



American Model United Nations

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

**Report to the Economic and Social Council
on Environment and Sustainable
Development: Water Conservation**

CONTENTS

Chapter	Heading	Page
	Executive Summary	3
I	Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council and brought to its attention	4
	A. Draft Resolutions	
	I. Draft resolution I	4
	II. Draft resolution II	5
	III. Draft resolution III	7
II	Consideration of Environment and Sustainable Development: Water Conservation	10
	A. Deliberations	10
	B. Action taken by the Commission	14
	C. Working papers for consideration by the Economic	15
	I. Working paper I	15
	II. Working paper II	16
III.	Adoption of the report	18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the present age, our world is experiencing a rapid increase in population while resources continue to dwindle. Water is a supply both largely needed and increasingly scarce in the modern world. Although the international community has agreed that access to clean water is a basic human right, 1.1 billion people in the world are currently without access to a safe water supply; by 2025, it is estimated that 3.5 billion people will be living in water stressed areas. The insufficient supply of clean, usable water presents a grave threat to human health and security. Realizing the pressing need to address this issue, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific brings our 2007 session deliberations before the Economic and Social Council.

Three resolutions were passed:

2.1: Education based- through mutual consent respecting state sovereignty:

- o Advocates using multi-media;
- o Promotes expertise sharing.

2.2: Localization of water conservation efforts within States, with an emphasis on funneling money through the Asian Development Fund.

2.3: Allocation of Aid:

- o Supports multi-faceted usage of water and assistance;
- o Approves multilateral funding through region based organizations;
- o Acknowledges that rural and urban areas present different challenges and therefore must be addressed with different methods of water conservation;
- o Recognizes the importance of self-assistance in developing countries.

The representatives of this Commission worked with an unremitting persistence to find solutions both helpful to individual States and beneficial to the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. This Commission believes that these resolutions contain the most effective plan for conserving water in Asia and the Pacific and strongly urges ECOSOC to consider the proposals put forth by this body.

CHAPTER I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council and brought to its attention.

A. Draft Resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Commission recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following Draft Resolutions.

Draft resolution I

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Reaffirming the United Nations Millennium Development Declaration goal to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water,

Recalling General Assembly Resolution 59/228, supporting the belief in water as critical for sustainable development, including the eradication of poverty and hunger,

Bearing in mind, that access to clean, sanitary freshwater is first and foremost, a humanitarian issue regardless of political implications,

Deeply concerned that 2.5 billion people do not have access to clean water worldwide and 560 million people lack access to clean water in rural areas of the Asian Pacific region,

Noting the spread of water born diseases and the negative effects of H₂O pollution,

Recognizing the importance of education and its effect on social and economic development,

Acknowledging the crucial role that education plays in self-sustainability in developing nations,

Considering the success of the ONE campaign to help eradicate global poverty,

Recognizing the efficiency and importance of multiple media sources and awareness campaigns on the international and local levels,

Fully aware that education needs to be implemented within the country and empowered by domestic and outside aid,

Expecting NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) to give aid without states sacrificing local control of water resources,

1. *Calls upon* Member States to increase efforts to reach the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by 2015;
2. *Recommends* collaboration between developed and developing nations in pursuing efficient and affordable water conservation technology in urban and rural areas;
3. *Reaffirms* the goals of existing institutions within national governments to continue their efforts in water conservation education such as the improvements commended in the ESCAP 2007 report titled, "Integrated Pro-Poor Water and Waste Water Management in Small Towns;"
4. *Requests* increased funding for institutions of higher education in the Asia Pacific region to empower local experts of the states to help solve regional problems of sustainable water use,
5. *Encourages* the use of multimedia literary sources to help in the education of water conservation promoted by local, national, or international bodies;
6. *Recognizes* access to water as an international human right, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Draft resolution II

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Recognizing that access to safe drinking water is a fundamental human right,

Noting that additional efforts for water conservation will need to be undertaken to successfully meet the Millennium Development Goals,

Acknowledging the sovereignty of Asian and Pacific countries in the context of long-term water conservation,

Reaffirming A/RES/59/228 and its findings,

Taking note the importance of education in water conservation initiatives,

Desiring the need for sub-regional, regional, and international cooperation to further enhance research and implementation of water conservation programs,

Understanding the importance of proper irrigation techniques to agricultural yield,

Welcoming the presence of United Nations Organizations such as UN Water, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Development Programme,

1. *Strongly encourages* subregional, regional, and international cooperation in technology and water sustainability initiatives to be funneled and organized under the auspices of the United Nations Water Programme (UN Water) including, but not limited to:

- (a) desalination technologies;
- (b) specific filtration processes;
- (c) innovative technologies;
- (d) successful technologies implemented in regional neighbors, which may include but would not necessarily be limited to;
 - (i) strategies that entail synergy between traditional and more technologically advanced plans;

2. *Urges* fellow Member States to engage in water conservation initiatives through;

- (a) localized education implemented through school systems, public awareness systems, and experiential community action systems;
- (b) information for citizens concerning sustainable living through the utilization of filtration processes, conservation technology and specific community conservation strategies;
- (c) regional cooperation on value-based water education through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as South East Asian Ministries of Education Organization;

3. *Recommends* fellow Member States to engage in water sanitation initiatives through:

- (a) the use of water desalination, filtration, and detoxification methods recommended and provided by the UN Water programme;
- (b) the encouragement of NGOs to address areas in particularly critical need of clean and sustainable water resources;

4. *Advises* fellow Member States to engage in water security activities in order to ensure long term water sustainability through the following, which would include but not necessarily be limited to:

- (a) reduction of the cost of water through subsidies funded by organizations which would include, but not necessarily be limited to;
 - (i) the United Nations Development Programme;
 - (ii) Asian Development Bank;
- (b) gradual implementation of both traditional and modern water conservation technologies;
- (c) localization of conservation efforts within states to further increase efficiency and self-sustainability;
- (d) utilization of technology supplied by UN Water;

5. *Strongly urges* Member States to encourage environment governance in their nations to be proactive, bearing in mind the ramifications of any decision making on the environment;

6. *Proposes* a clear means by which Asian and Pacific countries can demonstrate initiative and commitment to long-term sustainability of water resources through a process of implementing the annual World Water Assessment Programs, which would necessarily entail cooperation through the following steps:

- (a) assessment of the state of water resources;
- (b) identification of emerging critical water issues;
- (c) monitoring the progress in achievement for water sustainability, which would include;
 - (i) full transparency relative to water conservation on behalf of ESCAP members;
 - (ii) thorough analysis of programs implemented within ESCAP member states;
- (d) the annual publication of a report documenting such assessments, jointly supervised by UN Water, UNDP, and ESCAP;

7. *Calls upon* ESCAP Member States to further their agricultural yield through the channeling of irrigation systems pursuant to the standards set forth by the following organizations, which include but are not necessarily limited to;

- (a) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD);
- (b) Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO);

8. *Encourages* all Member States to provide funding to organizations and initiatives committed to providing aid to the Asia / Pacific region within the context of water conservation, which include:

- (a) the Asian Development Bank (ADB);
- (b) UN Water;
- (c) UN-Habitat's Water for Asian Cities Programme (WAC).

Draft resolution III

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Recognizing that donor countries have and will continue to contribute to the UN Water Programme,

Emphasizing the critical importance of water, in particular freshwater, for all aspects on sustainable development, including poverty and hunger eradication, water-related disaster reduction, health, agricultural and rural development, hydropower, food security, as well as the achievement of environmental sustainability and protection,

Recognizing that Agenda 21 passed in 1997 with the goal of halving the proportion of people without access to safe and clean drinking water and basic sanitation by the year of 2015,

Recognizing also that improved access to safe and clean drinking water and basic sanitation were placed as targets in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, reflecting that water is an extremely important element in achieving other MDGs such as eradication of poverty, hunger, health, education, and environmental sustainability,

Recalling resolution E/ESCAP/1205 which promotes the implementation of a Regional Action Programme relating to environmental quality and human health in urban areas of Asia and the Pacific,

Further recalling resolution E/ESCAP/1207 with a main goal of integrating water resources management as well as its intensive attention to the issues regarding water conservation and relative technology enhancement,

Affirming the endeavors of the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, which was adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in Kitakyushu, Japan in September 2000,

Recognizing water as a core human right, and expecting the consensus reached in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to foster cooperation at regional, national, and global levels as well as to build an environment where water management is a prominent factor,

Fully aware of the multi-faceted usage of water including agricultural water, industrial water, and water transport for regional development,

1. *Draws attention to* the fact that public and private organizations must both at the cooperate international, state, and local levels to protect the public interest and particularly the interests of vulnerable social groups;

2. *Reiterates* the importance of good environmental governance to review regional implementation of relevant international conventions;

- (a) Promoting the integration of environmental considerations into economic and social planning;
- (b) Developing and implementing strategic environmental plans and sustainable development indicators;
- (c) Promoting the increased involvement of stakeholders in achieving sustainable development goals;

3. *Supports* a three-tiered approach to address the issues of water conservation;

- (a) Education: the sharing of ideas, technologies, and techniques will create a database of sound practices and viable solutions for the problems brought forth by this issue;
- (b) Implementation: the application of water conservation ideas, technologies, and techniques to combat the issue;
- (c) Continuation: the continuing information sharing and application to sustain

efforts to better water conservation in the region;

4. *Encourages* supporting the self-assisted efforts in developing countries on water sanitation tailored to each recipient country's development needs and technology level through cooperation of international organizations, donor countries, Non-Governmental Organizations(NGOs), education institutions, research institutions, and so forth;

5. *Notes* that the distribution of water resources can potentially cause domestic or international conflicts and therefore necessary to consider the question of equality;

6. *Supports* the formulation and implementation of a long-term water management plan as well as the establishment of a framework for promoting joint water management and conservation among countries in Asia and the Pacific regions;

7. *Urges* protection and empowerment of individuals and local communities based on the perspective of human health on the issue of water conservation;

8. *Considers* that waterborne diseases and the protection of people from such should be placed as top priority and response to these disaster should be strengthened;

9. *Proclaims* two areas to improve water conservation as follows;

(a) In rural communities;

(i) Attach importance to the perspective of human health;

(ii) Support the improvement of sanitation;

(b) In urban areas;

(i) Suggests the utilization of private funds in addition to the Official Development Assistance(ODA) in order to respond to the large-scale financial needs required in the infrastructure development of water sewage;

(ii) Pay due attention to the poor and support capacity development;

10. *Affirms* efforts toward the self-sustained maintenance, management, and operation of the infrastructure by promoting local people's participation and facility management capacities;

11. *Supports* promotion of the use of renewable hydropower;

12. *Approves* exchange of expertise in identifying the source of pollution and establishing effective regulations and technologies for effective use of water and waste-water treatment;

13. *Recommends* the increase of multilateral funding through previously Asian-based organizations;

14. *Commends* humanitarian bilateral aid between countries of mutual consent.

CHAPTER II

Consideration of Environment and Sustainable Development: Water Conservation

In the present age, our world is experiencing a rapid increase in population while resources continue to dwindle. Water is a supply both largely needed and increasingly scarce in the modern world. Although the international community has agreed that access to clean water is a basic human right, 1.1 billion people in the world are currently without access to a safe water supply; by 2025, it is estimated that 3.5 billion people will be living in water stressed countries. This issue presents a grave threat to human health and security.

For its consideration of this item, the Commission had before it the following documents:

- (a) General Assembly Resolutions:
 - i. A/RES/61/192
 - ii. A/RES/61/59/228
 - iii. A/RES/55/2
- (b) World Water Development Reports 1 and 2 (2003 and 2006)
- (c) 2006 Annual Report (E/ESCAP/1390)
- (d) Water For All: The Water Policy of the Asian Development Bank
- (e) Overview Paper on Water for Sustainable Development (APFED1/02/Ref.3)
- (f) International Hydrological Programme

A. Deliberations

Representatives acknowledged that access to clean water is a fundamental human right. Each State discussed specific concerns pertaining to water access in its borders, such as poverty, hunger, disease, and so forth. Generally, our resolutions sought to please the Member States of the 2007 ESCAP, encompassing the water conservation issue holistically. The sections below address common themes within the resolutions.

International Cooperation: Through out the discussion of water conservation issues, much concern was expressed by the representatives Singapore, The People's Republic of China and Malaysia about the influence of western nations, specifically in the area of funding. The representatives of Japan, United Kingdom, United States, and Thailand believed that western funding was essential to developing a successful means to address water scarcity. The representative of Singapore spoke on the need to keep water conservation issues at the regional level and many Asian nations agreed that regional partnerships were vital.

The body also gave special attention to the issue of state sovereignty. The representatives of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and the United States of America gave special attention to border disputes in the water conservation issue. They confirmed the right of nations to exercise control over all water resources within their sovereign territory according to international maritime standards. The representatives of Japan, France, Malaysia, Thailand, United Kingdom and the United States of America emphasized supporting self-assisted efforts in developing countries, allowing the recipient countries to tailor aid to

their specific needs. The representatives of Singapore, Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Myanmar, Macao, Russia, Sri Lanka, Mongolia and the Philippines acknowledged the sovereignty of Asian countries in the context of long-term water conservation. They put specific influence on instigating sub-regional cooperation through community engagement.

Funding: In debate, States expressed concerns about the funding for water conservation research and technology in Asian States. The Commission discussed Non-Governmental Organizations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Fund, UN Water, donor nations and other means for obtaining funding. Each method of funding was viewed with mixed responses (for example, the question was raised as to whether or not Non-Governmental Organizations would be able to fund water conservation programs without other aid, and some States had concerns with the current methods of the World Bank).

Education: The 2007 ESCAP has extensively discussed the roles of education in the implementation of water conservation systems. Member States explained their current education policies, generating ideas as to the education policies possible to inform citizens of water conservation issues. Georgia, Macao, The People's Republic of China, Afghanistan, American Samoa, Netherlands, New Zealand, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom and Georgia encouraged the “use of multimedia and literary sources to help in the education” of water conservation issues (ESCAP/II/1). This approach would educate through posters (with and without captions) and pamphlet circulation. French Polynesia presented an experiential approach, focusing education through a community-based effort. Adults would learn from educators through physical demonstration. Other countries encouraged the subject of water conservation to be implemented in the current public education systems, educating children at an early age. Some Member States also hoped recognize the policies already implemented by nations already successful in conserving water. In relation, not disregarding but adapting old policies was also discussed. Singapore, People's Republic of China, Malaysia, Myanmar, Macao, Uzbekistan, Hong Kong, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, and the Philippines also supported a localized approach to education.

Implementation and Environmental Concerns: No matter the funding raised or the education provided, there is still the issue of implementation and methods of water conservation, which in turn generates the issue of environmental respect. Singapore, The People's Republic of China, Malaysia, Myanmar, Macao, Hong Kong, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Mongolia and the Philippines recommended the use of desalination, filtration, and detoxification methods. It proposed the implementation of these methods through traditional and new processes. As a method, Japan, France, Malaysia, Thailand, United Kingdom, and the United States of America supported the use of renewable hydropower, and proclaimed that sanitation must be improved. However, those same States emphasized the environmental concern of methods of water conservation. Those States recognized the importance of environmental governance to review regional implementation, recommending that the environment should be one of the measures by which we rate water conservation. Armenia, India, Russian Federation,

Malaysia, Nepal, Kazakhstan, Bangladesh, and Azerbaijan specifically targeted desalination as a method in need of environmental check.

The following is a compilation of the major concerns of each member State within ESCAP regarding the issue of Water Conservation:

The representative of Japan welcomed a multitude of bilateral and multilateral means to assist on the topic of water conservation.

The representative of Nepal recognized its topographical disadvantage in water distribution and conservation and looked to benefit from a platform of information exchange.

The representative of India concentrated on funding for waste water management infrastructure to address issues of quality and access to water supply with strict international oversight.

The representative of Turkmenistan supported efficient bilateral solutions on trans-boundary water access and conservation, as well as improvement of conservation systems using return water resources.

The representative of Uzbekistan supported funding for already established committees and programs under ESCAP that educate and sponsor water conservation.

The representative of Turkey supported ESCAP and United Nations initiatives, specifically those that address river basin management, Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), and water recycling.

The representative of France believed that work beyond the Millennium Development Goals must be done, and called upon donor states to strive to surpass these goals to achieve effective water conservation at the local, state and international levels.

The representative of the Philippines emphasized the importance of jointly developing sustainable water resources for all people in conjunction with improving socioeconomic conditions.

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea raised the important point of fairness of sharing bodies of water including rivers than may cross international boundaries such that upstream states may not disrupt the flow of potable water to downstream states.

The representative of the People's Republic of China supported localized programs of water conservation with a gradual shift from old to new technologies and joint international effort.

The representative of Myanmar was concerned with western influence on the dictation of

how monies are spent on the water conservation issue.

The representative of Singapore strongly encouraged Asian-originated solutions that bypass politicization of water resources.

The representative of Hong Kong believed that attention should be paid to the implementation of all forms of water conservation, and encourages foreign aid.

The representative of Georgia was focused on attaining water conservation through the application of hydropower, as it benefits their own country as well as others.

The representative of The Russian Federation was greatly interested in research for water purification and transporting.

The representative of Afghanistan believed education and technology is needed to attain bilateral solutions to water distribution and water disputes.

The representative of New Zealand affirmed, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human rights, access to pure drinking as a human right and advocated local government officials to take action on this issue.

The representative of The United States of America believed in promoting access to water through local projects by way of microfinancing and free market forces; they also strongly encouraged cooperation and the use of trans-boundary water sources.

The representative of Pakistan believed that infrastructure availability and funding for wastewater management was imperative for protecting and supplying clean drinking water.

The representative of Palau affirmed that water conservation could be achieved through public education and efficient and effective use of mass media.

The representative of Malaysia felt that clean water was essential to life itself and therefore believed that everyone should have access to it.

The representative of Armenia believed that no comprehensive solution to the water conservation problem existed, however, strongly believed that state and local education would be the best way to counter-act the problem.

The representative of French Polynesia encouraged ESCAP to utilize established Non-Governmental Organizations to fund education to the general public concerning irrigation, and the dangers of privatizing water.

The representative of The Islamic Republic of Iran urged ESCAP to help increase water conservation through financial, technological and educational assistance.

The representative of Kazakhstan believed water conservation to be of great importance, specifically water reclamation and conservation.

The representative of Mongolia felt that water conservation is an important aspect to consider when completing goal seven of the Millennium Development Goals.

The representative of Macao encouraged foreign investment and the force of investment and aid as long as local control over water resources and infrastructure was not compromised.

The representative of The Republic of Indonesia supported the localization of water conservation through co-operation on all levels.

The representative of Thailand encouraged work through already established committees of ESCAP to combat the problems of water conservation including natural disaster.

The representative of The United Kingdom supported bilateral and multilateral aid to countries experiencing problems of water conservation.

The representative of Azerbaijan supported the efforts of all delegations to provide clean water to the people of Asia Pacific.

The representative of Bangladesh stressed the use of simple technologies and basic ideas, like rain water harvesting, over costlier, inefficient technologies (example: desalination).

B. Action Taken by the Commission

Resolution II/1 passed with friendly amendments and a vote of 28-2-4. The spirit of the resolution was one of collaborative education within and between States on the issue of water conservation. A clause that seemed to potentially target certain states regarding downstream water resources was struck.

Resolution II/2 passed with friendly amendments and a vote of 17-8-8. The resolution raised the issues of a State's choice to engage in water conservation programs, as well as concerns about certain provisions in the draft which appeared to require too much transparency, a possible infringement upon State sovereignty. Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Kyrgyzstan were vocal on this concern. Japan believed the resolution might be too repetitive.

Resolution II/3 passed with a vote of 18-0-1. The resolution was passed with some amendments. The amendments were contested because the representative from the Netherlands, a co-sponsor, was not present at the time of the amendment drafting.

C. Working papers presented to the Economic and Social Council for consideration

Working paper I

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Acknowledging that water is essential for all socio-economic development and for maintaining wealthy ecosystems,

Understanding that the issues of water conservation must be addressed if the Millennium Development Goal of reducing, by half, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water is to be met by 2015,

Concerned with the increased imbalance between water availability and water demand,

1. *Urges* the implementation of sub-committees under ESCAP oversight, in which member nations' own representatives comprise said sub-committees, to address the individual water conservation issues of each country, in conjunction with;

(a) UN Water: A budgeting governmental office would be created in each nation governed by UN Water for distribution of funds to each nation;

2. *Supports* a three-tiered approach to address the issue of water conservation;

(a) Education: the sharing of ideas, technologies, and techniques will create a database of sound practices and viable solutions for the problems brought forth by this issue;

(b) Implementation: the application of water conservation ideas, technologies, and techniques to combat the issue;

(c) Continuation: the continuing information sharing and application to sustain efforts to better water conservation in the region;

3. *Suggests* the funding be provided to UN water by;

(a) Member states will contribute;

(b) Non-governmental organizations focused on water conservation;

(c) Asia Development Bank;

(d) United Nations Development Fund;

4. *Encourages* that the amount of funding given to each nation be determined by an annual report drafted by the sub-committee, the report will take into account factors such as;

(a) Economic factors;

(b) Amount of land available for irrigation;

(c) Hydrological conditions of the area;

(i) Source of availability of water;

(ii) Rainfall date;

(iii) Water storage capacity;

5. *Resolves* to utilize the funding made available by UN Water to be used to address the priority issues for each individual nation, the issues that need to be addressed in each nation include;

- (a) Transportation of water to states with a high level of water scarcity;
- (b) Purification of water;
- (c) Desalination of water with environmental oversight;
- (d) Implementation of technology shared in cooperation with other nations;

6. *Recommends* a two-tiered approach to the matter of education with regard to water conservation and related issues, specifically;

- (a) Governmental and United Nations education programs;
 - (i) Education on policy initiatives, both of economic and civic origins;
 - (ii) Education through mass information campaigns;
 - (iii) Raising awareness through school curriculum;
- (b) Non-governmental organizations' community education programs focusing on bringing and implementing current techniques and technology, designed to inform and educate the populous.

Working Paper II

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Recognizing the sovereignty of all nations,

Further recognizing the need for all nations to secure natural resources for the betterment of their people,

Acknowledging that water provides a unique challenge, as many sources are trans-boundary,

Convinced of the necessity of bilateral treaties in solving conflict,

Noting with regret that trans-boundary disputes are counterproductive to the future of secure water sources,

1. *Strongly affirms* the right of nations to exercise control over all water sources within their sovereign territory-according to international maritime standards;

2. *Calls upon* all nations currently involved in water disputes to develop bilateral solutions which provide for the citizens of all nations involved;

3. *Recommends* cooperation on the development of environmental protection and responsibility of these trans-boundary water sources;

4. *Endorses* utilizing technology and other methods of more efficient water use as a method of alleviating water disputes;

5. *Fully supports* regional water information databases, as they provide the necessary information for more efficiency in water use.

CHAPTER IV

Adoption of the report

On 29 November 2007, the Economic and Social Commission considered this report, and adopted it by a roll-call vote.

Only the Democratic People's Republic of Korea voted against the adoption of this report.