

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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FAO MEDIA ADVISORY MA 09/01

MEDIA ADVISORY

Bangkok 12 March 2009 The **29th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific** will be held at the **United National Conference Centre (UNCC/Escap)**, in Bangkok from **26 to 31 March 2009**. This major biennial event is convened by FAO to review and make recommendations on key food and agricultural issues affecting the Asia-Pacific region.

The conference brings together 43 Asia-Pacific FAO member nations and a wide range of observers such as United Nations organizations, donors and other development partners, inter-governmental and international non-governmental organizations. **All conference sessions are open to the media.**

Participants include ministers of agriculture from the countries in the region, senior government officials, the FAO director-general as well as representatives of civil society and the business sector.

In-depth discussions will be held on a range of issues central to food security and rural poverty alleviation in Asia-Pacific countries such as coping with water scarcity; agribusiness and agro-industries in the context of globalization and free trade; the aid for trade initiative; looking at environmental factors affecting the occurrence of transboundary animal diseases; and a round table on the bioenergy rush.

Conference schedule

The **senior officers'** (SO) segment of the conference opens on **Thursday 26 March at 09:00 hours** with an opening statement by the **Thai minister of agriculture and cooperatives**. The SO segment will last three days until Saturday 28 March.

The **ministerial-level** segment of the conference takes place on Monday and Tuesday **30 and 31 March**. The **inaugural ceremony** will start at **09.00 hours on 30 March**, chaired by the **Thai prime minister**. FAO director-general Jacques Diouf will deliver a statement that same morning, and meet the media at a **press conference** later in the day.

Also on Monday 30 March a **round table on the rush to bioenergy** will be held at 17:00 hours. The **adoption of the report** of the conference is planned to start at 16:00 hours on Tuesday 31 March.

The conference will be conducted in Chinese, English and French, with simultaneous interpretation provided. The provisional timetable and other documents are available on request and from the Internet site

http://www.fao.org/Unfao/Bodies/RegConferences/aprc29/index_en.htm

Media registration

Journalists and media representatives should register with FAO prior to accessing the plenary meeting hall inside the UNCC. Upon registration, a special daily media badge will be given. This badge is needed for access to the conference room as well as other facilities such as lounges, catering installations and service areas.

In order to facilitate **media registration**, journalists should bring along a valid Thai or UNIS press accreditation card. Media badges have to be picked up in person at the registration desk at the United Nations Conference Centre, starting from Thursday 26 March to the end of the conference.

Journalists not accredited in Thailand and interested to attend the regional conference are urged to contact the FAO Conference Information Officer as soon as possible and provide him details of their employer and intended attended at the conference.

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Media facilities

Journalists can follow the debates in the plenary room from designated rows of chairs for media and news organizations. In addition, working space with WIFI facilities is available throughout the UNCC building.