



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



Green growth critical to Asia-Pacific food and energy security, UN says



ESCAP Executive Secretary Noeleen Heyzer

20 June 2011 –

Asia-Pacific countries can cushion themselves against food and fuel price shocks and natural disasters by more efficient use of resources and energy, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ([ESCAP](#)) said today.

The current “energy, resource and carbon-intensive” development pattern must give way to green growth to reduce wasteful use of resources and energy, Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, [told](#) 800 people from 25 countries attending the Global Green Growth Summit in Seoul, organized by the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Dr. Heyzer said green growth was particularly important at a time when the Asia-Pacific region faces triple threats from recurring climate-related natural disasters and soaring food and fuel prices.

“Green growth remains an essential and urgent task for enhancing the energy and food security of each country (in the Asia-Pacific region),” she said.

Latest estimates indicate that rising food and oil prices can keep an additional 42 million people in the region in poverty in 2011, according to ESCAP.

The region is also the world's most vulnerable to natural disasters, with its people four times more likely to be affected by nature's wrath than those in Africa and 25 times more likely than those in Europe or North America, ESCAP said.

“Green growth, as one of the strategies to achieve sustainable development by improving the efficiency of the way we use our energy, resources, and in particular carbon, is no longer only an ecological conditionality but also an imperative to improve resilience of our economy against energy, food and resource price volatility,” Dr. Heyzer said.

“For Asia and the Pacific, a region whose efficiency in using energy and resources still remains low, improving the efficiency of our production and consumption will provide us with a new engine of growth,” the ESCAP chief said.

Representatives of some 52 countries endorsed an initiative on environmentally sustainable economic growth in Seoul in 2005.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[Sustainable agriculture key to green growth, poverty reduction – UN officials](#)