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Item 9 of the Agenda

MEASURES IN RELATION TO INTERNATIONAL  
ACTION FOR CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION  
OF NON-AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES  
(Item referred by the Economic and  
Social Council)

Note by the Executive Secretary

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/at its twelfth  
E/CN.12/231

At its twelfth session, the **Economic** and Social Council adopted a resolution (E/1946) which provided in part (A) for promoting the systematic survey and inventory of non-agricultural natural resources; and in part (B) for the holding of international conferences to deal with particular problems of non-agricultural resources. These measures had been recommended for the consideration of the Council in a report (E/1906) which had been submitted by the Secretary-General and arose out of the experiences gained in the United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources in which over a thousand experts from more than sixty countries participated. Copies of the Council resolution and the report of the Secretary-General are attached to this note.

Both of these proposals provide for consultation and co-operation with the regional economic commissions. In connexion with the first proposal the Council requested the Secretary-General to consider the suggestions of regional economic commissions in initiating work upon the development of international standards for the survey and inventory of non-agricultural resources and the systematic compilation of information embodying the results of surveys and inventories of such resources.

In the report attached (E/1906) the Secretary-General outlined the general procedure which would be followed in organizing the standards and compilation work which would be carried out separately

for each major sub-division of non-agricultural resources (e.g. coal, iron ores, non-ferrous ores, water power). The Commission may wish to postpone consideration of any suggestions with respect to this work until the Secretary-General has presented to the Economic and Social Council a **further statement** of specific **plans**, and actions taken as is required under the resolution of the Commission can at this time suggest to the Secretary-General the classes of non-agricultural resources which might be most usefully covered in view of the needs and resources programmes of Member States in the region.

Under the second part of the resolution (B) the Council has requested the regional economic commissions "to consider the present resolution and to make such recommendations as they deem would be useful in promoting its purposes". In addition, the Council has instructed the Secretary-General in exploring, at the request of Member States concerned, the scope and subject matter of particular conferences to consult regional economic commissions concerned when appropriate.

The co-operation of the regional economic commissions can be of great importance in shaping the entire programme of conferences for, as suggested in Council discussions, each Commission may serve as a forum for considering which are the practical problems which could be dealt with through the proposed conferences. Below are listed a number of subjects which illustrate important problems of economic development for countries in the region which

/it is believed

it is believed would be profitable dealt with through the Conferences contemplated in the resolution.

1. Iron ore resources and their Utilization for the Development of Local Iron and Steel Industries.

This is a subject which the Commission secretariat is now studying. Such a conference might serve to further explore this subject in a regionally integrated economic and technical fashion, covering all the various related aspects, from the availability of ores to the problems of demand for and uses of iron and steel products.

2. Possibilities for the Expanded Domestic Use of Petroleum by Economically Under-Developed Petroleum Producing Areas.

This is one face of the energy sector which interests a few countries in the region. The conference could deal with the expanded use of petroleum and gas as such, or through the generation of electric power, for local general requirements, long distance distribution and development of special industries.

3. Possibilities of Use of Low Grade Coals and Lignite.

For the countries who do not possess high grade coals the consideration of this special aspect of the development of the energy sector may be useful. A conference could deal with the preparation, handling, storage, and use of the low grade coals and lignite.

4. Improvements on the methods of preparation of mineral products.

This subject could be discussed in connexion with several mineral products common to various countries in the region, such as:

- a) Sulphur from volcanic deposits;
- b) Low grade apatites and phosphate bearing rocks;
- c) Low grade manganese ores;
- d) Sodium, potassium and miscellaneous saline compounds, etc.

5. The Availability and Use of Local Resources to meet Fertilizer Requirements.

The fact that the interest in this subject is so universal

/suggests



suggests that conferences devoted to it might be most effectively organized on a regional or sub-regional basis.

6. Possibilities for a comparative and integrated study of the mining codes.

A conference on the subject would serve to exchange the experience of the various countries, with view to simplify the procedure through which national and foreign capital can obtain mining leases, and to standardize as far as possible the terms and procedures of such leases.

7. Mineral Resources Survey and Appraisal Techniques.

Among the questions which could be examined in such a conference are: cost and organization of different types of surveys, personnel requirements for surveys and training methods, possibilities for integrated resource surveys, possibilities for the adoption of uniform technical definitions and nomenclature, establishments of permanent channels for the exchange of experience and findings, etc.

8. Expanded Use of Local Resources for Building Materials.

The subject is of considerable importance because of the large construction requirements involved in industrialization and raising living standards.

9. The Development of Energy Resources in relation to one another and in relation to general economic development.

A regional energy conference could deal with such questions as: the planning of the energy sector in relation to general economic development; the relative economies of the development of various energy sources for particular purposes; the most effective use of local economic resources for the development of the energy sector; the relative advantages of small scale and large scale projects taking into account local markets and resources.

10. The Integrated Development of River and Lake Basins.

A conference on this subject could deal with questions of evaluation, planning and administration in terms of specific projects in the region. Should such a conference be held, it might be useful at a later date, in view of the importance of this subject to economic development, to hold further conferences on specific aspects.

The order of listing of subjects does not indicate the relative importance or urgency of their consideration nor is the list to be regarded as including all suitable topics. It should be noted that the Commission may determine that there are other subjects of importance or urgency which deserve a higher priority in the practical plans for conferences.

In view of the Council request, the Commission may wish to recommend to the Council particular topics on which conferences should be held as soon as practicable. In making any such recommendations, the Commission could present suggestions as to the geographical scope of a particular conference; it would be most useful if the Commission were to select those subjects which appear to be suitable for regional or sub-regional conferences. The Commission might also wish to recommend its Member governments to explore the possibilities of holding conferences on the specific subjects of interest to the region, and advise the Secretary-General of their views.

The Commission may wish to note that in his report the Secretary-General stated it would be his policy to make full use of the secretariats of regional economic commissions in the planning and organizing of particular conferences whenever and wherever appropriate.

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