



Photo Credit: Maman Sukirman, Indonesia

I. Good to Know

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III. On the Calendar

46th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Brunei

The 46th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting took place in Bandar Seri Bagawan, Brunei on 30 June – 2 July. The meeting focused on progress of the April 22nd ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Community roadmap. A joint communiqué was issued at the end of the meeting which highlighted the aspirations for ASEAN 2015 as a sustainable community with mutual understanding and cooperation between ASEAN and its partners.

During the meeting, Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and its dialogue partners, namely Australia, India, the Republic of Korea, Russia, the US, Canada, New Zealand and the EU, proposed cooperation orientations, discussed issues of mutual concern and preparations of future summits. Trans-boundary haze was among the regional challenges discussed, with ministers reaffirming their commitment to strengthen regional cooperation towards the mitigation of haze impacts. Indonesia was encouraged to ratify ASEAN Agreement on Trans-Boundary Haze Pollution in the aftermath of recent air pollution caused by fires in Indonesian Sumatra. Indonesia Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa said the treaty had been resubmitted to the current legislature.

In addition, ASEAN has welcomed China's proposal to upgrade ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement. The ministers agreed to start official talks on the South China Sea Code of Conduct consultations at the 6th Senior Officials' Meeting on the Implementation of the Declaration of Conduct of the Parties in the SCS, to be held in China, September 2013.

Source: <http://www.asean.org>

8th Policy Consultation Forum of the Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth

The '8th Policy Consultation Forum of the Seoul Initiative Network on Green Growth (SI Policy Forum)' was organized by the South Korean Ministry of Environment and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Gyeongju, Korea from July 3 to July 5 2013.

Under the theme of 'biodiversity for sustainable development,' environmental officials from 19 countries including Korea, Japan and Vietnam and representatives from international organizations such as UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UNEP and International Union for Conservation of Nature as well as academia and industry participated at the event.

During the forum, participants discussed implementation strategies for biodiversity at the three sessions on biodiversity for sustainable development, sustainable use of biodiversity and eco-tourism.

The forum also provided an opportunity for participants to exchange thoughts on biodiversity for sustainable development prior to the Convention on Biological Diversity COP12 to be held in Pyeongchang, Gangwon-do in 2014.

Source: <http://eng.me.go.kr>



Asian Countries Making Big Progress on MDGs, Though Some Challenges Remain

A new UN report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) found that South Asia has made remarkable progress in achieving some Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but increased efforts are needed to meet others. According to the report, *the Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*, Eastern Asia and South-Eastern Asia have met or are on track to meet most of the MDG targets. The report found that some challenges remain, but overall momentum is building for the Asia region to reach many of the MDGs by their 2015 target date.

According to the report, extreme poverty rates have been halved for Eastern Asia, South-Eastern Asia and Southern Asia, excluding India, five years ahead of the deadline. While poverty remains widespread in India, progress has been substantial.

There were mixed improvements on water and sanitation. The drinking water target was met five years ahead of schedule in three sub-regions. In Eastern Asia the proportion of the population using an improved water source increased from 68 per cent to 92 per cent between 1990 and 2011. In South-Eastern Asia and Southern Asia, access to an improved water source increased from 71 per cent to 89 per cent and from 72 per cent to 90 per cent, respectively, during this period.

The greatest progress in sanitation has been made in Eastern Asia, where the proportion of the population using an improved sanitation facility, such as latrines or toilets, increased from 27 per cent in 1990 to 67 per cent in 2011, meeting the MDG target ahead of the deadline. In South-Eastern Asia the proportion of the population using improved sanitation increased from 47 per cent to 71 per cent between 1990 and 2011, putting the sub-region on its way to meeting the MDG target. In Southern Asia the proportion increased from 24 per cent to 41 per cent, showing a need to accelerate action on sanitation.

Source:
<http://un.org.au>
<http://www.un.org>

Photo Credit: singg.org

Joint Meeting of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management & Pacific Climate Change Round Table

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) organized the first Joint Meeting of the Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management and the Pacific Climate Change Round Table from 8 – 12 July 2013 in Nadi, Fiji. The purpose of the joint meeting was to move forward on discussions for the development of an integrated Pacific regional strategy for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change which is targeted for completion before 2015.

The moves to develop an integrated regional strategy for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change makes the Pacific the first region in the world to take constructive steps towards combining regional, national and sub-national efforts to reduce the risks to sustainable national development posed by disasters and climate change.

Source: <http://www.pacificdisasterclimatemeeeting2013.net>

Australia Scraps Carbon Tax, Brings Forward Trading Scheme

Australia's government plans to scrap its carbon tax and bring forward an emissions trading scheme a year earlier than planned.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said he wants the fixed price on carbon emissions to end on June 30, 2014. A floating carbon price, or emissions trading scheme that will be linked to the European carbon market, will start the following day.

Rudd said the change would slash A\$3.8 billion from the federal budget over the forward estimates period. He said his government would make up the gap with savings of around A\$3.9 billion from a range of measures. The tax was due to raise A\$8.14 billion in 2013-14, and A\$8.6 billion in 2014-15.

The policy shift would see the cost of carbon permits fall from the planned A\$25.40 (\$23.09) per metric ton from July 2014 to around A\$6 per metric ton, Rudd said, saving big businesses billions of dollars in carbon costs.

Source: <http://planetark.org>

Vietnamese Conservation Coalition Formed to Reduce Wildlife Consumption

Vietnam is a major consumer of endangered species and a key target country for combating wildlife trafficking. The Vietnamese government, with support from the USAID-funded Asia's Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking (ARREST) Program, recently convened government and NGO stakeholders to form a coalition to address illegal wildlife trade in Vietnam. Vietnam's Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA) held the meeting on July 19 – 20 to develop communication strategies for reducing the illegal consumption of wildlife. ARREST partner FREELAND presented the iTHINK consumption reduction campaign to the coalition, showcasing thought provoking messages from key opinion leaders and high-ranking government officials to discourage illegal wildlife consumption. Representatives from Market Control, Environmental Police, Department of Traditional Medicine and Pharmacy, Central Committee for Education and Propaganda, and National Youth Union attended the meeting. Local environmental NGOs such as Vietnam Association for Conservation for Nature and Environment, Asian Turtle Program, PanNature, FREELAND, Wildlife Conservation Society and World Society for the Protection of Animals were also present. The coalition committed to draft a detailed strategic communications plan, which includes a calendar on wildlife consumption-related awareness activities in Vietnam.

Source: RDMA Weekly Environment Update

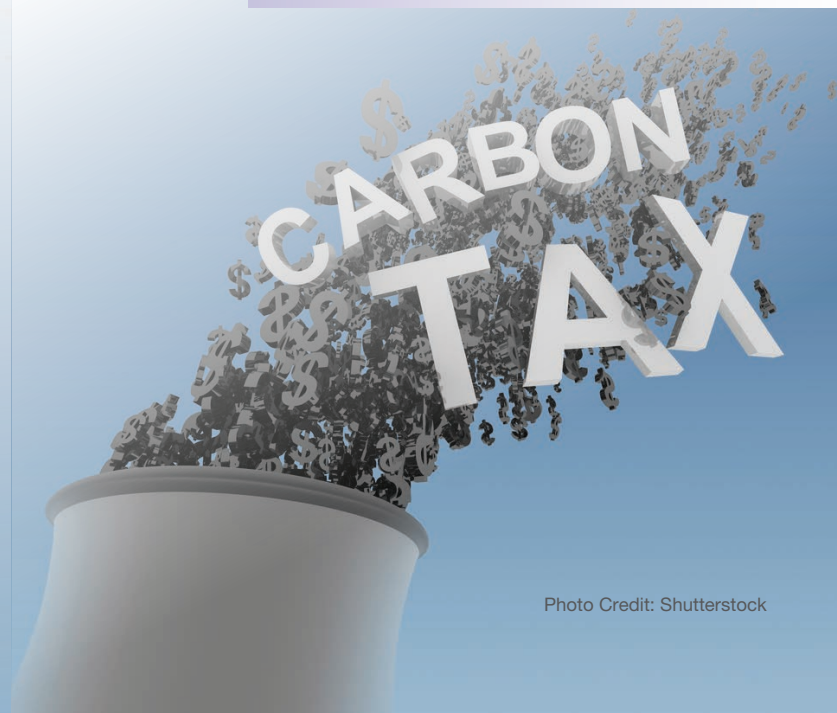




Photo Credit: Basak Dola, India

India Forges Ahead With Electric and Hybrid Transport

India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh put his government's stamp of approval on the rapid development of hybrid and electric vehicles.

India has the potential to emerge as a "global manufacturing hub for electric and hybrid vehicles," Prime Minister Singh and the High Level Committee on Manufacturing concluded at a meeting in New Delhi.

The meeting was convened to draw a roadmap for boosting competitiveness and output in three "strategic" industries – electric and hybrid vehicles, civilian aircraft manufacture, and advanced materials and composites as well as in two "important" sectors – textiles and steel.

The Committee endorsed the launch of public transport pilot projects for electric and hybrid vehicles, such as three wheelers, mini buses and larger buses. The first trials will take place in Delhi to be followed by other metropolitan areas after necessary approvals are obtained.

Source: <http://ens-newswire.com>

U.S., China Collaborate on Climate, Oceans, Energy and Wildlife

The U.S. and China have agreed to combat climate change through new cooperation on heavy-duty and other vehicles; smart grids; carbon capture, utilization, and storage; collecting and managing greenhouse gas data; and energy efficiency in buildings and industry.

The agreement was one of nearly 90 separate agreements - many of them environmental - reached during the Fifth Round of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, S&ED, held July 10-11 in Washington.

Presidents Obama and Xi also agreed to phase down consumption and production of hydrofluorocarbons, HFCs, refrigerants that also are powerful greenhouse gases. In addition, the two governments established the U.S.-China Climate Change Working Group in April to develop and implement bilateral cooperation on climate change between the two countries.

Source: <http://ens-newswire.com>

Indonesian Govt Prepares Emergency Measures to Tackle Forest Fires

The Indonesian government is stepping up its preparation of emergency measures to battle possible forest fires. Deputy Environment Minister for Environmental Damage Control and Climate Change Arif Yuwono said that the government had prepared emergency systems should blazes break out, after smoke from forest fires blanketed Singapore and Malaysia during the first peak period of the dry season in June.

Arif said that the government had prepared taskforces and emergency systems in fire-prone regions of Sumatra and Kalimantan. The government had also prepared measures for water bombing and creating artificial rain.

Meanwhile, the Environment Minister Balthasar Kambuaya said that the government was speeding up its effort to ratify the ASEAN agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AATHP), which would allow it to take emergency action and punitive measures against companies using slash-and-burn methods.

The ratification would provide Indonesia access to human resources and equipment, as well as technology used by ASEAN member states to handle haze pollution and forest fires, including that used for monitoring, evaluating and executing an emergency response.

Source: <http://www.thejakartapost.com>

China to Spend Trillions on to Tackle Air and Water Pollution

The Chinese government announced that it will spend more than 3 trillion yuan (489.3 billion U.S. dollars) to tackle air and water pollution prevention and treatment during an environmental protection industry forum that took place in July 28, 2013.

An airborne pollution prevention and control action plan, which will be released soon, will be backed by 1.7 trillion yuan in investment from the central government, according to Wang Tao, an official with the pollution prevention department under the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP).

Wang added that an estimated 2 trillion yuan will be put in to enhance monitoring of drinking water sources and control poisonous contaminants as was required by a water pollution prevention and control action plan in formulation.

In addition, the MEP is drafting a national standard for surface water quality, according to Zhao Yingmin, director-general of the MEP's science, technology and standards department. Zhao said the draft is expected to be released to consult public opinion within the year and be issued in 2014.

Following the country's increasing efforts in curbing pollution, the domestic environmental protection industry is booming. The output value of the energy conservation and environmental protection industry during the 12th Five-Year Plan period (2011-2015) is expected to exceed 10 trillion yuan, a more than 40 percent increase compared to the 11th Five-Year Plan period (2006-2010), according to Wang.

Source: <http://news.xinhuanet.com>

Several Asian Countries Inundated by Floods

India officially declared that nearly 6,000 people were missing a month after flash floods ravaged large parts of its northern state of Uttarakhand. Record rains in June caused devastating landslides and flooded rivers in Uttarakhand, trapping tens of thousands of Hindu devotees, who flock there each year on a pilgrimage to the temple towns of Kedarnath, Gangotri, Badrinath and Yamunotri.

In the Philippines, monsoon rains reinforced by a tropical storm flooded half the Philippine capital in just 24 hours, triggering landslides and killing at least seven people, while some 40,000 people sought shelter in government evacuation centers across the main island of Luzon.

Heavy seasonal rain resulted in flooding in many parts of DPRK Korea with the provinces of North and South Pyongan particularly severely affected. The Red Cross (IFRC) reports that Anju City, South Pyongan province is 80% flooded after the Chongchon River caused embankments to break in the early hours of 21 July 2013. The United Nations has dispatched assessment teams to a number of areas in DPRK that the government has identified as the most badly affected by flooding.

Meanwhile, persistent downpours have caused the worst floods in China since 1998 in Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces, also the heartland of China's grain production. Although the floods have passed their peak, the outlook remains grim for autumn. Official data showed floods have forced the relocation of 360,000 people, toppled more than 60,000 houses and affected 787,200 hectares of farmland.

Continuous heavy rainfall during June to August and the influences of the JEBI and Mongkhut typhoons, that have recently hit the north of Lao PDR, have resulted in floods in many provinces in the Northern and Central part of Laos. An estimated 116,518 people have been affected by the flooding with over 20 people killed, including 16 from flash floods on 20 August in Beng district of Oudumxay. Flooding resulted in high losses of livestock, damaged more than 6,224 hectares of rice fields and had severe impacts on education, water and sanitation and infrastructure.

Source:

<http://www.un.org>

<http://planetark.org>

<http://news.xinhuanet.com>

Lao PDR: Office of the Resident Coordinator
 Situation Report No. 1

Japan to Raise Severity Rating for Fukushima Leaks to Level 3



Photo Credit: Reuters

Japan will raise the severity rating of a recent toxic water leak at the destroyed Fukushima nuclear plant to level 3, or “serious incident”, on an international scale for radiological releases, underlining the deepening sense of crisis at the site.

Contaminated water with dangerously high levels of radiation is leaking from a storage tank at Fukushima, the plant’s operator said on Tuesday, the most serious setback to date for the clean up of the worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl.

Japan’s Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) assessed that the leak merits a level 3 rating, classifying it as a “serious incident” on the INES scale, according to a document posted on the agency’s website on Wednesday.

Source: <http://planetark.org>

Green Economy Focus of Inaugural Pacific Islands Development Forum

The inaugural Pacific Islands Development Forum was officially opened in Nadi, marking a new era for inter-regional partnerships and dialogue. The forum, which took place from August 5-7 2013, was attended by heads of states and government delegates from across the Pacific and focused primarily on regional partnerships for green economies in the Pacific.

Prime Minister Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama said the meeting idea was first discussed and agreed upon at the Engaging with the Pacific meeting held in Fiji last year. He said at that meeting, Pacific Island leaders endorsed the convening of the Forum for the purpose of engaging key sectors in implementing green economic policies in the Pacific Small Islands Developing States.

Heads of state of the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu were present at the official opening.

Source: <http://www.fijitimes.com>

First Trilateral Meeting on Transboundary Haze in Jakarta

Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore have held the first trilateral meeting on transboundary haze in Jakarta in late July.

At the meeting, the officials received an update on Indonesia’s efforts to address the fires that caused the haze, and considered future areas for cooperation. Singapore and Malaysia acknowledged Indonesia’s ongoing efforts to combat the haze, including the mobilisation of national resources to tackle the issue.

The senior officials agreed to provide an update on their discussions to their foreign ministers on the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Retreat in Hua Hin held from 13-14 August 2013, before the ministers’ report to countries’ leaders at the ASEAN Summit in October

Source: <http://www.channelnewsasia.com>

Oil Spill on Gulf of Thailand

An oil spill during a crude oil transfer from an oil tanker through a single-point mooring (SPM) to the pipeline for delivery to the PTT Global Chemical Public Company Limited refinery, 20 kilometers southeast of the Map Ta Phut seaport, resulted in an oil spill of approximately 50,000 liters which spread towards Samed Island and reached Prao Bay on the northwest coast of the island in Thailand.

The PTT Global Chemical Public Company Limited announced that it would take full responsibility for the incident, restore the environment and prevent any further problems. The company has carried out clean-up operations with help from the Marine Department, the Royal Thai Navy and related government agencies.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is working out plans with PTT Global Chemical on ways to provide compensation and rehabilitation and to prevent future incidents. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the incident had physical impacts but did not seriously affect tourism. The affected area was a small part of Samed Island while another 90% of the area remained untouched.

Source: <http://www.mfa.go.th>

Photo Credit: Shutterstock

FAO Urges Developing Nations to Cut Hazardous Pesticides

Developing countries should speed up the withdrawal of highly hazardous pesticides from their markets following the death of 23 children from contaminated food in India, the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said.

Children in the Indian state of Bihar died earlier this month after eating a school meal of rice and potato curry contaminated with monocrotophos, a pesticide considered highly hazardous by the FAO and the World Health Organization.

"Experience in many developing countries shows that the distribution and use of such highly toxic products very often poses a serious risk to human health and the environment," the FAO said in a statement.

Monocrotophos is banned in many countries but a panel of government experts in India was persuaded by manufacturers that the product was cheaper than alternatives and more effective in controlling pests that decimate crop output.

The FAO said many countries lacked the resources to properly manage the storage, distribution, handling and disposal of pesticides and to reduce their risks.

Monocrotophos is currently prohibited in Australia, China, the European Union and the United States, and in many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the FAO said.

Source: <http://planetark.org>

Equity and Justice Should Be at the Core of UN Post-2015 Development Agenda, Asia Pacific CSOs Say

Ninety-two civil society organizations from 21 countries came together on August 23-24 2013 for the Asia Pacific regional consultation which was held a couple of days prior to the Asia Pacific Ministerial Dialogue on the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda. They adopted the Bangkok Civil Society Declaration that called on regional leaders to put equity and justice at the heart of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, an end to unfair rules in international trade, finance, intellectual property rights and investments that they said impede efforts to attain genuine people- and planet-centred development in the South. Other measures included greater equity in ownership, access and control over land, health and universal social protection and decent livelihood, particularly for women and youth.

Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue on UN Post-2015 Development Agenda

Ministers and high-level representatives from Asia and the Pacific attending the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue on the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda adopted the Bangkok Declaration calling for a holistic, inclusive, equitable, people-centred Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The 'Bangkok Declaration of the Asia-Pacific region on the United Nations Development Agenda beyond 2015' also recommended that the Agenda should address all forms of inequalities and factors underpinning them. Additionally, it proposed a strengthened global partnership and enhanced implementation of agreed-upon development goals. Finally the Ministers expressed their desire to see an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process that involves civil society, private sector and other stakeholders.

The Ministerial Dialogue, held from 27-29 August, marked the first regional Ministerial-level event to discuss the United Nations post-2015 development agenda following the release of the report of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons. Joined by representatives from civil society, the private sector, as well as international organizations and UN agencies, participants reflected on key lessons learnt from the Millennium Development Goals process, and shared Asia-Pacific perspectives on transformative shifts to advance sustainable and inclusive development across the region post-2015.

Source: www.unescap.org



Conference on Loss and Damage Associated with Climate Change in Asia Pacific

The Asia Pacific Adaptation Network organized an International Conference on “Adaptation and Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change in Asia Pacific: Integrating Scientific Aspects” on 30-31 August in Bangkok. The conference provided a platform for sharing scientific knowledge and information among different stakeholders so that policy makers can make decisions based on the available science and improve resilience to a changing climate. During the conference, participants increased their understanding on the issues of loss and damage, identified major stumbling blocks in dealing with these issues, and learned about measures they can take to address challenges related to loss and damage.

Meeting Reviews Progress of Regional Actions and National Plans for the Coral Triangle Initiative

The Interim Regional Secretariat of Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) organized the 2nd CTI-CFF regional priorities workshop in collaboration with the National Coordination Committees, technical and governance working groups and partners in Manado, Indonesia on 20-22 August 2013. The CTI-CFF is a multilateral partnership of six countries working together to sustain marine and coastal resources by addressing crucial issues such as food security, climate change and marine biodiversity.

During the workshop, participants reviewed progress of Regional Priority Actions and National Plan of Action implementation (including bilateral/regional projects) that were identified in 2010, refined the Technical and Governance Working Groups and cross-cutting proposed priorities, and developed the scope, implementation plan and teams for the proposed 2013 Regional Priority Actions. The outputs from the workshop will be presented for approval at the CTI-CFF Senior Officials' Meeting to be held later this year and will serve as a common CTI-CFF Regional Workplan for the CT6 countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste) and CTI-CFF partners.

South Asia Youth Environment Network Meeting

The 8th South Asia Youth Environment Network (SAYEN) meeting took place in Thimphu, Bhutan on 24-26 July 2013. The meeting gathered 27 young leaders from South Asia to foster cooperation, exchange and discussion and strengthen the capacity of these young leaders on themes and issues related to Post Rio+20 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. During the meeting, youth delegates were able to share and exchange actions and activities they undertake in their countries. They also developed an action plan for 2013-2015, taking into account environmental challenges facing the subregion. The meeting resulted in a South Asian Youth Statement on UN Post 2015 Agenda that will be shared with partners, youth networks in the region and where relevant, the wider UN community.

Paving the Way for a Sustainable Asia-Pacific: Regional Perspectives on Green Economy

The Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, along with collaborating partners, the Asian Development Bank, UNEP and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific organized the International Forum for Sustainable Asia and the Pacific 2013 (ISAP) on 23-24 July 2013. The Forum aimed to promote and facilitate discussions on sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, with front-line experts and diverse stakeholders from international organizations, governments, business and NGOs. Under the theme of “Paving the Way for a Sustainable Asia-Pacific: Regional Perspectives on Green Economy”, ISAP 2013 shared information with stakeholders on on-going international and regional discussions and actions that promote shifts toward green economy and possible pathways that the region could take toward an inclusive green economy.



ASEAN-China Capacity Building Workshop on National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

UNEP and the China ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Centre jointly organized the ASEAN-China Capacity Building Workshop 15-17 July 2013 in Kunming, Yunnan Province, China, to enhance the capacity of ASEAN countries and China to update, develop and implement their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) in line with Aichi Targets, through South-South cooperation. The workshop was undertaken in collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and the Department of Environmental Protection of Yunnan.

During the workshop, participants shared experiences in developing/upgrading and implementing NBSAP, identified key threats to biodiversity and mainstreaming tools/mechanisms and steps needed for national target setting and indicator selection. They put forward a set of recommendations on measures to mitigate the perceived challenges for the implementation of NBSAP in line with Aichi Targets and priority areas for cooperation among ASEAN countries and China.

Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation in Development Plans in Southeast Asia

The Southeast Asia Network of Climate Change Focal Point Offices (SEAN-CC) in collaboration with Asia Pacific Adaptation Network organized a regional capacity building training workshop on “Vulnerability Impact and Adaptation (VIA) Assessment Methodology and Tools” in Hanoi, Vietnam on 10-12 July 2013. Representatives from seven Southeast Asian Countries attended this training workshop, which aimed to enhance the understanding of SEAN-CC network member countries on identification of entry points to mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into development plans and investments and the requirements of VIA including approaches, methods and tools.

Stronger Collaboration with Youth to Address Environmental Issues Facing Northeast Asia

The 7th Tunza Northeast Asia Youth Environment Network (NEAYEN) meeting resulted in a Northeast Asia Youth Statement on UN Post 2015 Agenda that called on Northeast Asian governments to involve them in addressing a range of issues facing their sub-region. These include tackling waste and waste reduction, air pollution, reducing carbon emissions, water pollution, strengthening laws to protect biodiversity, support for new and innovative green technology, and the integration of sustainable development in education curricula. Around 30 young leaders from Northeast Asian countries met in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, July 2-5 to foster cooperation, exchange and discussion and strengthen the capacity of these young leaders on themes and issues related to Post Rio+20 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The meeting provided a forum for dialogue and exchange among the participants on actions and activities undertaken in their individual countries. The meeting also resulted in a NEAYEN Action Plan, which outlines actions and activities that Northeast Asian youth will take in 2013/14.



Thai Teen Wins UN Art Competition



A Thai teenager has taken the top prize in an art competition run by UNEP.

Chiratchaya Kaeokamkong's painting of a child playing with fish, turtles and unicorns on a planet covered with water and vegetation won first place in the 22nd International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment. The 13-year-old's work was deemed the best out of almost 700,000 entries by children from 110 countries.

All of the young artists were asked to paint pictures inspired by the theme Water: Where Does it Come From? 2013 is the UN's international year of water. Chiratchaya said she wanted her painting to show that "water is a very important resource, which we should conserve and keep clean for the next generation".

Her prize consists of US\$2,000 and an all-expenses-paid trip to attend the award ceremony, which will take place alongside UNEP's Champions of the Earth awards in New York in September.

The International Children's Painting Competition is UNEP's flagship art and environment event. Since 1991, it has received more than three million entries from children in more than 190 countries.

Read more here: www.unep.org

Wildlife poster campaign reaches millions in Shanghai

A major poster campaign aimed at sensitizing the public to the true cost of illegal wildlife products such as ivory and rhino horn is reaching millions of commuters on the Shanghai metro system each day.

Shanghai, one of China's most-populous cities with an estimated 24 million inhabitants, pledged in February this year to use its resources to sensitize the public to the work of UNEP. As part of the agreement, the city agreed to use its large screen displays in the city centre and posters in stations of the extensive Shanghai Metro rail network to demonstrate UNEP's prioritized themes, including the campaign for wildlife protection being run in conjunction with CITES and the GoodPlanet Foundation.

There are now twenty posters in five different stations, and they will remain there until late December. The Shanghai metro is one of the busiest in the world, carrying almost 2.3 billion passengers in 2012.

Read more: <http://www.unep.org>

Photo Credit: Huffington Post



UN and Partners Renew Efforts to Support Green Economy Projects in Deserts and Drylands



Photo Credit: UNEP

Renewed collaboration between UNEP, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Beijing-based Elion Foundation was announced at the conclusion of the Kubuqi International Desert Forum - the only international forum dedicated to supporting the green development of the world's deserts, held in Inner Mongolia. The collaboration will include support for pilot projects in China, Mongolia, and other countries in Central Asia, including payment for ecosystem services projects, as well as investments in initiatives to improve the sharing of knowledge, technology and data on desertification between developing countries.

During the Kubuqi International Desert Forum, UNEP led a special session for Chinese entrepreneurs entitled "Investing in Natural Capital to Create Corporate Value". The event included a presentation of UNEP's recent GEO-5 for Business report.

UNEP signed a Memoranda of Understanding with the Elion Foundation that aims to improve the management of dryland ecosystems. UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja signed a five-year strategic cooperation plan with the Elion Foundation at the event to facilitate international efforts to combat desertification.

See more at: <http://www.unep.org>

OzHarvest and UNEP fed 5000 in Sydney

OzHarvest partnered up with UNEP on the global Think.Eat.Save - Reduce your Foodprint campaign and hosted an event in Sydney's Martin Place last 29 July from 12 noon until 2pm. Some of the nation's top chefs and hundreds of volunteers have joined OzHarvest, Australia's leading food-rescue organisation, in serving 5000 members of the public, a free, delicious hot lunch made from rescued ingredients that would otherwise have ended up as landfill.

Founder and CEO of OzHarvest, Ronni Kahn, said the aim behind the Feeding the 5000 events globally was to help raise awareness about the disturbing amount of food wasted around the world, where roughly one third of food produced for human consumption (approx. 1.3 billion tonnes) gets lost or wasted. The Australian event highlighted the amount of food wasted as a nation, and the direct impact this has on the environment.

Source: <http://www.thinkeatsave.org>



Photo Credit: Juliegreenart

New UNEP Report Finds China Outpacing Rest of World in Natural Resource Use

A new report released by UNEP, *Resource Efficiency: Economics and Outlook for China*, found that China has surged ahead of the rest of the world in material consumption, creating intense environmental pressures. It also found that the country also remains among the most successful in improving resource efficiency.

The report attributed China's growing affluence to the country becoming the world's largest consumer of primary materials (such as construction minerals, metal ores, fossil fuels and biomass), with domestic material consumption levels four times that of the USA.

From 1970 to 2008, China's per capita consumption of materials grew from one third to over one and a half times the world's average levels.

Domestic consumption of natural resources per capita increased at almost twice the rate of the whole of the Asia Pacific region due to massive investments in urban infrastructure, energy systems and manufacturing capacity. The report notes, however, that some 20 per cent of the resource uses in China goes towards the production of goods which are eventually consumed abroad.

The full report, *Resource Efficiency: Economics and Outlook for China*, is available at: <http://www.unep.org>

September 2013

9-10 September	Ministerial Environmental Health Forum	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
11-13 September	8th Regional Network Meeting of SEAN-CC	Bangkok, Thailand
11-12 September	Regional Policy Roundtable: Adaptation Practices in Agriculture Sector	Myanmar
11-14 September	10th MFF Regional Steering Committee Meeting (RSCT-10)	Hoi An, Viet Nam
15-18 September	Central Asia Youth Environment Network Meeting	Ashgabad, Turkmenistan
17-18 September	Asia Pacific Civil Society Regional Consultation Meeting 2013	Phnom Penh, Cambodia
19 September	10th Sub-regional Environment Policy Dialogue Meeting	Phnom Penh, Cambodia
22-25 September	Indicators for a Resource Efficient Green Asia	Beijing, China
27 Sept - 2 Oct	Regional Training of Trainers on Ecosystem Approach in Water Resources Management	Andong City, Korea

October 2013

1-2 October	Regional Pre-COP19 Workshop (SEAN-CC)	Hanoi Vietnam
9-11 October	6th ASEAN-Plus-Three Leadership Programme: Sustainable Production and Consumption	Phnom Penh, Cambodia
15-18 October	6th ASEAN-Plus-Three Leadership Programme: Sustainable Production and Consumption and High Level Seminar on Resource Efficiency and Decoupling Approach	Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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