

CONTENTS

News in the Region

- Global Blue Carbon Market Proposed by Five UN Agencies
- Australia Passes Landmark Carbon Price Laws
- Bangladesh to build its first waste-fuelled power plants
- Business, academe and NGOs declare support for biodiversity conservation
- Thailand to speed up water projects
- Studying glaciers at the top of the world

What's News in UNEP Asia-Pacific

- UNEP Executive Director Receives Outstanding Contribution Award from CCICED
- Spanish Soccer Star Carles Puyol Kicks Off Orangutan Campaign
- SEA Officials Support Phase-Out of Incandescent Light Bulbs
- Sculptor of the Goddess Nüwa as a call to repair the ozone layer
- Tweeting on the environment in China

...and more...

Inspiring Stories

- Helping Poor Communities in Bangladesh Cope With Climate Change –Sasakawa Prize Winner 2007
- Planting seeds of Hope in Degraded Landscapes of the Pamir Alai Mountains in Central Asia

Get Involved

Ministers on the Move

DID YOU KNOW?

As the world's population reaches 7 billion, urban population has grown by 45 per cent since 1992.

- *Keeping Track of our Changing Environment: From Rio to Rio+20*





Global Blue Carbon Market Proposed by Five UN Agencies

Environment News Service
Paris, Nov. 1, 2011

A global blue carbon market that would create direct economic gain for those who protect ocean habitats is the main feature of a plan issued today by five United Nations agencies to improve the management of the world's ocean and coastal areas.

The "Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability" says that the agencies intend to work with existing international carbon markets to define and implement a blue carbon market for protecting marine and coastal carbon sinks.

Oceans act as sinks for the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, CO₂. In fact, the oceans are the largest active carbon sink on Earth, absorbing 26 percent of all CO₂ emissions.

[Read Full Story](#)



Credit: Washington State Dept. of Ecology

Australia Passes Landmark Carbon Price Laws

by James Grubel
Canberra, Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2011

(Reuters) - Australia passed landmark laws on Tuesday to impose a price on carbon emissions in one of the biggest economic reforms in a decade and injecting new impetus into December's global climate talks in South Africa.



Credit: Reuters/Tim Wimborne

Tuesday's vote in the upper house Senate made Australia the second major economy behind the European Union to pass carbon-limiting legislation. Tiny New Zealand has a similar scheme.

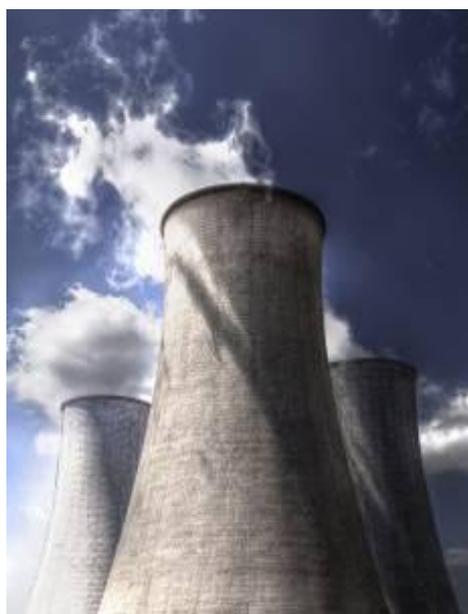
Its impact will be felt right across the economy, from miners and liquefied natural gas (LNG) producers to airlines and steel makers, and is aimed at making firms more energy efficient and push power generation toward gas and renewables.

[Read Full Story](#)



Bangladesh to build its first waste-fuelled power plants

Dhaka, Monday, Nov. 14, 2011



Credit: Shutterstock

(Reuters) - Bangladesh plans to build its first ever waste-fueled power plants to ease electricity shortages and manage garbage properly, a government official said on Monday.

Italian firm Management Environment Finance SEL was given permission to build two 50 megawatt power plants at two places in the capital, to be completed in three years, the official said.

[Read Full Story](#)



Credit: Shutterstock

Business, academe and NGOs declare support for biodiversity conservation

ASEAN Biodiversity Updates
Vol. 4, No. 11, Nov. 2011

Over 200 representatives from the business sector, academe and various NGOs declared their support to biodiversity conservation efforts in Asia. The pledge of support was contained in the Cha-Am Declaration, which resulted from the first Asia Regional Forum on Biodiversity held on November 3-4, 2011 in Cha-Am, Thailand. The forum was organized by the Sirindhorn International Environmental Park Foundation, under the patronage of HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, and in cooperation with the Royal Thai Government, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, and the United Nations Institute of Advanced Studies through the Regional Centres of Expertise for Sustainable Development in Asia-Pacific.

[Read Full Story](#)



Credit: Washington State Dept. of Ecology

Thailand to speed up water projects

Sunday, 5 February 2012
The Jakarta Post

The government is accelerating its water-resources management and flood-prevention projects worth a combined 350 billion Baht to ensure that the country is ready to cope with this year's rainy season, according to Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

"We're working on details of the plans at the provincial level to ensure consistency and interconnectedness," she said.

"We're also making sure that public money is used properly and that the floodways will actually work when the water is there. This means we need accurate calculations and forecasts on the amount of water in the major dams, the amount of rainfall and the amount of water that will be left in low-lying areas," she said.

[Read Full Story](#)

Studying glaciers at the top of the world

Science and Development Network
December 13, 2011

A string of high-altitude research stations across Asia could shed light on how climate change is affecting one of the world's largest ice masses.

Spearheaded by the Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research, part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the initiative is building state-of-the-art research facilities across South Asia, including in Nepal, Pakistan and Tajikistan. The move could help reverse years of decline in the subject, as the fall of the Soviet Union and political instability have seen research reduce dramatically.

Covering more than 1,000 square kilometres, Central Asia and the Tibetan Plateau comprise the largest mass of ice outside the Arctic and Antarctic. The region has one of the most rapidly warming climates on earth and is therefore ideal for studying how large bodies of ice respond to increasing temperatures.

[Read Full Story](#)

Credit: Shutterstock





UNEP ED Receives Outstanding Contribution Award from CCICED



In recognition of his five-year engagement as Council Member and the valuable contribution of UNEP to the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED) and its policy studies, UNEP's Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, Achim Steiner, was conferred the CCICED outstanding contribution award at its Annual General Meeting in November 2011.

UNEP will continue to support the CCICED in the next phase, which begins in 2012.

Spanish Soccer Star Carles Puyol Kicks Off Orangutan Campaign

Nairobi, 6 December 2011 - Spanish soccer star Carles Puyol, who captains FC Barcelona and led Spain to the World Cup title one year ago, is now tackling an even bigger challenge – saving endangered orangutans.

Puyol is the face of “Act Now for Orangutans,” a new campaign from the United Nations Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) and International Animal Rescue (IAR) that seeks to halt the orangutan's dramatic slide towards extinction. Less than 66,000 wild orangutans are thought to remain in the forests of Borneo and Sumatra, and more than half of that population has been lost since 1950.

The campaign website can be found at www.actnowfororangutans.org

SEA Officials Support Phase-Out of Incandescent Light Bulbs

At the UNEP/GEF *en.lighten* Workshop in Singapore on 4 November 2011, government representatives from 18 countries in Southeast Asia voiced their support for the phasing out of incandescent light bulbs. Such a move could save the region over US1.6 billion a year in energy costs.

The energy efficiency officials and climate change focal points that participated in the regional event unanimously agreed that the phase out of incandescent lamps is one of the easiest ways to reduce CO2 emissions and achieve significant energy and financial savings.

[Read the full story](#)



Sculptor of the Goddess Nüwa as a call to repair the ozone layer

Delegates to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer gave rocks from all continents and water from the two Polar Regions on 24 November 2011 to renowned Chinese artist and UNEP Patron for Arts and Environment Prof. Yuan Xikun. The rocks and water were given to support Prof. Yuan's project to sculpture the ancient Chinese goddess Nüwa as a call to repair the ozone hole. According to an ancient Chinese myth, Nüwa is a goddess who smelted a seven-color stone to block a hole in the sky.

Mr. Yuan, who received sand from the President of Maldives as a first contribution to the project in October 2011, said he plans to 'smelt' these materials to form a stone which he will make into the sculpture.

For more information please visit:
www.unep.org/ozonaction



Tweeting on the environment in China



A 'Weibo-Talk', addressing environmental education, public participation and sustainable development took place on Monday, 31st of October 2011 at the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Publicity Centre. The talk was aimed at raising awareness of environment protection as well as UNEP's work in China.

Sina Weibo is recognized as the 'American Twitter' in China and is currently the most influential and high profile micro-blog operators, with 140 million registered users. The one-hour talk featured Mr. Zhang Shigang, UNEP Country Coordinator and Mr. Du Shaozhong, Deputy Director General of Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau. Nearly 1,036 comments and questions were received.

Weibo Talk Link:

<http://talk.weibo.com/ft/201110312370>



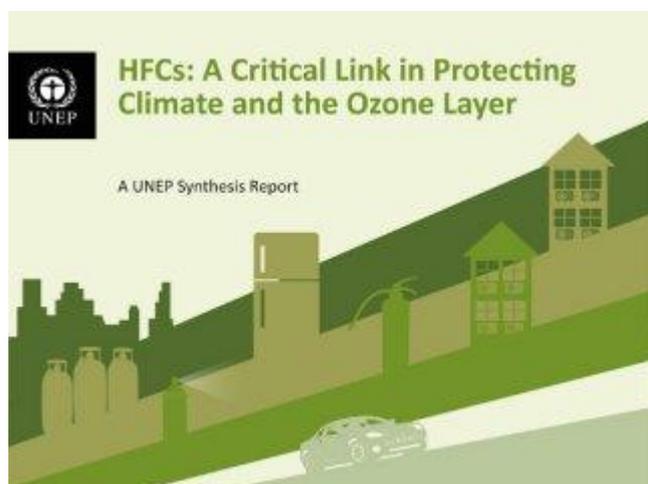
New UNEP Report Urges Fast Action on “HFCs”

A report launched in November in Bali, Indonesia by UNEP at the 23rd Meeting of the Parties of the Montreal Protocol, projects that by 2050 Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), used in products such as air conditioners; refrigerators, firefighting equipment and insulation foams, could be responsible for emissions equivalent to 3.5 to 8.8 Gigatonnes of carbon dioxide (Gt CO₂eq) --comparable to total current annual emissions from transport, estimated at just under 7Gt annually.

HFCs are becoming popular replacements for ones phased-out or being phased-out to protect the ozone layer—the Earth’s high flying shield that filters out dangerous levels of the sun’s ultra violet rays.

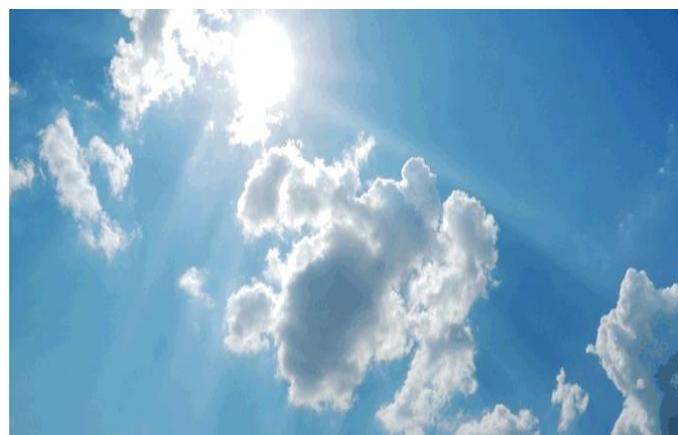
HFCs: A Critical Link in Protecting Climate and the Ozone Layer—a UNEP Synthesis Report is available at

http://www.unep.org/dewa/Portals/67/pdf/HFC_report.pdf



China Launches US\$265M project to protect ozone & combat climate change

China is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of HCFCs in the world.



China's Ministry of Environmental Protection launched the HCFC Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP) on 19 December 2011, a US\$265 million project to cut consumption of Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) by 1 January 2015.

Through the HPMP, 45,000 metric tons of HCFCs, or about 17% of China's total amount of controlled HCFCs use, will be eliminated. In addition, as part of the project, the new technologies to replace the HCFC technologies currently used by the industries will significantly reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in the country.



Countries Accelerating Plans for a Transition to a Green Economy: China Backing Green Sectors As Never Before

A new UN report released in Beijing in November demonstrates that governments and businesses are taking steps to accelerate a global shift towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient and socially inclusive green future.

From China to Barbados, Brazil to South Africa, countries are developing Green Economy strategies and activities to spur greater economic growth and jobs, environmental protection and equality.

Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication can be found on the UNEP website: www.unep.org/greeneconomy



Roundtable for ASEAN Chief Justices on Environment



The Roundtable for ASEAN Chief Justices on Environment, jointly organized by the ADB, the Supreme Court of Indonesia and UNEP, took place on 5-7 December 2011 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The Roundtable brought together Chief Justices or their representatives from member countries of ASEAN, with the aim of increasing cooperation on legal issues related to the region's key environmental challenges, including climate change, deforestation and illegal logging, illicit trade in wildlife, the destruction of coral reefs, pollution and waste management, etc.

The roundtable discussed common challenges the judiciary in ASEAN countries face in adjudicating environmental legal cases and the role they can play in championing environmental justice. The roundtable agreed on a common vision on the role of the judiciary in tackling regional environmental challenges and areas for future cooperation.

Please check the website of the Supreme Court of Indonesia at:

<http://asean.mahkamahagung.go.id/>



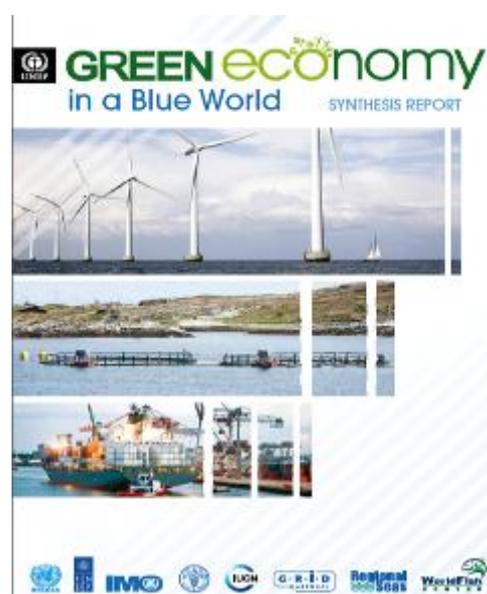
Nature Conservation and Flood Control Project in the Yangtze River Basin Finalized

Representatives from the Chinese Ministry of Environment, Chinese research institutes and partners met to finalize an Ecosystem Function Conservation Areas system in the Yangtze River Basin 23 December 2011, in Beijing China. The project is part of a UNEP/GEF Nature Conservation and Flood Control project in the Yangtze River Basin, which began in 2006. The Government of China will further replicate project results throughout the upper basin of the Yangtze River, as well as in other river basins including those with transboundary effects.



Clean the Ocean, Green the Economy, UN Report Urges

by Nancy Roberts
January 25, 2012, 10:38 pm



A new report urges focusing on the world's seas and oceans in the quest for sustainable development and economic progress. *Green Economy in a Blue World*, produced by a several organizations headed by the UNEP, asserts that the ocean, and how we see and use it, must play a huge role in the much-needed transition to a new, green economy.

The report looks at a wide variety of human impacts on ocean health, from fisheries to coastal tourism to marine-based renewable energy and ocean nutrient pollution. About 40 percent of the world's population lives within 62 miles (100 km) of a coast; the ocean provides food and jobs for millions of people, but human activity is endangering ocean health through pollution and overuse.

[Read the full story](#)



Countries adopt Manila declaration to strengthen protection of global marine environment

On January 31, 2012 · In Homes & Property

Representatives from 65 countries have agreed to step up efforts to protect the world's oceans from land-based activities, while underlining the central role played by the marine environment in a transition to a low carbon, resource-efficient green economy.

The Manila Declaration was adopted on the final day of the Global Conference on Land-Ocean Connections (GLOC), co-organised by the Government of the Philippines and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The four-day event brought together environment ministers, marine scientists, NGOs, representatives of financial institutions and other organizations, with the aim of delivering new policies and actions to improve the sustainable management of oceans and coasts. Under the Manila Declaration, signatories reaffirmed their commitment to develop policies to reduce and control wastewater, marine litter and pollution from fertilizers.

[Read the full story](#)

Perspectives on Rio+20

ASEAN Must Play a Leadership Role in Earth Summit II

The South East Asian region was the recent host of several key international meetings that were organized as part of the preparations for a major global conference that will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the landmark 1992 Earth Summit in June this year. Kuala Lumpur was the scene for one of the meetings meant to explore a possible Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) position for the Summit, which has been dubbed Rio+20, and is intent on strengthening the global governance of environment and sustainable development.

The ASEAN meeting was a key event not just for preparing for Rio+20, but also because it signaled that ASEAN countries are starting to wake up and realize the mismatch between their economic importance and their relative political weight in the world.

The sooner that ASEAN countries start to realize their rightful place on global issues, the better. Relative power is shifting away from the US and Europe toward the emerging economies and mega population centers. In the next two decades the world will be a completely different place. It will be a multi-polar world and it will mark the reemergence in history of Asian nations. It is time for Asia and the ASEAN region in particular to start preparing for that future.

[Read Full Story](#)

Forum Highlights Green Economy in Viet Nam

Green Economy is closely associated with sustainable development, helping to ensure social security, protect the environment, and improve the efficiency of energy use, said Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan. The Deputy PM made the affirmation at a forum in Hanoi on 13 December 2011, to discuss green economy and sustainable development in Viet Nam. He said creating a green economy is to generate jobs, sustain economic growth, reduce environmental pollution, and minimize the effects of global warming and exhausted natural resources.

[Read the full story](#)

Help Plug Data Gaps, Urges Senior UN Official

Ochieng' Ogodo, 13 December 2011

Support must be given to the efforts of developing countries to improve data collection, Sha Zukang, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, told the Eye on Earth Summit in Abu Dhabi (13 December).



"We must establish partnerships so that we can tap into commercial data and information sources to bridge data gaps. For policy to be based on science and facts, data and information must be

widely and easily accessible. It must also be in formats usable for decision-making and in public domains," he said.

UNEP High Level International Forum on Ecosystem Management and Green Economy

On 18 November 2011, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) co-organized a High-level International Forum on Ecosystem Management and Green Economy. The forum aimed to contribute to the success of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, popularly known as Rio+20, by highlighting the pivotal role of ecosystem management in the development of a Green Economy in China and other developing countries. The day-long forum covered an opening ceremony, launch of the International Ecosystem Management Partnership (IEMP), a High-level Roundtable, and two thematic sessions.

The forum was attended by over 200 participants from around the world, including heads of UN and other international organizations, leaders and ministers from the Chinese Government, renowned scientists, business leaders and representatives of the civil society.

Young Asians Craft Their Views on Rio+20

More than 80 young leaders from countries in South Asia and Central Asia met in January 2012 to bring their perspectives to bear on Rio+20. The "***The Road to Rio 2012: Sustainable Lifestyles for a Green Economy***" was the theme of the meetings aimed at fostering cooperation, exchange and discussion among South Asian and Central Asian youths and strengthen their capacity on themes and issues related to Rio+20, including the green economy in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development and an institutional framework for sustainable development.

The South Asia Youth Environment Network meeting took place in Dhaka, Bangladesh 10-12 January, while Central Asian Youth met in Dushanbe, Tajikistan 26-29 January 2012. Youth statements from these meetings will be incorporated into an Asia Pacific Youth Rio+20 document and submitted to the 2012 Summit.



Credit: www.ashden.org

Sasakawa Prize Laureate 2007 **Helping Poor Communities** **in Bangladesh Cope With** **Climate Change**

Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha was founded in 1998 to help poor and marginalized people from the remote Chalanbeel region and to combat the effects of climate change in Bangladesh, particularly devastating floods and rising water levels.

The Shidhulai has achieved this target by building 40 flat-bottomed boats from locally available materials, which make their way through the rivers and shallow canals of the Chalanbeel to bring a range of educational services and renewable energy supplies to 88,000 families each year.

"Climate change has increased flooding in recent years now we have floods two to three times a year. Over the next 8-10 years, ten per cent of our land will be lost to the sea because of climate change - issues like this need local solution by local people. Shidhulai as a local organization is proving that it is possible to deal with this climate change, to tackle pollution, and at the same time, to lift people out of poverty. We hope our work in using boats to adapt and cope with climate change and improve the quality of life will serve as an inspiration," said Mr. Rezwana.

[Read Full Story](#)

Planting Seeds of Hope in **Degraded Landscapes of the** **Pamir-Alai Mountains in** **Central Asia**

Hidden from the spotlight of global attention, over the past three years communities inhabiting the deeply incised valleys and high-altitude cold deserts of the Pamir-Alai mountains, have been searching for ways of making a living that would allow them to remain in the harsh but scenic mountain environment which they call home, while preserving it for their children and the future generations.

Many are already benefiting from a Global Environment Facility project, implemented by the United Nations University (Bonn) with local partners in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and supported by UNEP, that uses innovative approaches to managing scarce cropland, shared pasture and forest resources. The project developed 166 micro-projects that led to the rehabilitation of degraded marginal lands and notable improvement of income. Nearly 2500 ha of land has been improved and 5000 households, nearly 40% of the population in the project area, have benefited. Another 2500 ha is expected to be improved and a further 2000 households will benefit. In parallel, the long-term legal and policy reform of transboundary pasture management, renewable energy, and biodiversity conservation have been identified and commitments to strategic changes made, promising to enable others in the region to benefit from the potential of improved use and management of their land resources in the future.

For more information please see:
<http://www.ehs.unu.edu/palm/>



UNEP/UNESCO Youth Xchange Guidebook on Green Skills and Lifestyles



The YouthXchange Guidebook on Green Skills and Lifestyles is designed to connect the discussions and issues of green economy, green jobs, green skills and green societies to young people's everyday lifestyle choices. It will seek to empower young people to critically engage with the complexity of sustainability issues, to form their own opinions, and to determine their own lifestyle responses and their own career choices.

This would be the 3rd of YouthXchange guidebook series and would be a contribution to the Rio+20 meeting in June 2012.

The guidebook will be structured around themes with six inter-related principles necessary for exploring green skills and youth lifestyles: (a) Engaging with complexity; (b) Dealing with uncertainty; (c) Developing critical skills; (d) Learning through action; (e) Participation and democracy; and (f) Leadership and change.

Calling for submission of feature stories on environment and forests!

The Young Asian Reporters in conjunction with UNEP is now calling for submission of feature stories on "environment & forests". This opportunity is provided to showcase your journalistic skills while sharing an inspiring story among an international youth audience. Thus, let us know an issue pertaining to environment with a particular focus on forests in your country or region and stand a chance to be rewarded with USD 100! Best articles will also be published in NAM News Network (coordinated by Malaysia's Bernama News Agency), which feeds national news agencies in over 120 countries across the globe. In addition all articles will be published in Young Asian Reporters network.

E-mail tharuka@amic.org.sg for more information.

World Water Day – March 22

International World Water Day is held annually on 22 March as a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. Each year, World Water Day highlights a specific aspect of freshwater. In 2012, World Water Day is focused on 'Water and Food Security'.

For more details please visit

<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/index.html>

Join UNEP Asia-Pacific Facebook page





OzonAction Award for Young People

Do you have a practical project showing how we can help the ozone layer recover? Do you know how helping climate can help the ozone layer? Then this could be your chance to receive international recognition.

Any group of young people aged 13-16 working to protect the ozone layer and combat climate change could be rewarded, with the OzonAction Award - an international award run by Volvo Adventure in co-operation with the OzonAction Branch of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Volvo Adventure has been recognizing and rewarding practical action taken by young people to solve local environmental problems for a decade. It is now forming a partnership with OzonAction, which has been raising awareness and helping people understand how they can help reduce the impacts of ozone depletion as part of UNEP's achievement of the Montreal Protocol objectives. Ozzy Ozone and his friends are now eager to reward those people who are taking practical action on these issues.

At OzonAction, we know that there are many great creative and innovative environmental projects run by young people that protect the stratospheric ozone layer and the Earth's climate at the same time. These projects could be representing their country at the final. The winner will receive an all-expenses-paid trip from Volvo Adventure to the final in Sweden in June 2012.

For more information visit:

http://www.volvoadventure.org/va_ozzventry.aspx

The 21st International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment



UNEP has launched the 21st International children's painting competition. The competition is organized annually by the UNEP and the Japan-based Foundation for Global Peace and Environment (FGPE), Bayer and Nikon Corporation. The theme of the 21st painting competition will be "Green Communities" and participants will have until 15 February 2012 to submit their entries.

For more details on the Competition please visit

<http://www.unep.org/tunza/children/documents/2011%20painting%20competition.pdf>

World Environment Day 5 June 2012

The 2012 theme for World Environment Day is Green Economy: Does it include you? Evidently, there are two parts to this theme and the first tackles the subject of the Green Economy. This is where some people shut off their minds because they find the concept of the Green Economy a little too complex to understand.

On the contrary, the Green Economy is really something that is applicable all around you and it is easy to imagine how you fit in it. Visit the 'What is the Green Economy?' page to read a layman's narrative of this concept.

<http://www.unep.org/wed/greeneconomy/>



Kazakhstan

His Excellency Mr. Nurlan Kapparov has been appointed Minister of Environment Protection of Kazakhstan and succeeded H.E. Mr. Nurgali Ashim's previous environmental duties.

Kyrgyzstan

His Excellency Mr. Sabir Atadjanov is Kyrgyzstan's newly appointed Director of the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry. He succeeded H.E. Mr. Bayanbek Kadyrov.

Marshall Islands

His Excellency Tony de Brum was recently appointed as Minister in Assistance to the President (in Charge of the Environment) for Marshall Islands. He succeeded Honorable Ruben Zackhras.

Mongolia

His Excellency Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar is currently Mongolia's Minister of Nature, Environment and Tourism. He succeeded H.E. Mr. Gansukh Luimed.

Nauru

His Excellency Mr. Rykers Solomon has been appointed Minister of Commerce, Industry, & Environment. He succeeded H.E. Mr. Freddie Pitcher.

