

Towards a Resource-efficient and Pollution-free Asia-Pacific

CALL FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

The first Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment will take place in Bangkok from 5 to 8 September 2017, jointly organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment).

At the request of member States, the Ministerial Summit will bring together for the first time two United Nations ministerial-level meetings on the environment, namely the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED) and the second session of UN Environment's Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia-Pacific. The Ministerial Summit will focus on addressing the linkages between resource efficiency and pollution reduction in Asia and the Pacific, under the theme 'Towards a Resource-efficient and Pollution-free Asia-Pacific'.

The two ministerial-level meetings have brought governments, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders together in preparation for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and UN Environment Assembly. The hard work by civil society organizations (CSOs) in this region has boosted the quality of dialogue at the MCED, Forum of Ministers, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UN Environment Assembly and other global forums and strengthened CSOs participation in the 2030 Agenda across the globe.

CSOs are invited to apply to engage in these processes through the following events:

The CSO Forum on the Environment: 4 September 2017 in Bangkok

The CSO Forum on the Environment will be convened by ESCAP and UN Environment in collaboration with the Thailand Environment Institute (TEI) on behalf of Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM) as a preparatory meeting for the Ministerial Summit.

The CSO Forum will be a forum for CSOs to work together and consolidate their position and recommendations to ensure that voices of marginalized sectors and grassroots are reflected in the Ministerial Summit as well as regional and global agenda on the environment. Asia-Pacific CSOs from different sectors and countries will explore common

ground and actions, develop common messages and coordinate strategies for more effective participation in the national, regional and global intergovernmental processes on the environment. The CSO Forum invites applications from nationally registered CSOs to work with others to:

1. Inform and build capacity of civil society participants on the regional and global United Nations discussions on the environment, and on the opportunities and modalities for engaging these processes;
2. Discuss the structure and content of the Ministerial Summit with the theme 'Towards a Resource-efficient and Pollution-free Asia-Pacific', formulate joint positions, as well as strategize interventions at the Ministerial Summit; and
3. Share and exchange views on critical environment-related issues faced by the various constituencies and discuss alignments and areas of partnership and cooperation.

Those seeking to attend the Ministerial Summit **must attend this preparatory forum** (unless they are already part of their official national delegations).

The Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment:

5 – 8 September 2017 in Bangkok

This year, the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment will address the theme 'Towards a Resource-efficient and Pollution-free Asia-Pacific'.

The Asia-Pacific region's unprecedented rate of economic growth continues to exert environmental pressure and depletion of limited natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable. The most direct and evident impact of such unsustainable management of natural resources can be seen in the six key pollution risk areas (land/soil, air, water, marine, chemicals and waste) with direct consequences on the health of human beings. Pollution destroys ecosystems and is associated with health risks that affect everyone, albeit predominantly the poor and marginalized.

Economic growth strategies based on the assumption of unlimited availability of resources are no longer economically or environmentally sustainable. Future sustainable development models will depend highly on the way resources are used, managed and preserved. Moving towards sustainable resource use through concerted regional actions will be crucial in managing the increasing scale of pollution-generating processes and reversing them for a healthier and more efficient development.

Against this background, for the seventh MCED, the Ministerial Summit will review the implementation of recommendations of the sixth MCED and adopt a Ministerial Declaration that would provide strategic guidance for regional cooperation on environment and development issues, and would focus on specific key areas related to the theme.

For the second Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia-Pacific, the Ministerial Summit will review the implementation of the 2016 UN Environment Assembly resolutions in Asia and the Pacific and provide guidance on regional priorities and actions for the 2017 UN Environment Assembly with the theme of “Towards a Pollution-free Planet” and other emerging issues in relation to the agenda and proposed resolutions of the 2017 UN Environment Assembly.

Target group

We welcome applications to the CSO Forum on the Environment from those who are based in Asia and the Pacific and from CSOs working on the 2030 Agenda, SDGs and the environment and especially those who are also:

- Engaged in the 2030 Agenda and SDGs-related processes or working on SDG’s linkages with resource efficiency issues and six key pollution risk areas (land/soil, air, water, marine, chemicals and waste) at the national, regional and global levels;
- Members of grassroots and/or faith-based constituencies, and/or working directly with grassroots and/or faith-based constituencies; or
- Working in countries that signed up for Voluntary National Review at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018.

Those interested in attending the Ministerial Summit should also

- Be accredited with the United Nations system (consultative or similar status with the UN including ECOSOC, CSD Roster, UNFCCC, FAO, UN Environment¹ and UNDP or other UN-related organizations) – unless they are part of their national delegations or UN Environment’s Global Environmental Outlook (GEO) civil society consultation group².
- Have in-depth expertise and experience related to the theme of the Ministerial Summit; and
- Be prepared to actively participate in preparing statements and other contributions to the meeting, coordinating with other CSOs.

Other key points:

- It should be noted that participation in the CSO Forum is required for those seeking to attend the Ministerial Summit.

¹ A list of Organizations accredited to ECOSOC and the UN Environment are available at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2015/INF/5 and <http://web.unep.org/about/majorgroups/resources/list-accredited-organizations>.

² Organizations without formal accreditation with the United Nations could be accepted provided that they can indicate in the application form the name of an organization with ECOSOC accreditation that would be willing to support its application (proof to be provided prior to confirmation of participation).

- Normally, there are many more applications than there is space for, so you are encouraged to make your application as strong as possible.
- Funding which includes airfare, accommodation and modest daily subsistence allowance (DSA) will be available for a limited number of organizations through ESCAP and UN Environment's collaborating partners. If needing funding to attend, please ensure that you indicate this in your application.
- No more than two persons may be considered and accepted from the same organization, due to a high volume of applications. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate within the organization to identify at maximum two best applicants to represent organizational positions prior to submitting applications.

How to apply

Submit the application form online (click [here](#)) by latest **28 July 2017 (12 midnight Thailand time)**. Application forms will be reviewed by ESCAP and UN Environment in consultation with the AP-RCEM, prioritizing those who best fit the target group described, and to ensure balance in geographic and thematic representation, scope of mandate, gender, and the level of experience with the regional process of sustainable development among other factors. Notification on the status of the applications will be sent by **7 August 2017**.

For more information

- On the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment 2017:
<http://www.apministerialenv.org/>
- On the regional process regarding the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific:
 - Overview: <http://www.unescap.org/commission/about-the-commission>
- On the global process regarding the UN Environment Assembly:
 - Overview: <http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/>
 - Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum:
<http://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/global-major-groups-and-stakeholders-forum>
- On UN Environment's engagement with the Major Groups and Stakeholders:
<http://web.unep.org/about/majorgroups/>.
- On Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM)
 - AP-RCEM: <http://www.asiapacificrcem.org/>
 - AP-RCEM Booklet: <http://www.asiapacificrcem.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AP-RCEM-brochure.pdf>

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