

Green growth can help Asia-Pacific overcome recessions, climate change – UN



ESCAP Executive Secretary Noeleen Heyzer

27 September 2010 – Green growth can simultaneously promote environmental sustainability and development in Asia and the Pacific, a senior United Nations official has said, urging stepped up investment in natural capital, clean energy and ecological efficiency.

In a **message** to a high-level **gathering** kicking off today in Astana, Kazakhstan, to identify a roadmap for environmental protection and development in the region, Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (**ESCAP**), stressed that environmental sustainability need not be a trade-off for economic growth.

But for this to happen, there will need to be a “fundamental transformation of our economic structure by integrating ecological costs in market prices, investing in sustainable infrastructure, promoting green business and technology, pursuing sustainable lifestyles and by developing climate resilient societies,” she said.

The ESCAP gathering in Astana, which runs until Saturday, will assess how to improve the quality of economic growth through addressing environmental challenges.

“Green growth offers the unique opportunity for developing countries and emerging economies to leapfrog from the conventional and costly ‘pollute first and clean up later’ trap to an ecologically efficient, inclusive and sustainable growth paradigm,” said Rae Kwon Chung, Director of ESCAP’s Environment and Development Division.

Such an approach will help the region tackle the threats posed converging economic, resource and ecological crises, according to the UN.

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