



Webinar:

Enhancing Understanding and Expanding Inter-regional and Regional Cooperation on Sand and Dust Storms

The Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies (ACCCP) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) are organizing a webinar on enhancing understanding and expanding inter-regional and regional cooperation on sand and dust storms in the context of the working group on regional cooperation and mediation of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms.

Date: 7 July 2021

Time: 8:00 Tunis, 9:00 Geneva, 10:00 Beirut, 11:30 Tehran, 14:00 Bangkok

Duration: 2 hours

Register [here](#)

Please join the webinar via MS Teams by clicking on [this link](#).

Background

As a meteorological phenomenon, sand and dust storms drive mainly from arid and semi-arid areas and spread across large geographic areas. Major sand and dust storm events can transport dust over great distances so that their impact occurs not only in the areas where they originate but also in communities far from the source areas, frequently across international boundaries.

Countries in the Asia and the Pacific region, and also in the Western part of Asia and Northern part of Africa (ESCAP and ESCWA regions respectively) are among the largest in terms of mineral dust emissions. Due to the transboundary nature of sand and dust storms and in order to enhance the inter-regional collaboration, the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) are collaborating with a view to improve the understanding of the risk of this hazard and identify potential action at the regional and cross-regional level to foster Member States collaboration on the matter.

The General Assembly through the adoption of A/RES/74/226, “encouraged regional, subregional and interregional organizations and processes to continue to share best practices, experiences and technical expertise in combating sand and dust storms to address the root causes and impacts of sand and dust storms, including through improved implementation of sustainable land management practices, and to promote regional cooperation in this matter to reduce the risks and impact of future sand and dust storms and to provide affected countries with capacity-building and technical support from the relevant United Nations organizations”.

APDIM, as a subsidiary body of ESCAP, supports regional cooperation mechanisms for slow-onset disasters including sand and dust storms – involving member countries from West, South West and Central Asia and key partners including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other members of the UN Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms.

The ACCCP under ESCWA has been supporting the sand and dust storm-related activities in the Arab region through regional climate modelling and long-term projections of climate parameters as well as capacity building programmes. In doing so, ESCWA in coordination with WMO and the League of Arab States) support the Arab Climate Outlook Forum (ArabCOF), which engages Arab meteorological services in the delivery of seasonal weather forecasts and provision of meteorological services including the understanding of the frequency and seasonal behaviour of sand and dust storms in the region.

Think globally, Plan regionally/nationally and act locally for sand and dust storms risk reduction

The transboundary nature of sand and dust storms requires regional action and inter-regional collaboration.

The United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms is the main United Nations effort on combating the negative impact of sand and dust storms. ESCAP and ESCWA through their respective centres co-lead the working group on regional collaboration of the coalition. To improve awareness around the socio-economic impact of sand and dust storms, their transboundary nature and to showcase examples and opportunities for collaboration at the regional level around the world to cope with this hazard, APDIM and ACCCP, with the collaboration of the other Coalition members including the WMO and FAO, are organizing this webinar with the following in mind.

Expected Outputs:

- Deepening understanding on the component of the risk of sand and dust storms: hazard, vulnerability and resilience.
- Showcasing examples of transboundary cooperation from around the world.
- Enhancing collaboration among actors.
- Identifying possible areas for joint activities and studies across regions.

Programme of Webinar

Time	Topic	Presenter
10 min	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Letizia Rossano, Director, Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Director, Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies (ACCCP), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Feras Ziadat, Chair, United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Part I	Understanding Sand and Dust Storms at Regional Level	
Moderator: Mostafa Mohaghegh, Senior Coordinator, APDIM/ESCAP		
15 min	Sand and Dust Storms Risk Assessment in Asia and the Pacific	Amin Shamseddini, Programme Officer, APDIM/ESCAP
15 min	Regional Climate Projections and Applications for Sand and Dust Storms Analysis	Marlene Ann Tomaszekiewicz, Regional Advisor for GIS for Climate Change Analysis, ACCCP/ESCWA
10 min	Q&A	
Part II	Examples and Opportunities for Regional Collaboration on Sand and Dust Storms	
Moderator: Tarek Sadek, First Economic Affairs Officer/Climate Change Officer, ACCCP/ESCWA		
15 min	Sand and Dust Storm Warning Advisory and Assessment System (SDS-WAS) Cooperation on Forecasting and on Modelling Socio-economic Impact: DustClim and inDust	Alexander Baklanov, Science and Innovation Department, World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Sara Basart, Postdoctoral Researcher, Barcelona Dust Forecast Center, Barcelona Supercomputing Center
10 min	The Socio-economic Impact of Sand and Dust Storms: Data and Knowledge Gaps	Nicholas Middleton, Fellow in Physical Geography, St. Anne's College, University of Oxford and Sand and Dust Storms Expert
Part III	Countries Experiences - Panel Discussion	
Moderators: Carol Chouchani Cherfane (ESCWA) and Letizia Rossano (ESCAP)		
20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sayed Abdul Basit Rahmani, Senior Adviser to State Minister, State Ministry for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan • Haythem Belghrissi, Head of Short and Medium Numerical Predictions Section, National Institute of Meteorology, Republic of Tunisia • Abbas Golriz, Director of the Department of International Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran • Hassan Aldashti, Meteorologist, Climatology Superintendent, Department of Meteorology, Directorate General of Civil Aviation, State of Kuwait 	
10 min	Open Discussion	
5 min	Closing remarks	Letizia Rossano (ESCAP) and Carol Chouchani Cherfane (ESCWA)