, technology and innovation play a vital role in ensuring sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, especially for low-income countries. In support of this, a two-day consultation on strengthening national academies of science in the region concluded in Bangkok, Thailand today.

The event, organized by the United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), brings together policymakers, representatives of existing national academies of science, scientists and researchers to exchange experiences and identify pilot countries for the establishment and support of national academies of science.

“As we unlock the potential of innovation to help accelerate the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals, new challenges are emerging that need collective and proactive action. That is why ESCAP is joining forces with the UN Technology Bank and our member States to develop regulatory frameworks for fast moving technologies and incentives and disincentives that will help align technology investments with the SDGs,” said Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP.

The consultation will outline a roadmap for capacity development and cooperation, regionally and nationally, to boost national science academies.

“The world’s least developed countries stand to benefit enormously from national academies of science. The expert support and guidance that these institutions can offer national governments has the potential to greatly increase partnerships, encourage interaction and guide effective policy,” said Mr. Joshua Setipa, Managing Director of the United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries.

“This consultation is a key moment for the Asia and Pacific region to bring together stakeholders involved with national academies of science. We are very pleased to be in Bangkok to learn from each other’s experience and to plan a way forward together.”

A number of high-level delegates participated in the consultation. These included Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary, ESCAP, His Excellency Kitti Settha Pandita Cham Prasidh, Senior Minister, Minister of Industry & Handicraft, Cambodia, and Mr. Joshua Setipa, Managing Director, UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries.

Throughout the two days, perspectives and experiences were shared by representatives of the science, technology and innovation sector in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal and Timor-Leste.

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About the UN Technology Bank

The UN Technology Bank is a new global organisation, dedicated to enhancing the contribution of science, technology and innovation for sustainable development in the world's 47 least developed countries. Least developed countries are low-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks and have low levels of human assets.

The UN Technology Bank supports national and regional technological efforts in least developed countries, reinforcing partnerships across sectors and helping nations identify and use appropriate technologies to transform their economies and improve livelihoods.

Website: www.un.org/technologybank

About the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) serves as the United Nations' regional hub promoting cooperation among countries to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. The largest regional intergovernmental platform with 53 Member States and 9 associate members, ESCAP has emerged as a strong regional think-tank offering countries sound analytical products that shed insight into the evolving economic, social and environmental dynamics of the region.

The Commission's strategic focus is to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is reinforced and deepened by promoting regional cooperation and integration to advance responses to shared vulnerabilities, connectivity, financial cooperation and market integration. ESCAP's research and analysis coupled with its policy advisory services, capacity building and technical assistance to governments aims to support countries' sustainable and inclusive development ambitions.

Website: www.unescap.org