

## Concept note

### Regional Consultation on Sand and Dust Storms Risk Reduction &

### Developing Elements for a Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms

**Date:** 6 December 2021

**Time:** 8:00 Geneva, 10:30 Tehran, 12:30 New Delhi, 13:00 Almaty, 14:00 Bangkok, 16:00 Incheon (4 hrs)

**Meeting Connection Link:** [Click here to join the meeting](#)

**Registration link:** <https://forms.office.com/r/33hxnM8Drq>

**Link to website:** <https://apdim.unescap.org/knowledge-hub/regional-consultation-sand-and-dust-storms-risk-reduction-and-developing-elements>

#### Background

The Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM) invites government officials, experts, and practitioners from across the Asia-Pacific region to participate in an online Regional Consultation on Sand and Dust Storms Risk Reduction and developing elements towards a regional plan of action on sand and dust storms.

Pursuant to ESCAP resolution 72/7 which requested the ESCAP Executive Secretary to: “(a) Within existing mandates and expertise, accord priority focus on the work of the Commission relating to sand and dust storms as a great transboundary challenge; (b) Work, including through the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management, as well as with other relevant regional organisations, utilising a combination of existing funds and extrabudgetary contributions, to promote regional and interregional networking on sand and dust storms”.

APDIM working in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization, the UNCCD Secretariat, FAO, UNDRR and in consultation with other UN agencies involved in combating the negative impact of sand and dust storms, is organizing an online consultation on the findings of the report on [Sand and Dust Storms Risk Assessment in Asia and the Pacific](#) with a sub-regional and thematic focuses. The consultation aims at generating discussions amongst affected countries to identify common ground for joint follow-up action along with the three key areas for further action suggested in the report.

- (i) A deeper understanding of the socioeconomic impacts of sand and dust storms;
- (ii) Extension of the monitoring system and improvements of the early warning system, with an impact-based focus, to timely forecast sand and dust storms and enable targeted measures to minimise exposure and reduce risks; and
- (iii) Coordinated actions in most at-risk and exposed geographical areas with a view to mitigating the risks.

The outcomes of the consultation among others, will be used to develop elements of a regional plan of action on sand and dust storms for the attention of the Governing Council of APDIM for advice and guidance on further

actions. Subject to the advice of APDIM Governing Council on the following steps, an initial draft of regional plan of action on sand and dust storms will be made available online for ESCAP member States and expert's review. A revised draft will then be presented to ESCAP member States' representatives with a view to arrive at a final regional plan of action document.

## Programme

Time	Topic	By
5 mins	Opening remarks and introduction	Ms Letizia Rossano, Director, APDIM
20 mins	Sand and Dust Storms Risk Assessment in Asia and the Pacific	Mr Amin Shamseddini, Programme Officer, APDIM
30 mins	The UN response to understanding and dealing with sand and dust storms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Nicholas Middleton, Sand and Dust Storms Expert, FAO</li> <li>- Mr Alexander Baklanov, Science Officer, WMO</li> <li>- Mr Utchang Kang, Programme Officer, UNCCD Secretariat</li> <li>- Mr Sanjay Srivastava, Chief, Disaster Risk Reduction Section, ESCAP</li> <li>- Ms Sunisa Soodrak, Programme Officer, UNDRR</li> </ul>
15 mins	Q & A	Questions from participants
10 mins	Break	
10 mins	Process towards developing regional plan of action on reducing the risk of sand and dust storms	Ms Letizia Rossano, Director, APDIM
90 mins	<p><b>Breakout Rooms</b></p> <p><b>Discussion on:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Better Understanding</li> <li>2. Coordinated monitoring and early warning system</li> <li>3. Coordinated actions</li> </ol> <p><i>*Key questions to be discussed and details are provided below</i></p>	
40 mins	Reports from breakout rooms and discussion	Moderator: Ms Letizia Rossano, Director, APDIM
10 mins	Wrap up and closing	Ms Letizia Rossano, Director, APDIM

## Key Questions for Discussions in Breakout Rooms

### Key Question 1: Better Understanding

What are the key areas that you see as a priority to tackle immediately in terms of deepening the understanding of the problem in the subregion, especially from the transboundary, collaborative perspective?

#### Follow-up questions

How do the report findings resonate with your experience at the national and international level in terms of understanding of the phenomenon?

The impact in what sectors between – socio-economic, human health, agriculture, environment, energy, transport – do you feel has the biggest gaps in data and literature?

Are there other sectors that you think need to be better understood in terms of the socio-economic impact of SDS?

What areas of collaboration with the other countries in the sub-region should be advanced on any of these issues? If so, which areas would be most useful to explore to deepen the understanding of the impact of SDS in the sub-region?

### Key Question 2: Coordinated monitoring and early warning system

How is the phenomenon currently being monitored in the sub-region and what action, if any, could be made in this regard at a trans-boundary level as well as at a national level?

#### Follow-up questions

What mechanisms are you currently using for monitoring and issuing early warning of sand and dust storms? Based on your experience, is the current system, and its products, being used by decision makers/actors in order to reduce the impact of sand and dust storms?

Are you using the WMO SDS-WAS regional centres forecasts of sand and dust storms (<https://public.wmo.int/en/our-mandate/focus-areas/environment/SDS/warnings>) for your country early warning system? Do you see the need to collaborate? How do you plan to collaborate with other countries in the sub-region on monitoring and early warning of sand and dust storms? In what areas would be most useful to strengthen the collaboration with other countries in the subregion on monitoring and early warning?

### Key Question 3: Adaptation and Source Mitigation

Based on the evidence presented in the report and your own experience and understanding of the phenomenon, what actions and in what geographic areas would benefit from priority attention in the subregion to improve adaptation and source mitigation?