



2004 Top News on Environment in Asia

アジアの環境重大ニュース

IGES

2004 Top News on Environment in Asia

2004年アジアの環境重大ニュース



財団法人 地球環境戦略研究機関

IGES

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
財団法人 地球環境戦略研究機関

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
財団法人 地球環境戦略研究機関

R100
Printed on recycled paper

2004
**2 Top News on
Environment in Asia**

アジアの環境重大ニュース

Contents

2004 Top News on Environment in Asia — Summary	1
■ The Asia-Pacific Region ■	6
Tim Higham, United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP)	
1. New Indicators Released to Guide Sustainable Development in Asia-Pacific	
2. New Offices in Korea and Japan Coordinate Efforts to Conserve Seas of Northwest Pacific	
3. UNEP-Tongji University Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development Serves as Teaching and Research Hub for Asia-Pacific Region	
4. UNEP Launches First Report on the State of the Environment in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	
5. First Atlas of the Greater Mekong Subregion Launched by UNEP and ADB	
■ The Asia-Pacific Region ■	9
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)	
1. Russia's Ratification Sets the Stage for Enactment of the Kyoto Protocol	
2. Asia Going Active in CDM Projects	
3. The Ecosystem Approach for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Resources	
4. Kitakyushu Initiative: 60 Cities Working Towards a Cleaner Environment	
5. The Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA) Programme	
6. 1st International Conference on Green Purchasing	
7. China RoHS Directive Will be Effective from 1 July 2005	
■ Australia ■	14
Gerard Early, Australian Government Department of the Environment	
1. Australia Moves to Reform Water Use	
2. Significant Gains in Heritage Protection	
3. Securing Australia's Energy Future	
4. Increasing Australia's Protected Areas	
■ Bangladesh ■	16
Khandaker Mainuddin, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)	
1. Workshop on "Options for Flood Risk and Reduction Damage in Bangladesh" through Sharing Common Rivers	
2. Master Plan for Waste Management in Dhaka City	
3. Ground Water Drops to Alarming Level in Dhaka City	
4. Devastating Flood Affects a Large Part of Bangladesh	
■ Cambodia ■	19
Khieu Muth, Ministry of Environment	
1. Inauguration Ceremony of Coastal Zone Resource Centres	
2. The 2004 Meeting of SEAP and SA- ODS Officer	
3. Cambodia's Celebration of International Ozone Day	
4. World Wetlands Day : 2-3 February 2004, Stoeng Treng Ramsar Site, Cambodia	
■ China ■	22
Chang Miao, Tsinghua University, Department of Environmental Science and Engineering	
1. Great Performance Needed to Clean up Huai River	
2. New Vehicle Emission Standards Formulated	
3. China to Establish Charge System on Hazardous Waste Disposal	
4. State Environmental Protection Administration Issued Six Bans to Execute Environmental Laws Rigidly	
■ India ■	25
Jyoti K. Parikh, Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRADe)	
1. Ministry of Environment and Forest Comes Out with National Environmental Policy	
2. City Governments Take Initiatives to Curb Air Pollution	
3. Wild Life Conservation and Livelihood Conflict - Stray Elephants Leave a Trail of Destruction	
4. Recycling Scrap Metal Saves Energy but May Impose Other Costs	
5. Two Indians Win 2004 Goldman Environmental Prize	

<p>■ Indonesia ■</p> <p>Mohamad Soerjani, Institute for Environmental Education and Development (IEED) Member of the National Research Council Indonesia</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. West Java Environmental Management Project (WJEMP) 2. Environmental Science 3. Empowerment of Future Fishermen 4. Environmental Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development 	<p>28</p>
<p>■ Japan ■</p> <p>Yohei Harashima, Faculty of International Development, Takushoku University</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong Earthquake and Abnormal Climate 2. 3Rs (to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Waste) Initiatives 3. Nuclear Power Plant Accident 4. Natural Hot Spring Using Artificial Whitening 5. Invasive Alien Species Act 6. Revising the Guideline for Measures to Prevent Global Warming 	<p>31</p>
<p>■ Korea ■</p> <p>Sang-il Hwang, Korea Environment Institute</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sick House Syndrome Attacks Dwellers of New Apartments 2. The First Korean-Made Hybrid-Powered Car Launched 3. South Korea to Host the 5th MCED 4. South Korea's Major Paint Manufacturers Agree to Reduce VOC by 20% 	<p>34</p>
<p>■ Lao PDR ■</p> <p>Ketkeo Salichanh, Department of Environment, Science Technology and Environment Agency, Prime Minister's Office</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Fifteenth Meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) 2. Social Environment and Development Projects 3. Strengthening Environmental Management Project Supporting the Propagation of Gender Issues in Environmental Protection 4. Lao National Environment Strategy 	<p>36</p>
<p>■ Malaysia ■</p> <p>Norhayati Mustapha and Wan Portia Hamzah, Bureau of Environment, Science and Technology (BEST), Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rumble in 'Bali Hai' 2. Illegal Import of Toxic Waste 3. Tougher Enforcement to Protect Turtles 4. COP7 to the Convention on Biological Diversity and MOP1 to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety 5. The Water Dilemma 	<p>39</p>
<p>■ Mongolia ■</p> <p>Ayush Namkhai, Department of Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Nature and the Environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Law on Water Has Been Renewed 2. "Water Policy Reform XXI" 3. The National Bureau of Clean Development Mechanism 4. Census of Deer (<i>Cervus elaphus</i> L.) 5. Bogd-Ochirvaani Buddhist Memorial 6. Garden Creation 	<p>42</p>
<p>■ Nepal ■</p> <p>Phool Chandra Shrestha, Freelance Consultant</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nepal Feels Heat, Alarm Bells for Region 2. Construction of Bio-track from Bagmati to Yamuna Begins 3. Concern over Exploitation of Nepali Monkeys 4. Medical Waste Disposal Directory 5. Community Forests Aim to Reduce Poverty 6. Supreme Court Tells Government to Probe Risks of Polythene Use 	<p>44</p>

■ New Zealand ■	47
Neil Ericksen and Claire Gibson, The International Global Change Institute (IGCI), The University of Waikato	
1. Review of Flood Risk Management	
2. Changes to the Resource Management Act	
3. New National Environmental Standards	
4. Fiordland Marine Area Created	
■ Pakistan ■	50
Mushtaq Ahmed Memon, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies	
1. Decision on Kalabagh Dam is in Sight!	
2. Arsenic Monitoring and Mitigation Project for Clean Drinking Water	
3. Karachi Mayor Calls on Kitakyushu Mayor for Environmental Cooperation	
4. IUCN Environmental Media Award 2004 for Asia Goes to Pakistan	
5. National Workshop on the Improvement of Urban Air Quality	
■ The Philippines ■	53
Merlin M. Magallona, Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines Law Centre	
1. Storms, Landslides, Death, and Deforestation	
2. Clean Water Act of 2004 Takes Effect	
3. Office of Environmental Ombudsman Created	
4. Farmers Protest Cutting of Trees in Building Road	
5. Bath-Sharing to Conserve Water	
■ Russia ■	56
Anatoly Lebedev, Non Government Environmental Organisation, Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC)	
1. Oil Pipeline Development Plans and Governmental Tricks	
2. New Structure – New Problems	
3. Illegal Logging as Community Based Timber Industry	
4. Russia Will Get Green Party	
■ Singapore ■	59
Koh Kheng-Lian, Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL)	
1. Ministry of Environment and Water Resources (MEWR)	
2. Restructuring of National Environment Agency	
3. Animals and Birds (Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes) Rules 2004 (No. S 668)	
4. SARS: Chua Mui Hoong, Defining Moment: How Singapore Beat SARS	
5. Capacity Building in Environment	
■ Sri Lanka ■	61
Nalaka Gunawardene, TVE Asia Pacific	
1. Tsunami Deals a Massive Blow to Coastal Sri Lanka	
2. New Measures to Ensure Better Air Quality	
3. Sri Lanka's Amphibians under Threat	
■ Vietnam ■	63
Pham Huu Nghi, Institute of State and Law, Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences	
1. Orientations for Improving Environmental Standards	
2. ADB Funds Central Urban Environment Projects	
3. Sci-tech Institute Helps Improve Environment in Craft Villages	
4. Environment Management to be Computerised	
Afterword	65
Previous Articles of Top News on Environment in Asia	66

<Reports are placed in alphabetical order>

2004 Top News on Environment in Asia — Summary

INTRODUCTION

At the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, we have been announcing the top news on the environment in the Asia-Pacific region every year since 1998 in order to collect and organise information about environmental issues and policy trends in this region, and to report on how this region addresses environmental problems and how it works to create a sustainable society.

For this year's top news on the environment in Asia, we have collected a total of 98 news items from 2 organisations and 19 countries. These news items have been chosen by our supporting organisations or researchers, and do not necessarily represent the official views of the countries and organisations concerned. Yet the news vividly communicates the recent trends and problems pertaining to the environment in this region.

Here is a brief look at these items classified under the categories of global warming, air quality, water environment, waste and recycling, harmful chemical substances, nature conservation, various policy measures and systems, and miscellaneous subjects.

1. Global Warming

After seven years of efforts since the Third Conference of Parties (COP3) at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change hosted by Japan, the Kyoto Protocol is at last ready to become effective. Russia's formal ratification in November 2004 has cleared the way for the protocol to come into force in February 2005. In Asia, a system for the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), one of the Kyoto mechanisms, is being improved, and the upcoming enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol is expected to accelerate CDM-related activities.

As the international community is working to shape a worldwide framework intended to thwart global warming, we have received reports on the effects of this phenomenon. In Nepal, ice and snow on the world's highest peaks such as Mount Everest have been melting at the rate of 0.5 inches a year, and the rising sea level is of great concern. Meanwhile, New Zealand had its two worst ever floods this year, dealing a heavy blow to the national economy and throwing the society and the environment into confusion. In response, New Zealand refurbished its flood risk management system and is now carrying out a research project designed to look into the possible impacts of climate change and land use changes on flooding. In Bangladesh, which suffered serious damage from floods between July and August, the Prime Minister has determined that the consequences of construction activities and building both at home and abroad are to be blamed for the disruption of the ecosystem and the environment, as well as for floods, and that a rise in the sea level stemming from the greenhouse effect is also to be blamed for the spread of damage from flooding. Realistic strategies, including international cooperation, are called for.

(IGES-1-2, Bangladesh-1-4, Cambodia-2-3, Japan-6, Mongolia-3, Nepal-1, New Zealand-1)

2. Air Quality

By the year 2015, two-thirds of the mega cities in the world are expected to be located in the Asia-Pacific region, indicating that addressing problems related to air quality remains a crucial challenge.

Delhi in India has introduced environmental and sales taxes for diesel cars as a disincentive to dieselisation, and is considering imposing an entry tax. Diesel engine exhaust gas is believed

to contain carcinogens and Delhi's introduction of these taxes is attracting attention as an initiative to prevent air pollution in mega cities that are becoming increasingly urbanised.

China has also moved to enforce tighter controls on contamination by automobile emissions. New vehicle emission standards, which became effective in July, are as stringent as the Euro II standards in force to regulate automotive emissions in Europe. The Chinese government intends to adopt stricter emission standards comparable to the Euro III standards by 2008.

In Pakistan, a national workshop was conducted on improvements to the air quality in major cities. Pakistan has begun a study examining national standards for the monitoring of the air quality in order to bolster the air quality management systems in the main cities.

Meanwhile, Korea has launched its first hybrid-powered cars, which have been offered to main local public bodies and government agencies. The hybrid-powered cars deliver fuel efficiency 40–50% higher than the existing automobiles and produce 30% less emissions.

(Cambodia-2-3, China-2, India-2, Korea-2, Pakistan-5, Sri Lanka-2)

3. Water Environment

In the area of the water environment, one of the most important global environmental challenges in the 21st century, we have gathered reports describing how energetically countries in the region are working to improve water quality and manage water resources.

In China, after the heavy rain in July this year, the Huai River overflowed its banks forcing the discharge of contaminated reservoir water, polluting marine products and plants along the seashores, and resulting in an enormous economic loss to the nation. In an enhanced effort to clean up rivers, four provinces along the Huai River basin were required to control river contamination and to

undergo an examination by the State Environmental Protection Administration.

Malaysia is a tropical country blessed with ample rain, but water shortages are not uncommon. This is because the rates of non-revenue water (water consumed without payment of charges) lost to leaks from old pipes or through illegal connections are relatively high. Under these circumstances, the new Prime Minister decided to centralise the administration of water resources within the federal government, and a new ministry specialising in water use and management was created.

In Pakistan, after 30 years of controversy, the green light was finally given to a project aimed at building a large dam. In order to stop the use of arsenic-contaminated drinking water, the Pakistani government also granted authorisation for a project to develop arsenic-eliminating technology so as to alleviate arsenic pollution.

In the meantime, the Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA) Programme, an initiative proposed at the 3rd World Water Forum, was commenced to initiate efforts to promote water governance and capacity building for relevant stakeholders in the Asian region by providing an information platform.

(IGES-5, Australia-1, Bangladesh-1-3-4, China-1, Malaysia-5, Mongolia-1-2, New Zealand-1, Pakistan-1-2, the Philippines-2-5)

4. Waste and Recycling

With regard to waste disposal, a waste problem covering not only a single nation but passing beyond national boundaries has been reported.

India, which imports scrap iron from war zones across the world, is troubled by the disposal of artillery shells mixed with scraps of iron. Thousands of pieces of live rocket ammunition, mortar shells and missiles were collected but have been left undestroyed. India is also importing large quantities of mercury

and electronic waste from industrialised countries, and these imports have been increasing significantly.

In Malaysia, illegal imports of harmful waste are posing a problem. Waste containing highly concentrated heavy metals is illegally imported from Taiwan, and talks about these illegal imports between the governments of Malaysia and Taiwan are under way.

(Bangladesh-2, China-3, India-4, Japan-2, Malaysia-2, Nepal-4)

5. Harmful Chemical Substances

This year, we received a larger than usual number of reports on harmful chemical substances.

In Nepal, the Supreme Court has ordered the Ministry of Population and the Environment to survey the impacts of the manufacture and use of polythene bags on the public's health and the environment.

In Korea, six leading paint manufacturing companies have agreed to reduce their production of volatile organic compounds (VOC) and VOC production is expected to decrease by 20%.

Meanwhile, a draft called the China RoHS Directive (a directive on restrictions of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment) was completed and is expected to become effective in July 2005. The directive prescribes reductions and controls on the use of six types of hazardous substances in electronic products and is likely to have a major impact on Asian countries and trade markets.

(IGES-7, Korea-1-4, Nepal-6)

6. Nature Conservation

We have received many reports on nature conservation from Asia, a continent blessed with natural resources.

With the progress of urbanisation and land

development, quite a few animals and plants are in danger of extinction. In areas from China to Indonesia and from India to Vietnam, Asian elephants are reportedly decreasing in number, and their communities are becoming increasingly isolated. The Marina Project off Tioman Island met with extreme resistance as it was feared that the project would threaten the existence of giant clams and corals. The project has been postponed until a detailed environmental impact assessment report is submitted.

On the other hand, we have had numerous opportunities to recognise anew the bounty of nature. New Zealand created the Fiordland Marine Area to protect its national treasure, Fiordland, which was recently officially registered as a UNESCO World Heritage area. In Cambodia, World Wetlands Day was celebrated in Stoeng Treng, a Ramsar wetland site, to raise the awareness of local inhabitants on the value of wetland biodiversity and functions, and the importance of nature conservation in and around this site.

In Russia, where the environmental protection movement has increased its influence over economic development policy over the past few years, the Green Party is establishing itself and is expected to play an active role in environmental preservation.

(IGES-3, Australia-4, Cambodia-1-4, India-3, Japan-5, Malaysia-1-3-4, Mongolia-4-5-6, Nepal-2-3, New Zealand-4, the Philippines-4, Russia-1-3-4, Singapore-3, Sri Lanka-3)

7. Various Policy Measures and Systems

a) Initiatives by Countries

We have received reports describing how energetically the governments of Asian countries are working to address environmental problems through various measures, including revising environmental standards.

India's Ministry of the Environment and

Forest has announced the National Environmental Policy and has been examining a comprehensive environmental policy. New Zealand has also authorised environmental standards at a national level this year. Consistent national environmental standards are in place as a result. Vietnam, which announced a plan to computerise the environmental administration and management system, has revised environmental standards designed to promote sustainable socio-economic development.

Meanwhile, some countries have streamlined their environmental administration through the restructuring of government agencies. In Singapore, as the Ministry of the Environment was reorganised, organisational reform in the National Environment Agency of Singapore was carried out. The Lao PDR created a social impact department responsible for impacts of development projects on society, and this department is to provide advice on development projects that would be beneficial for local citizens.

(Australia-3, Cambodia-1, China-2-4, India-1, Lao PDR-2-4, New Zealand-2-3, the Philippines-2, Russia-2, Singapore-1-2, Vietnam-1-4)

b) Regional and International Cooperation

Trans-national cooperation toward environmental issues and environmental conservation took place and diverse international frameworks were created.

In August, the 15th Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) was held in the Lao PDR, and participants devoted animated discussions to a wide variety of issues, including biodiversity, multilateral environmental agreements, and water resource management.

In November, Cambodia played host to an international conference on substances that deplete the Earth's ozone layer, with 26 countries participating from the Asia-Pacific region. At this conference, participants exchanged information about countries' policies and experiences pertaining to reductions of

ozone-depleting substances specified in the Montreal Protocol, and set goals for developing countries to cut down on their production and consumption of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by 50%, halon by 85% and methyl chloroform by 30%.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) announced in November new indicators for sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region. The new indicators prescribe assessment criteria in 30 different categories, such as the economy, society and the environment, in five sub-regions of the region.

In the Kitakyushu Initiative Network, which is pursuing a pioneering initiative towards improving the quality of the environment with 60 cities from 18 countries in the Asia-Pacific region taking part, participating nations reviewed and assessed the efforts they had made towards sustainable development over the last five years in preparation for the 5th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED) due to take place in Korea in March 2005.

(IGES-3 -4 -6, UNEP-1-2, Cambodia-2, Korea-3, Lao PDR-1, Malaysia-4, Pakistan-3, Vietnam-2)

8. Miscellaneous

This year we had exceptionally numerous natural disasters in Asia, such as typhoons, earthquakes and tsunamis. The Philippines has reported that serious damage from typhoons was attributable to extensive forest destruction causing landslides and floods, and the president imposed a country-wide ban on the felling of forests while the government deliberated on a comprehensive felling prohibition bill. We received a report from Sri Lanka, which suffered heavy damage from the tsunami caused by the earthquake originating off the western coast of northern Sumatra at the end of the year, stating that the recent tsunami demonstrated that coral reefs and mangrove forests could ease damage from tsunamis but

these reefs and mangrove forests had already been destroyed by projects to construct shrimp farms and hotels, so the government has moved to enforce an existing law that bans the construction of buildings in areas near the shorelines.

Meanwhile, we have noticed news articles featuring sustainable development with citizen participation as a keyword. The Lao PDR's national environmental strategy encourages the people to participate in environmental management to be conducted in socioeconomic development projects, dictating that the people's active participation could ensure sustainable development. Speaking on the occasion of the opening of the Coastal Zone Resource Centres designed to protect the marine environment, Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen delivered a message to the effect that the local community

is encouraged to assume responsibility and take part in environmental protection and the management of natural resources, and communities, municipalities, state and local authorities and all levels of entities should concentrate their efforts on protecting the environment and conserving natural resources. In Nepal, the community forest resource management system that encourages local communities to participate in protecting forests is attracting public attention, and funds derived from the community forests are contributing to women's social advancement, poverty reduction, and improvement of the quality of life as well as the conservation of biodiversity.

(UNEP-1-3-4-5, Australia-2, Cambodia-1-4, India-5, Indonesia-1-2-3-4, Japan-1-3-4, Lao PDR-3, Nepal-5, Pakistan-4, the Philippines-1-3, Singapore-4-5, Sri Lanka-1, Vietnam-3)

The Asia-Pacific Region

Tim Higham
Regional Information Officer
United Nations Environment Programme
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP)



1. New Indicators Released to Guide Sustainable Development in Asia-Pacific

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released indicators to assist countries of Asia-Pacific to measure their progress towards sustainable development goals in November.

Published in simple, graphical form they allow policy makers to use benchmarks and assess trends in 30 different economic, social and environmental areas.

Staff at UNEP's Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific combed dozens of technical reports to obtain indicators such as population level, standard of living, availability of clean water, percentage of forest cover, air pollutant emissions and number of threatened species.

The indicators are important tools to assess well being and performance against the targets set in the UN Millennium Development Goals, at other international summits and against national plans. Overall the indicators show progress in economic performance, poverty reduction and human health across the region, but declines in the quality of land, air, water and biodiversity resources.

The reports have been published for each of the five sub-regions of Asia-Pacific and were released during UNEP's second Subregional Environmental Policy Dialogue (SEPD) meeting in Bangkok on 17 November 2004.

More at www.rrcap.unep.org/indicator

2. New Offices in Korea and Japan Coordinate Efforts to Conserve Seas of Northwest Pacific

Conservation of the marine and coastal areas of the Northwest Pacific will be strengthened following the opening of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) supported offices in Toyama, Japan and Busan, Republic of Korea in November.

Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) offices for the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) will assist management of the seas on which millions of people depend for their livelihoods, but which are increasingly threatened by coastal development, industry, transport, oil production and activities such as land reclamation and intensive marine aquaculture.

The opening of the offices follows five years of negotiations with the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Russian Federation over implementation of the Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific, first adopted in 1994.

The Regional Coordinating Unit will oversee implementation of the action plan agreed to and funded by the four signatory countries. At the ninth NOWPAP intergovernmental meeting in Busan on 2 November, members signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a new Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plan, to address

the threat of major oil spills in the region.

The RCU will also oversee the work of four NOWPAP Regional Activity Centres in Beijing, Daejeon, Toyama and Vladivostok, and provide a platform for meeting the country's responsibilities under international marine and environmental conventions.

More at www.unep.ch/regionalseas/regions/nowpap/nowhome.htm

3. UNEP-Tongji University Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development Serves as Teaching and Research Hub for Asia-Pacific Region

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) - Tongji Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development in Shanghai offered its first educational course - a leadership development programme - in July 2004.

UNEP Executive Director Mr. Klaus Toepfer said the new institute was intended as Asia and the Pacific's premier environmental teaching and learning centre. "China is the centre of a region that is fast becoming the world's economic powerhouse, but to realise and sustain this potential for enhancing human well being we must ensure that environment is fully integrated into the developmental model. This can be achieved by tapping the best technological, legal, managerial and social science knowledge, from both here and abroad, and putting it to service for the environment," he said at the inauguration of a new six-storey building to house the institute in September.

The leadership course was designed by the UNEP-Tongji Institute staff and a faculty drawn from a dozen universities and educational institutes in the region. The curriculum added the human dimensions of "body, mind and soul" to the traditional three pillar - economy, environment and society - approach to teaching and learning about sustainability. A masters course will be offered from 2005, closely tied to

the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

The institute was initiated two and a half years ago with the signing of an agreement between UNEP and Tongji University and strong backing from the Shanghai Municipal Authority.

More at www.rrcap.unep.org/uneptongji/

4. UNEP Launches First Report on the State of the Environment in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The first assessment of the state of the environment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was launched in August by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and DPRK officials at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi.

The State of the Environment report was produced in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and was initiated following a visit by UNEP Executive Director Klaus Toepfer to DPRK capital Pyongyang in 2000. DPR Korea officials from 20 different government and academic agencies produced the report with training and guidance from UNEP's assessment office in Bangkok and the UNDP office in Pyongyang.

The report uses a "pressure-state-response" methodology and identifies priority issues related to forests, water, air, land and biodiversity. It also showed a lack of research and data on which to base reliable environmental assessments. "Bringing together the available environmental information and identifying priority issues will help strengthen monitoring and assessment, policy setting, action planning and resource mobilisation in North Korea," Mr. Toepfer said.

UNEP and the DPRK delegation signed a framework agreement in Nairobi to guide joint activities to further strengthen capacity for environmental protection. This includes a

project with UNDP to improve quantitative environmental assessment and monitoring, utilising information technology and integrating 10 national institutions with environmental responsibilities.

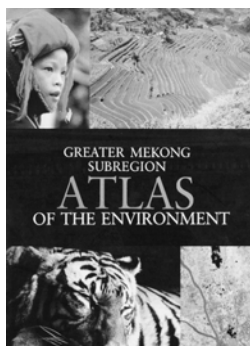
The assessment report also provides guidance for the donor community on specific environmental issues and needs.

The report is available from <http://www.rrcap.unep.org/reports/soe/dprksoe.cfm>

5. First Atlas of the Greater Mekong Subregion Launched by UNEP and ADB

A Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Atlas of the Environment was launched in April, published jointly by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).

The Atlas, the first of its type, provides comprehensive environmental information, the



scarcity of which has been a major constraint on sustainable development planning and decision-making in the subregion.

About 250 million people, most of them in rural areas, inhabit the five countries and one province of the subregion: Cambodia, Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam.

Extensively illustrated by photographs, maps, remote sensing images, tables, graphs and text, the Atlas showcases the wealth of the region's natural resources - including water, minerals, energy, wetlands, forestlands, biodiversity, protected areas, agriculture and fisheries - and the efforts being made to tackle the region's environmental problems.

It concludes that environmental degradation remains one of the most pressing challenges in the countries sharing the Mekong River - a region rich in resources but with a high poverty rate. Wise stewardship of the environment and natural resources is needed to ensure sustainable livelihoods for the Mekong peoples.

More at http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/GMS_Atlas/default.asp

The Asia-Pacific Region

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)



1. Russia's Ratification Sets the Stage for Enactment of the Kyoto Protocol

Seven years after its adoption at the Third Conference of Parties (COP3) at the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change hosted by Japan, the Kyoto Protocol is expected to entry into force on 16 February 2005 because of the Russian ratification of the Protocol on global warming. Under the strong leadership of President Vladimir V. Putin, the Russian Cabinet decided to endorse the legislation on the ratification of the Protocol on 30 September 2004. The Russian Duma (lower house) voted overwhelmingly to ratify the protocol on 22 October and the Council of Federation (upper house) followed suit five days later. Subsequently, President Putin signed Russia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on 5 November. However, Russia restricts its participation in the Protocol to the first period of commitment and, consequently, the United States has already declared its withdrawal from the Protocol. Further, U.S. and EU including major industrialising countries such as India and China are expected to engage in bitter competition for leadership in creating a new framework after 2013, or Beyond Kyoto Protocol (BKP). At COP10, which was held in Buenos Aires in December 2004, in addition to the achievement of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, which marked the 10th anniversary,

adaptation and receptiveness to discussions relating to climate change or technology and climate change, small-sized carbon sinks and compensation issues in oil-producing countries were debated.

By the Climate Policy Project

2. Asia Going Active in CDM Projects

2004 UNEP-RISO statistics reveal that Asian countries are remarkably positive toward Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects. According to these statistics, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region account for approximately 90% of the CDM projects submitted to the UNFCCC.

The CDM Programme includes support for the education and training of people dedicated to CDM projects, primarily in Asia. Here are some of the recent news items related to the partner countries of the programme involved in CDM. The CDM Executive Board decided to review an HFC-23 destruction project in India for registration at the seventeenth meeting. As part of the Thai government's efforts to conduct an overall review of its CDM policy in the light of new global developments, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment reorganised the institutional arrangement for CDM. The Philippine government set up a Designated National Authority (DNA) in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in

June 2004, while Indonesia ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2004. In addition, the Cambodian government has completed a draft of its national sustainable development criteria to be announced officially in fiscal 2005.

As seen above, several countries involved in the CDM Programme have begun paving the way for a worldwide CDM. The general trend of CDM project activity development in these countries is expected to grow stronger in line with the effectuation of the Kyoto Protocol scheduled for 16 February 2005.

By the Clean Development Mechanism Programme

3. The Ecosystem Approach for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Resources

The Third World Conservation Congress, the largest rendezvous for conservation and development, was successfully held under the auspices of IUCN-the World Conservation Union in Bangkok from 17-26 November 2004. Over 5,000 delegates representing government, the private sector, civil society, and professional and scientific communities gathered in Bangkok to discuss the global issues on conservation and sustainable development. Inaugurated by the Queen of the Kingdom of Thailand, the 33rd sitting of the Members' General Assembly elected Mohammed Valli Moosa from South Africa as its president, as well as a treasurer, eight regional councilors and six commission chairpersons.

The Members' General Assembly adopted its intersessional programme (2005-2008), which comprises 26 global results clustered in six key result areas covering (1) biodiversity, (2) social equity, (3) incentives and finance, (4) international agreements, (5) ecosystem and (6) programme delivery. The strategy of the intersessional programme is based on the assumption that when knowledge is available and people and institutions are empowered to use it, they can often participate more effectively in the

decision-making process to improve laws, policies, instruments and institutions.

In the conservation forum, the theme of the ecosystem approach emerged as a response to balancing the needs of nature conservation with human needs. In other words, it brings the diverse areas and activities under conservation. Any approaches can be aligned under this approach. The ecosystem approach was endorsed by the 7th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in February 2004. It declared that "the Ecosystem Approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use of resources in an equitable way."

As a consequence of this development, the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) argues that it is the best tool to address the global issues facing the 21st century. The CEM has put forward the five practical steps to implement the principles of the Ecosystem Approach as advocated by the CBD.

By the Forest Conservation Project

4. Kitakyushu Initiative: 60 Cities Working Towards a Cleaner Environment

By 2015, it is forecasted that two-thirds of the mega-cities in the world will be found in the Asia-Pacific region. With the ever increasing number of cities in this region, it is essential for cities to jointly tackle environmental issues, helping each other.

The Kitakyushu Initiative Network, with members from 60 cities in 18 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, is playing an important role in fostering capacity building of local environmental staff through the conduct of pilot projects and sharing lessons learnt among the member cities to improve the quality of the environment. This Initiative was adopted in 2000 at the Ministerial Conference on

Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED), which is one of the highest official meetings in the Asia-Pacific region for environment and development. The year 2004 was the year in which the Asia-Pacific countries reviewed their activities toward sustainable development for the past five years before the next MCED on 24-29 March 2005 in South Korea.

During its 3rd network meeting in August 2004, the Kitakyushu Initiative adopted the Kitakyushu Initiative Action Plan for future activities (2005-2010) and a message from the member cities' Mayors/Senior Officials to the MCED 2005. The Action Plan included concrete activities to help member cities reduce and manage solid waste, improve air quality, promote urban environmental planning, conserve and improve water quality, build management capacities particularly through the use of ICT, and energy conservation, among others. Member cities' lack of capacity and appropriate technology, as well as difficulties of procuring financial resources were also noted. Cooperation for capacity-building, financing, technology transfer and institutional strengthening were identified as possible mechanisms to address these challenges. It was also proposed that a "Kitakyushu Initiative Award" would be given to cities that made significant effort in improving quality of environment. This Action Plan will be presented to the Ministers at the MCED 2005 for their consideration.

Source: <http://www.iges.or.jp/kitakyushu/>

By the Urban Environmental Management Project

5. The Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA) Programme

The Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA) Programme was officially launched in April. WEPA is a new initiative proposed by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan at the third World Water Forum (2003). It works to provide an information platform for water

environment conservation.

WEPA aims to contribute to strengthened water environmental governance and capacity building in the region, developing a set of four databases under the headings of Policy; Activities by NGOs and Communities; Technologies for Water Environment Conservation; and Information Sources.

The WEPA inception workshop was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, in March, where the participants discussed the details of the WEPA programme activities and its partnerships with various countries. The WEPA programme will continue for five years from 2004 to 2008, the year in which the 5th World Water Forum will be organised. The Freshwater Resources Management Project at IGES will continue to take a key role in implementing and coordinating the WEPA activities.

For details, please refer to: <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/fw/wepa.html>

By the Freshwater Resources Management Project

6. 1st International Conference on Green Purchasing

The 1st International Conference on Green Purchasing in Sendai took place in Sendai City, Japan, on 6 and 7 October 2004. The conference was sponsored by Sendai City, the Green Purchasing Network (GPN), and other entities. Green purchasing plays an important role in consumers' efforts to change the goods and



By courtesy of the Steering Committee of the 1st International Conference on Green Purchasing in Sendai

services market to one that cares about the environment. Viable tools for promoting the purchase of green goods or environmentally acceptable products include environmental labelling and the Law Concerning the Promotion of Procurement of Eco-Friendly Goods and Services by the State and Other Entities (Law on Promoting Green Purchasing). Encouraging numerous economic entities to voluntarily purchase environmentally friendly products is crucial for achieving market transformation. Forward-thinking business enterprises, administrative agencies, and other organisations have been purchasing green goods of their own free will. The conference indicates that this movement is gaining momentum in various countries around the world.

The 1st International Conference on Green Purchasing was attended by more than 1,000 participants from 37 countries and regions around the world, including Asia. The conference was concluded by the announcement of the Green Purchasing Sendai Declaration that calls for more active green purchasing and intends to set up an International Green Purchasing Network (IGPN) as a new framework for promoting green purchases throughout the world.

The GPN was established in 1996 in Japan as an organisation aimed at formulating guidelines on green purchasing and promoting green purchasing among consumers, businesses, and governmental organisations. The Asian countries followed suit: South Korea formed a GPN in 1999 and Malaysia established this network in 2003. Taiwan and Thailand are making preliminary arrangements for setting up GPNs. The establishment of international green purchasing institutions is expected to further accelerate the GPN movement.

By the Business for Sustainable Society Project

7. China RoHS Directive Will be Effective from 1 July 2005

The draft of 'Management Methods on the Prevention and Control of Pollution Caused by Electronic Information Products', proposed by the Ministry of Information Industry (MII), has been completed in detailed discussion and reviews. The draft, called the China RoHS Directive (restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment), lies in the final stage of ratification. According to 'Chinacourt', it is scheduled for approval at the end of this year, and is expected to be effective from 1 July 2005, which will be a year ahead of the EU RoHS Directive. Modelled on the EU RoHS, it regulates the reduction and the restriction of the use of six hazardous substances in electronics, such as mercury, lead, cadmium, chromium, polybromide biphenyl, and polybromide biphenylether, and their phase-out on the market by July 2006. It also requires producer responsibility to provide information on products and packages, including names of certain hazardous substances and their contents in a product (articles 10, 13, 14). In addition, the draft mentions producer responsibility on 'take-back' and recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) (article 16). Accordingly, China is presently circulating a draft of 'Management Regulations on Recycling and Treatment of Waste and Used Household Electrical and Electronic Products', called the China WEEE Directive, and is preparing for its enactment accordingly.

Since the EU WEEE and RoHS Directives came into force, China as one of biggest exporters has been looking for solutions to tackle the upcoming threat on the EEE export market. The China RoHS directive seems to be radical considering the available technologies in China to find alternatives replacing such hazardous substances in EEE. However, it provides a strong driving force for Chinese industry to proactively develop environmentally

friendly and sustainable products. Not only for protecting the environment, but also for surviving in the competitive global market, China took positive initiatives among Asian countries. The China RoHS Directive is expected to heavily influence other Asian countries and trade markets. By introducing the China RoHS and WEEE directives, China is adopting 'Extended Producer Responsibility' principles in product policy, followed by Korea and Japan, and is evolving its policies in a participatory manner.

Source:

1. <http://www.ep.com.cn/cgi-bin/dbfg/doc.cgi?id=1849>
2. Chinacourt. (2004). <http://www.chinacourt.org/public/detail.php?id=123675>
3. *Management Regulations on Recycling and Treatment of Waste and Used Household Electrical and Electronic Products (Draft for Comment), Draft as of 17 September 2004*

By the Long-term Perspective and Policy Integration Project

Australia

Gerard Early

Head, Approvals and Wildlife

Australian Government Department of the Environment



1. Australia Moves to Reform Water Use

Apart from Antarctica, Australia is the world's driest continent. There is a continuing national imperative to increase the productivity and efficiency of Australia's water use and to ensure the health of river and groundwater systems. During 2004 a number of measures were taken to deal with these issues. Under the National Water Initiative, governments throughout Australia committed themselves to an expansion of water trade, more secure water access entitlements, better water planning, addressing water over-allocation and improved specification of environmental outcomes, and better management of water in urban environments. A National Water Commission has been established to assess progress and advise on actions to implement the National Water Initiative. In addition to the \$2 billion Australian Water Fund, the \$500 million Living Murray Program aims to reduce the level of water overallocation and to achieve specific environmental outcomes in the Murray-Darling Basin covering the watersheds of the Murray and Darling Rivers in eastern Australia, an area of over one million square kilometres. During 2004 the Australian Government also moved to establish a mandatory national water efficiency labelling and standards scheme expected to save more than \$600 million in water and energy costs by 2021. The scheme, which will

be the first of its kind in the world, will enable consumers to make informed decisions about which brands of products such as washing machines, dishwashers, showers and taps will help them save the most water.

2. Significant Gains in Heritage Protection

A number of places in Australia were listed as heritage sites under new legislation during 2004, including the first ever World Heritage listing of an Australian historic building. Under the legislation, a new national scheme for the identification and conservation of Australia's unique heritage places came into effect in January 2004, requiring approval to be obtained for any action likely to have a significant impact on the national heritage values of any listed place. The first place to be included on the National List was the Budj Bim National Heritage Landscape where, thousands of years ago, the Gunditjmara people built a highly sophisticated system of weirs, channels, water races and fish traps so they could grow and harvest fish. Other places include the Eureka Stockade Gardens, the site of a rebellion 150 years ago that gave rise to Australia's unique democratic tradition of a 'fair go', the Dinosaur Stampede National Monument in Queensland and the Kurnell Peninsula in Sydney, a site important in the history of European settlement

in Australia. The Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens, built to host the Melbourne International Exhibition in 1880, and the building that opened Australia's first national Parliament, were the first historic places to be included on Australia's new National Heritage List. This remarkable building was also included on the World Heritage List in 2004 for its importance as the last great survivor of the international exhibition movement of the late nineteenth century. Almost 350 other sites, managed, owned or leased by the Australian Government, were also listed in 2004 on the basis of their important natural, indigenous and built heritage values.



The Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, included on the World Heritage list in 2004

*Copyright ©the Australian Government
Department of the Environment and Heritage*

3. Securing Australia's Energy Future

In June 2004 the Australian Government adopted a comprehensive long term policy framework for Australian energy. The framework set out policies and principles to guide the production and use of energy in Australia well into the 21st century. These include developing Australia's enormous energy resources, improving electricity and gas, and transport energy markets, overhauling Australia's fuel excise system, improving energy efficiency, enhancing energy security, lowering Australia's long term greenhouse emissions signature, improving air quality and managing the environmental impact of large

projects. The framework recognises that Australia's low-cost reliable supplies of energy deliver many hundreds of thousands more jobs and underpin a world competitive resource processing sector and that Australia has a responsibility to develop its resources in an environmentally sustainable way.

4. Increasing Australia's Protected Areas

Australia supports the development of networks of protected areas (including national parks) to conserve biodiversity, protect ecosystem services and provide nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities. Recent additions to national reserves include some twenty properties covering almost 300,000 hectares. Since 1996, the Australian Government has added more than 20 million hectares to the National Reserve System, including some 7 million hectares purchased or covenanted, and more than 13 million hectares declared as indigenous protected areas. This area represents 3% of Australia's mainland. The total area covered by terrestrial protected areas in Australia is more than 77 million hectares, or just over 10% of Australia's landmass.



The Australian Alps, one of Australia's protected areas

*Copyright ©the Australian Government
Department of the Environment and Heritage*

Bangladesh

Khandaker Mainuddin

Fellow

Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)



1. Workshop on “Options for Flood Risk and Reduction Damage in Bangladesh” through Sharing Common Rivers

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh Begum Khaleda Zia said it would be best if the countries sharing common rivers could sit together with a common interest to negotiate to the formulation of a timely plan of action to reduce the severity of floods. A two-day workshop was held from 7 to 8 September 2004 and was attended by ministers, public representatives, civil and military officials, experts, professionals, diplomats and representatives of development partners, NGOs and civil society. The Prime Minister Office (PMO) organised an in-depth workshop, the first of its kind in the country, at the Bangladesh-China friendship centre. The Prime Minister mentioned that Bangladesh is not the origin of severe floods as the country shares 54 rivers that originate in India, China, Nepal and Bhutan. She hoped that the workshop would lead to pragmatic recommendations involving bilateral, regional and international cooperation that are needed in the current perspective. She mentioned that floods had been occurring frequently in the country for the last two decades with a gradual increase in the magnitude of losses as well as in the duration of the floods. She said that construction of structures and carrying out of activities that

lead to destruction of ecology and environment both in and outside the country is a contributing factor to the abnormal floods. A rise in sea level due to the greenhouse effect is another reason that worsens the flood situation, the prime minister said and she sought recommendations to devise a working strategy to face the problem.

Source: Daily Star, 8 September 2004

2. Master Plan for Waste Management in Dhaka City

The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has taken a one-year project to design an advanced master plan for solid waste management. The waste control plan will be designed in a scientific and health-oriented manner and will cover waste disposal up to the year 2015. The master plan will be developed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and is expected to be completed by December 2004. The DCC and JICA signed the project contract on 16 July 2003. According to a JICA report, about five thousand tons of solid waste is generated in Dhaka City every day. The JICA report predicted that the yearly waste volume will reach 1.1 million tons by 2015 as the population of Dhaka city, which is nearly 10 million at the moment, might reach 20 million by then.

The project would also look into the

possibility of utilising the solid waste for recycling and power generation. One of the main areas of focus of the project will be domestic waste management. This will include raising awareness among the residents and capacity among women as they are the ones who generally deal with domestic waste. DCC is optimistic that Japan might step in to fund this project as the master plan initiated by JICA is based on an understanding with the Japanese government.

Source: The Daily Star, 18 January 2004

3. Ground Water Drops to Alarming Level in Dhaka City

The ground water level in Dhaka city has dropped to 24 meters in nine years since 1996, bringing about a crisis in water output. Dhaka Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) attributed the crisis to the lack of ground water recharge in the monsoon because of unplanned and ever-expanding habitation. Ground water does not get recharged as there is no adequate open space for rain water to accumulate. It threatens the quantity and quality of water as well, according to WASA sources. A recent study by Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) also pointed to a drop in the groundwater level in the last decade and predicts that if the trend continues there will be a severe crisis and a rise in the number of devastating landslides. The water level was recorded at 26.6 meters from the surface in 1996 – a table that slid further to 50.6 meters in 2004, according to a study carried out with a vertical automatic water level recorder, the

modern method of verifying water levels.

The output of tubewell water in some areas of the city is not the same as before and many tubewells have remained inoperative for a long time. According to WASA sources, which depend on ground water for 85 % of the demand, now supplies 1.5 billion litres against a demand of 2.0 billion litres per day.

Source: The Daily Star, 10 March 2004

4. Devastating Flood Affects a Large Part of Bangladesh

The devastating flood which occurred during the monsoon months of July and August 2004 caused heavy loss of life and property. According to an estimate, 33.5 million of the country's 140 million population have been affected by the flood. Out of the country's 64 districts, 39 districts were hit by the flood causing damage to a various extent. The death toll from the flood was about one thousand. Besides, many were affected by diarrhea and other water borne diseases. Standing crops on 1.5 million acres of land were washed away by the flood and 1.1 million acres were partially damaged. Some 85 thousand houses have been washed away while 3.1 million houses have been partially damaged. About 20 thousand head of cattle have died during the flood. Some 13,541 km of roads, 1,225 educational institutions have been damaged. A large part of the capital city of Dhaka was also inundated during the flood. Small country boats replaced rickshaws and autorickshaws in some parts of the city submerged by flood water. The road communication between Dhaka and the north-



People took the shelter on the roof of a tin-house
Copyright ©Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies



Boats ply on the submerged roads of Dhaka
Copyright ©Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies

eastern city of Sylhet was cut off for about a week. The government, NGOs and donor agencies have come forward to mitigate the flood losses through undertaking a massive rehabilitation programme.

Source: The Independent 13 July and 4 August 2004

Cambodia

Khieu Muth

Director General

Ministry of Environment



1. Inauguration Ceremony of Coastal Zone Resource Centres

On 1 April 2004, the launching ceremony of Coastal Zone Resource Centres of Sihanouk Ville, Kep City, Kampot and Koh Kong provinces, was held in the presence of Samdech Hun Sen, the Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, at the independent beach, Sihanouk Ville. The ceremony was attended by heads of institutions and government officials, representatives from the military and NGOs, as well as Ambassadors and local people. The joyful gathering testifies to this very important historical event in the protection of the environment of coastal and marine areas.

Coastal Zone Resource Centres were built with a contribution from the Danish Government. The centres play an essential role as a focal point for capacity building. They serve as a forum for exchange and dialogue, where technical knowledge, lessons learned and experiences can be shared for the purpose of identification of priority issues, development of strategies, plans and activities, education and dissemination to the population and public through documentation, research and actual implementation via learning and replication. It is very important to support the government's efforts in development of human resources, dissemination of technical information and development of environmental and socio-economic information systems for coastal and



Launching ceremony of Coastal Zone Resource Centres
Copyright ©Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

marine areas. It is indeed a priority area that is consistent with the Royal Government's objective to strengthen decentralization and deconcentration policies, which have made considerable progress.

During the launching ceremony, the Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen delivered a speech citing that "In order to resolve the environmental problems of coastal and marine areas, such as contamination, illegal fishing, deterioration of biodiversity, shortage of clean water, declining quality of environment, improper use of land and so on, it requires harmonisation and coordination between public and private sectors including participation of the local community in taking responsibility and also mobilising efforts of community, city and provincial and municipal authorities at all levels, in environment protection and natural resource management."

He also appealed to all the fishermen in maritime areas to stop illegal fishing activities including the use of equipment that is harmful

to maritime resources, such as use of fishing nets in areas with a depth of less than 20 meters, destruction of corals by using explosives, razing sea grasses, cutting mangrove forests and ruining fish habitats.

2. The 2004 Meeting of SEAP and SA- ODS Officer

The Senior Officer Meeting on Ozone Depletion Substances to Southeast Asia, Asia-Pacific and South Asia was held for four days from 3-6 November 2004, at Apsara Angkor Hotel, Siem Reap. The meeting was attended by H.E. Dr. Mok Mareth, Minister of Environment, Cambodia, along with representatives from 26 nations.

The meeting's aim discusses strategies in reducing Ozone Depletion Substances use that is stated in the Montreal Protocol, and to exchange experiences and implementation methods of each country in the past. It also set goals at the end of 2004 that developing countries shall reduce production and consumption of Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by 50%, Halon by 85% and Methyl Chloroform by 30%.

Cambodia's Environment Minister addressed the meeting and said that "The primary job of the Ministry of Environment is preparing the first National Environment Action Plan 1998-2002 and the Second National Environment Action Plan 2002-2006. The action plan focuses on 6 key areas: Forest Policy, Fisheries and Flood Plain Agriculture in the Tonle Sap Region, Coastal Fisheries, Biodiversity and Protected Areas, Energy Development and the Environment, and Urban Waste Management. These action plans are a guide to integrating environmental concerns. These jobs have become an investment plan for local, national policy and economic decision making," he added.

The meeting called for all countries to pay attention to dangerous substances consumption, even though it is not used at the present, and to focus on developing a law on ozone depletion substances to prevent future use.

3. Cambodia's Celebration of International Ozone Day

The Cambodia's Celebration of International Ozone Day was held, under the UNEP's theme "Save Our Sky: Ozone-Friendly Planet, Our Target", on 16 September 2004 at the Garden of Royal University Phnom Penh. There were about 600 people from various institutions, including government officials, NGOs and private enterprises, and student. The main purpose of this celebration is to focus more attention on ozone depletion which has been and is occurring at the present, that threatens the lives and health of humans worldwide.



Cambodia's Celebration of International Ozone Day was held.
Copyright ©Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

On this significant occasion, Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Royal Government of Cambodia, sent a message to the compatriot saying "Given that ozone protection is a common obligation and need for people worldwide, and stands on the concept: <Protection ozone is a human life and environment protection> the government decided on 27 June 2001 to be a signatory of the Vienna convention for the protection of ozone layer and the Montreal protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer". "In regional policy framework, the government clearly determined its position in the participation in environmental cooperation with ASEAN nations as well as the Asia-Pacific. In the name of a signatory of Vienna convention and Montreal protocol, the government would like to express its full support for nations' stand on convention

parties,” stated the message.

In the 5 year third term (2004-2008) of the Royal Government of Cambodia, it lays out a basic policy instrument called the “Rectangle Strategy”, in which sustainable environmental management is a crucial angle. Practically, to effectively control the import of Ozone Depletion Substances (ODS) to be within the limit of the Montreal Protocol phase-out schedule, Cambodia will issue a Sub-Decree on ODS control in the short term, with strict enforcement on illegal ODS import.

All participants wore T-shirts with messages about the protection of the ozone layer. Speeches were made by the Secretary of State, the Director General, Ministry of Environment, and representatives of CAP-UNEP/ROAP as well as the private sector, universities, and local authorities. At the end of the gathering the delegates were given balloons with different slogans about protecting the ozone layer.

4. World Wetlands Day : 2-3 February 2004, Stoeng Treng Ramsar Site, Cambodia

The World Wetlands Day (WWD) was celebrated on 2–3 February 2004 at the Regional Teacher Training Centre in downtown Stoeng Treng province, Kandal village, Preah Rumkel commune, and Thalaborivat district within the Ramsar site. It was organised by the Department of Environment of Stoeng Treng with various support from MWBP, IUCN, Wetlands International, CEPA, PLG and OCAA, and funded by the Mekong Wetlands Biodiversity Programme. This event was highly honored by the attendance of Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment, and with the participation from national and international guests and students.

The purpose of the WWD is to raise awareness among local people, inter-governmental institutions and civil society of the values of wetlands biodiversity and the function and importance of



Celebration of World Wetlands Day
Copyright ©Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

conservation and sustainable use of wetlands in and around the Stoeng Treng Ramsar site.

During the celebration of the WWD at provincial towns and at the Ramsar site, H.E Secretary of State officially delivered a speech by mentioning the significance of Wetlands, the history of the Ramsar convention on Wetlands signed in 1971 in Ramsar city, Iran. He also gave some information about the three Ramsar sites in Cambodia, and also stressed strongly on the role of all people, institutions and civil societies in the participation of conservation and wise use of Wetlands. Furthermore, speeches given by delegates strongly expressed the significance of Wetlands, Wetlands management, sustainable and wise use as well calling for all people to participate in environment and natural resource protection, particularly Wetlands resources.

Four stage show group performances by primary school students from Samaki, Koh Sneng, O’Svay and Preah Rumkel communes did a great job. Each group presented their education and awareness on conservation and protection of Wetlands using some method such as story telling, poems, or short action entertainment performance.

Participants easily captured and understood what the event was about through Wetlands questionnaires answering games, stage show groups’ performance as well as T-shirts, posters and other materials posted and distributed. Local villagers had a chance to attend and see their children perform in the stage show on education of wetlands resource conservation and sustainable use.

China

Chang Miao

Associate Professor, Water Policy Research Centre
Tsinghua University, Department of Environmental
Science and Engineering



1. Great Performance Needed to Clean up Huai River

Huai River belongs to the “Three Rivers & Three Lakes” national project for cleaning up the river during the 10th Five-year plan period. However, this achievement, backed by tens of billions of yuan and the efforts of all relevant parties in the last decade, has proven to be far from remarkable after a storm in July this year. Because of the flood brought by the storm, reservoirs on the upper reaches of the Huai River had to open their floodgates to release the extra water. When the heavily polluted water behind more than 5,000 floodgates and dams flowed to the lower reaches of the Huai River, aquatic products, wild fish and plants along the river bank were poisoned which have caused great economic losses and serious influence to the public society. Therefore, the State Environmental Protection Administration decided to sign an agreement with four provinces along the Huai River in East China. According to this agreement, starting from next year, the four provincial governments will be required to account for their pollution control work to the SEPA. The administration will then check if the provinces have fulfilled their pollution pledges and make a report to the State Council. Legislation concerning the monitoring of pollution has long been in place, but the law’s lack of backbone has brought the river to the brink. To make matters worse, there are no

clear-cut measures to punish those who fail to implement the legislation. On the contrary, officials vie for promotion by ensuring high GDP growth, regardless of the costs to the environment. At last, we should know that Huai River is just a representative project, and the efforts to be taken to clean up all the polluted rivers in China will be enormous and formidable.



Pollutants of the Huai River in Jiangsu
Copyright ©The State Environmental Protection Administration

2. New Vehicle Emission Standards Formulated

New vehicle emission standards (GB18352.2) that went into effect on 1 July 2004 across China are the equivalent of Euro II standards and apply to light-duty vehicles, mainly cars. Authorities say the move is a further push to crack down on pollution caused by automobile emissions across the country. All new types of light-duty automobiles must meet the new standards. The environmental officials say that most currently produced cars in China meet the standards. They attribute the encouraging

situation to a publicity drive conducted as early as 2001 by the State Environmental Protection Administration. In another development, the administration has charted emission standards that are equivalent to Euro III standards. It is expected that China will adopt the Euro III-level standards by 2008. The State Council has agreed to continue the tax reductions for vehicles that meet Euro III standards ahead of time. Before the newly adopted standards, China had adopted emission levels in 2000 equalling Euro I standards. Compared to the old levels, the new standards stipulate that carbon monoxide emissions must be 30.4% lower and hydrocarbon and nitrogen oxide discharges must be 55.8% lower. After a one-year transitional period, manufactured and approved imported vehicles that only meet Euro I standards will have to end production or importation by 30 June 2005. Beginning on 1 July of next year, sales and registration of such automobiles must also stop. A series of measures will be taken to control automobile emissions in China. The administration has completed draft regulations on the supervision and management of vehicle emissions controls.

Source: China Daily



Copyright ©www.xinhuanet.com

3. China to Establish Charge System on Hazardous Waste Disposal

The State Development and Reform Commission (SDRC) and four other government departments jointly issued a notice in January 2004 on adopting a surcharge system and

accelerating the industrialisation of hazardous wastes disposal. China generates a total of 9 million tons of hazardous waste every year. Only 6 million tons are recycled or safely disposed. The remaining 3 million tons are stored in temporary facilities. A total of 20 million tons is now stored, posing a serious threat to the environment, so the Government will establish this charge system to solve this problem. The margin of surcharges on waste disposal would be set by local government departments. Operators of waste disposal facilities were permitted to set their own price within government limits and sign service agreements with trash producing units. The Chinese government will open the hazardous wastes disposal industry to the private sector including foreign companies and encourage competition in the construction and operation of disposal facilities.

China plans to spend nearly 15 billion yuan (US\$ 1.8 billion) in the next three years to build installations for the safe storage and disposal of various dangerous wastes nationwide. The State Council has approved the programme, which aims to build a nationwide disposal system for various dangerous forms of industrial, municipal, medical and radioactive waste.

Source: The State Environmental Protection Administration

4. State Environmental Protection Administration Issued Six Bans to Execute Environmental Laws Rigidly

Staff of environmental protection authorities are forbidden to approve construction projects in violations of the environmental law. This is one of the six bans announced by State Environmental Protection Administration at a national environmentalist conference that was held in Beijing on 24 November 2003, and they have come into effect from 1 January 2004 to enhance the executive ability of the environmental protection system. According to

the six bans, they are forbidden to cover up, connive with or shield acts which violate of the environmental law, to issue fines on a whim or to fabricate monitored data. They are also banned from interfering in the tendering of environmental projects and designating contractors and equipment for purchase. They must not make use of the power in hand to receive money from subordinates or reimburse what should be personal expenses in violation of

public property. The violators of the bans will be administratively reprimanded, disciplined or sacked depending on the seriousness of the cases. Those who violate the law will be legally sued. The responsibility of the leaders who work perfunctorily or cover up violations of the law will be investigated and be held accountable.

Source: The State Environmental Protection Administration

India

Jyoti K. Parikh

Executive Director

Integrated Research and Action for Development (IRADe)



1. Ministry of Environment and Forest Comes Out with National Environmental Policy

The need for a comprehensive policy statement on the environment in India has been felt for some time now. There are many sectoral and cross-sectoral approaches to environmental management and a holistic picture of these is required. The National Environment Policy (NEP, 2004) has been formulated with these concerns in mind. It supports India's national commitment to a clean environment, mandated in the Constitution in Articles 48 A and 51 A (g), strengthened by judicial interpretation of Article 21. The NEP 2004 is also intended to endorse India's commitment to various international initiatives. The policy attempts to mainstream environmental concerns into all development activities. The NEP 2004 highlights the key environmental challenges faced by India at present as those that the country is also likely to face in the future. The draft document includes objectives of environment policy, normative principles underlying policy action, strategic themes for intervention, broad indications of the legislative and institutional development needed to accomplish the strategic themes, and mechanisms for implementation and review.

The Union Ministry posted the draft policy on 15 August suggesting that comments on the draft policy should be e-mailed for consideration

or possible integration.

Source: www.envfor.nic.in

2. City Governments Take Initiatives to Curb Air Pollution

Delhi Government has decided to impose an environmental cessation on diesel passenger cars and multi-utility vehicles in Delhi, and has simultaneously raised the sales tax on diesel in the budget. The government is also examining the possibility of imposing an additional entry tax on diesel vehicles registered outside Delhi, to discourage their entry into the city. These long-awaited steps were urgently needed to arrest the alarming trend of dieselisation in Delhi.

The share of diesel cars in total car registration has jumped from 4% in 1998-99 to 16% in 2002-03 while petrol car registration stagnated during the same period. The annual incremental growth rate for diesel cars is as high as 106.3% as opposed to 12.27% for petrol cars. Growing scientific evidence from across the world points to the toxic effects of poor quality diesel. Recent reports from the US Environment Protection Authority (USEPA) show that diesel engines emit almost 100 times more particulate matter than petrol engines. Japanese scientists have isolated a deadly compound in diesel fumes that is the strongest carcinogen known.

About 8,000 vehicles plying in the Calcutta Metropolitan Area (CMA) are to be phased out by the end of 2004. A survey by the transport department shows that only 8,000 vehicles fall into the pre-1975 category. Bus owners' associations have gone to court against the government's policy of phasing out old vehicles, claiming it would affect 35,000 vehicles and the livelihood of the people associated with them. The 8,000 vehicles in the over-30-year category comprise only 4.25% of the 191,000 vehicles in the metropolitan area.

Source: http://www.cseindia.org/aboutus/press_releases/press_20040722.htm

3. Wild Life Conservation and Livelihood Conflict - Stray Elephants Leave a Trail of Destruction

In the northeastern Indian state of Assam, elephants have been raiding army depots, eating the military's rations, drinking its liquor, and leaving a trail of destruction in their wake. In Bangladesh, stray elephants from India have been terrorizing villagers and destroying farms, roads, and houses, the latest irritant in a testy relationship between the South Asian neighbours. The elephants had strayed after forests in the Indian state of Meghalaya were hastily cleared to build a highway. Across northern India, train drivers have had to cope with elephant herds, whose traditional migration routes have been bisected by railway tracks. From China to Indonesia, India to Vietnam, Asian elephants are in danger, their habitats shrinking fast and their communities increasingly isolated.

There are approximately 35,000 to 50,000 wild elephants, down from more than 100,000 a century ago and a lot less compared to 600,000 of their larger and larger-eared African cousins. A subspecies in Borneo numbers little more than 1,000 animals.

Source: <http://www.enn.com/today.html?id=154>

4. Recycling Scrap Metal Saves Energy but May Impose Other Costs

India imports a whopping 3,650,000 metric tons of scrap every year for more than 200 public and private sector iron and steel melting units. However, recently this is posing serious threats to people working in scrap yards, as well as in the melting plants. The scrap metal from strife-torn countries like Iraq and Somalia arrives via ports at Kandla, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata to iron and steel factories and container depots, and within this scrap lie buried arsenals. These shells exploded at many places last month. Many of these shells are 2.5 feet long and extremely powerful. Around 100 live shells have been dumped in Kanha upwan, a green land area in Ghaziabad district in Uttar Pradesh bordering Delhi. A major chunk of this is shipped from the developed world and battlefields like Iraq and Afghanistan. In the war-ravaged countries where broken tankers and shells are available in plenty, the scrap comes at very cheap rates. According to estimates, in comparison to normal places where the scrap costs US\$280 per metric ton, the scrap in war zones comes at US\$230 per metric ton. Moreover, the steel used in the manufacture of shells is supposed to be of very good quality. Besides importing scrap from war zones and Europe, India imports a big quantity of mercury and electronic waste from the industrialised world. These imports have multiplied six times in almost the same number of years (1997-2003). Electronic waste comes mainly from Singapore, United States and South Korea. In India thousand of live rocket, mortar and artillery shells and missiles seized from iron scrap all around the country are yet to be destroyed and many new ones are being added to the pile every day.

Source: http://www.asiantribune.com/show_news.php?id=11919

5. Two Indians Win 2004 Goldman Environmental Prize

Rashida Bee and Champa Devi Shukla, are the Goldman winners from Asia. They have spent years trying to hold Dow Chemical accountable for the 1984 Union Carbide gas leak in Bhopal, India, that killed more than 20,000 people and injured more than 150,000.

Richard Goldman, whose foundation created the environmental prize in 1990, said the awards

help activists gain credibility in their home countries and often bring protection from repressive regimes.

Source: www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4778338



Copyright ©Paul Sakuma/AP

Indonesia

||| Mohamad Soerjani
||| Director
||| Institute for Environmental Education and Development (IEED)
||| Member of the National Research Council Indonesia



1. West Java Environmental Management Project (WJEMP)

The Indonesian Government has developed an Environmental Management Project, initially starting as a pilot programme in three provinces West Java, Banten, and Jakarta. The project has been supported by IBRD, consisting of a coordinating programme, whereby the Environmental Awareness Campaign addressed mainly to community organisations, NGOs and professional/social associations, waste management

in cities, hospitals, and industrial waste, etc. A supporting expert team is seconded to the Director General of Primary, Secondary High schools and Vocational High schools to design and implement the supervision of environmental education.

The main objective of this environmental education programme is to publish several books aimed at the integration of an environmental concept into the curriculum of formal education (natural as well as social and cultural sciences), a training programme of



Fig 1. The clean school building (A); the school nursery garden (B); ornamental pots (C); the friendships among teachers and students (D); full discipline in the classroom (E); extra curriculum study at the library (F); playing football (G); and music as a cultural exercise (H). Photos copyright of IEED, taken during a field survey in West Java, Banten and Jakarta.

Copyright ©IEED

trainers for the teachers, development of a student environmental club, and competitions. The books will consist of several volumes, reading materials on environmental education for students, a teacher's guidebook, as well as an environmental science concept as a basis to develop Environmental Education and Environmental Management.

2. Environmental Science

A textbook on environmental science, as a basic concept for the implementation of environmental education and environmental management has been prepared by M. Soerjani, as the team leader of environmental education of the Director General of Primary, High schools and Vocational schools. The text book will be used to socialise the school teachers, lecturers at university as well as officials and policymakers at local governments. The concept of the book refers to legal documents of Act No. 23 of 1997 on Environmental Management and Act No. 2 of 1989 on National Education.

The main concept of environmental science will consist of the ecosystem philosophy that aims at caring, seeking for and acquiring environmental wisdom as a fundamental consciousness to behave and act beneficially and mutually for the continuity of life and welfare for human beings and other living things.

The concept will consist of among others:

- Merology and hology
- Entity
- Reality and amenity
- Caring for (egoism, empathy and altruism)
- Interdependency and interactions
- Positivism and optimism
- Precautionary and preventive principles
- Appropriate behavior and actions
- Human needs analysis
- Self-esteem and interpersonal esteem
- Capacity building (competence and practicality)
- Sustainable environment for sustainable development
- Others

The book will be published bilingually in Indonesian and English, aiming at introducing our Indonesian environmental science concept to colleagues and to overseas readers that may be interested to they can compare it with their own concept and ideas.

Please contact: M. Soerjani <soerieed@centrin.net.id>

3. Empowerment of Future Fishermen

The Indonesian archipelago covers a territory of 7.4 million sq km of which 5.5 million sq km (75 %) is a marine area. It has great potential in geopolitics, national security and in the management of marine natural resources.

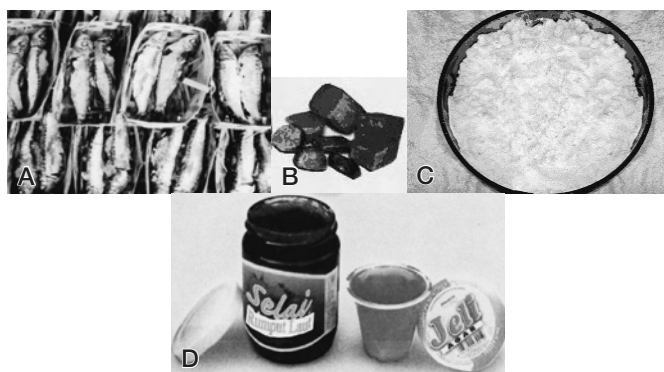


Fig 2. Fermented fish (A); fish paste (B); fish powder (C); and seaweed jams and jelly (D). (IEED documentations).

Copyright ©IEED

Nevertheless the people are in a backward position for obtaining benefits to manage its rich marine resources. The optimal fish production is six million tons annually, and yet 2–2.5 million tons are stolen by foreign fleets, out of the four million tons harvested, and only 800 thousand tons of fish is consumed locally, and the rest are exported. Similarly, slightly over one million ha of the seaweed harvests are mostly exported as dried products. After being processed overseas, these are mostly re-imported as medicine, carrageen, emulsifier, seaweed paste for toothbrushing, etc.

Only about three years ago, Indonesia established the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources. Since then, efforts to train young (future) fishermen have been accelerated.

A book has been developed for the vocational fishery high schools written by M. Soerjani (IEED) and I. Muchsin (Bogor Agricultural University) containing messages to motivate the students to be equipped with technical skills and entrepreneurship in managing the marine resource with added value for consumed goods. The remaining products could also be exported after being properly manufactured for higher values and higher prices on the open market.

4. Environmental Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development

The National Research Council has launched several books approaching the end of the working period 1999–2004. The Environmental Working Group has published a book as a message for the coming 2004–2009 working group entitled *Environmental Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Development*.

As a sounding board to suggest policy alternatives in the present national development, the Environmental Working Group has sent the message addressed to the Central Government that the Development Planning Agency should be replaced with a so-called National

Development Coordinating Agency, and the chairman should have authority as Senior Minister for Development Coordination assisted by three deputies functioning as Minister of Development Planning, Minister for Development Supervision and Minister for Development Evaluation, Audit and Accountability. The sectoral ministries, for example, in Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Industry, Health, Public Work etc should report to the Minister for Development Planning for their sectoral plan feasibility, including the EIA, as a component of the overall development feasibility. In the development implementation the Minister for Development Supervision should supervise the implementation of approved plans. Finally every fiscal year, the development programme will be evaluated and accountably audited by the Minister for Development Evaluation, Audit and Accountability.

The environmental aspect of all these sectoral programmes should be integrated in the overall policy and steps of the respective individual sector. The functions of the Minister of Environment and its staff is to sustain these sectoral ministries from their early steps in planning, implementation, obtaining results or benefits, until the project finishes.

Japan

Yohei Harashima
Associate Professor
Faculty of International Development
Takushoku University



1. Strong Earthquake and Abnormal Climate

The most traumatic affairs this year were a strong earthquake and the abnormal climate. A record heat wave hit Japan this summer. The number of summer days in which the temperature hit thirty degrees Celsius or more has set a new record in many areas of the nation. Kumamoto city had more than one hundred such hot summer days. The number of typhoon that hit Japanese archipelago was ten, the largest number since the start of the weather observation in 1951. However, the most shocking natural disaster was the great earthquake which struck Niigata Prefecture on the evening of October 23. Aftershocks followed for a long period of time after the main quake. Landslides, collapse of building, blackouts, and road blocks due to the earthquake forced up to 100,000 people to evacuate in the safety areas. Approximately 40 people died due to the immediate cause of this earthquake and many were injured in the quake-hit area. The need for preparation and adaptation to natural disasters were felt especially strongly among Japanese people because of this year's earthquake and abnormal climate.

2. 3Rs (to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Waste) Initiatives

With the Basic Law for Establishing a Recycling-based Society of 2000 as a turning point, 3Rs initiatives of solid waste have rapidly developed and grown nationwide. For instance, in the case of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles, the plastic bottles for mineral water and soft drinks, the collection rate has considerably increased from approximately 16% in 1998 to 60% in 2004. This was not only due to governmental regulations but also recycling technological development and fostering of recycling industries. In order to apply the idea of 3Rs initiative to the international community including Asia, the government of Japan suggested the "3Rs" Action Plan and Progress on Implementation at the G8 Summit Meeting (The Sea Island Summit) this June as the next step of the G8 Action Plan on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development. The purpose was to encourage more efficient use of resources and materials. In cooperation with relevant international organisations such as the OECD, the G8 member nations will seek to: (1) reduce waste, reuse and recycle resources and products to an economically feasible extent; (2) reduce barriers to the international flow of goods and materials for recycling and remanufacturing, recycled and remanufactured products, and cleaner, more efficient technologies; (3) encourage cooperation among

various stakeholders; (4) promote science and technology suitable for 3Rs, and (5) cooperate with developing countries in such areas as capacity building, raising public awareness, human resource development and implementation of recycling projects. The Plan will be formally launched in the coming year at a ministerial meeting in Japan.

The documents on the G8 “3Rs” Action Plan and Progress on Implementation are available at the URL: <http://www.g8usa.gov/documents.htm>.

3. Nuclear Power Plant Accident

On 9 August, there was an accident caused by a fracture in the condensation piping near the ceiling of the second level of the turbine building at the Mihama Nuclear Power Plant Unit 3 of Kansai Electric Power Co., Inc (KEPCO). Eleven workers were exposed to the steam, which had a temperature of about 140 degree Celsius: five died and six were seriously injured. The main cause of the accident was lack of inspection of the pipes which had not been done since the start of operations in the mid 1970s, despite being an important part of the nuclear power plant. KEPCO, after sequentially shutting down all of its operating nuclear power plants, performed inspections on all of their systems, and confirmed their integrities. Nuclear power plant troubles at Tokyo Electric Power Co., Inc two years ago are still fresh in our memory. Currently one third of the total electricity depends on nuclear power plants in Japan. In fact, the government of Japan has been planning to promote nuclear fuel-cycle programmes even further. These accidents, however, resulted in a loss of credibility in nuclear power plants among the Japanese people. In order to restore credibility and to realise a harmonious coexistence of local residents and nuclear related facilities, it is vital that national nuclear policies should be designed and decided based on discussions not only among experts and policymakers but also

through public participation.

Further information on the accident at the Mihama Nuclear Power Plant is available at the URL: <http://www.kepco.co.jp/english/index.html>.

4. Natural Hot Spring Using Artificial Whitening

The Japanese people have always enjoyed hot springs. There are more than 3,000 hot spring spots across the country. Hot spring spas are one of the most popular and familiar recreational activities for Japanese people. The recent hot spring boom, however, resulted in excess withdrawals of hot spring water thus revealing the limitation of hot springs as a natural resource. This July, the media reported that an open air public bath and some inns at Shirahone in Nagano Prefecture were using a method of artificial whitening. It seems that the operators put an industrial liquid into the baths to maintain the famous milky white water for a long time. Problems of hot spring water being reused were also found at several hot spring spots. These problems have raised the issue of quality and sanitation at hot springs in Japan. Conservation and sustainable use of hot springs need to be seriously considered.

Further information on the Shirahone hot spring is available at the URL: <http://www.shirahone.org/> (in Japanese only)

5. Invasive Alien Species Act

In globalising world economy, there is a growing concern over the problems of invasive alien species (IASs) and the threat posed to biodiversity and human society. A large number of alien species, including macaroon, black bass and mongoose have already been introduced across the nation in Japan. The National Strategy on Biological Diversity revised in 2002 recognises “the influence on local ecosystems of

alien species” as one of the most significant crises in biodiversity. Once alien species have established themselves, spread out and reproduced, their eradication would be almost impossible. So far there have been no laws related to IASs with the purpose of the biodiversity conservation in Japan. As the very first step of measures against IASs, the Invasive Alien Species Act was enacted this May. The purpose of this Act is to prevent adverse effects on the ecosystem caused by IASs through regulating the raising, importing, or other handling of IASs and through measures such as the mitigation of IASs, with the aim to help stabilise and improve the quality of national life through contributions to biodiversity conservation, human safety and sound development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. However, this Act does not comprehensively cover all the problems with regard to IASs. There are still many issues to be resolved such as domestic movements of IASs, introduction of IASs through planting, and enhancement of scientific knowledge.

Further information on the Invasive Alien Species Act is available at the URL: <http://www.env.go.jp/en/topic/as.html>.

6. Revising the Guideline for Measures to Prevent Global Warming

Russian approval of the Kyoto Protocol will enable the Protocol to go into effect. The 2002

Guideline for Measures to Prevent Global Warming developed by the government of Japan has presented specific measures to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases including CO₂. The Guideline is due to be revised this year. In order to comply with the commitments under the Protocol, the government of Japan will be required to adopt additional measures. Above all, one of the most controversial issues is the introduction of an environment tax. The Ministry of the Environment proposed a tax of 2,400 yen (about 22 US dollars) per metric ton of carbon as an additional measure. Japanese economic organisations were strongly opposed to the proposed tax. Moreover, several leading environmental groups express skepticism about the effects of the proposed tax because of its low rate. Even though it has come to a common understanding that tax is an efficient instrument for environmental policies, introducing the environmental tax will require substantial time.

The revised Guideline for Measures to Prevent Global Warming will be finalised early next year. The text of the existing Guideline is available at the URL: http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/policy/ondanka/index_e.html.

Korea

Sang-il Hwang

Associate Research Fellow

Korea Environment Institute



1. Sick House Syndrome Attacks Dwellers of New Apartments

Sick house syndrome is a phenomenon where people suffer from various skin ailments, respiratory problems and other symptoms caused by harmful chemical substances present in new buildings. According to studies by the Ministry of Environment for 75 newly built apartments in Seoul and Kyonggi Province, the level of indoor air pollution of all the examined homes exceeded the recommended level in Japan. The average density of formaldehyde, a chemical widely used in construction materials, was 460 micrograms per cubic meter, far exceeding 100 micrograms, the standard used by Japan and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The density of toluene, a volatile organic compound, also exceeded Japan's standard of 260 micrograms per cubic meter for 80 % of the apartments considered, with one having 4,177 micrograms, some 16 times the standard level. Even though a large number of people suffer from chemicals in their homes, South Korea does not have its own standards for acceptable levels in apartment buildings. South Korea only has a standard for the level of formaldehyde in public facilities, including private institutes. In June, a court ordered the builder of an apartment to compensate a family for sick house syndrome. While the ruling was the first of its kind, the construction firm protested, saying there were no domestic regulations governing

indoor air quality. Fortunately, the authorities are moving to establish stricter regulations for indoor air quality.

Source: The Korea Times, 7 November 2004

2. The First Korean-Made Hybrid-Powered Car Launched

The first Korean-made hybrid car "Click" starts operation on 8 November 2004. Manufactured by Hyundai Motor Co., the hybrid-powered Click features 40–50% greater fuel efficiency and 30% reduced emission exhaust compared to the gasoline-powered model. The Ministry of Environment plans to provide budgetary assistance of 28 million Korean won in supplying hybrid cars to the Korean National Police Agency, Metropolitan Governments, NGOs, the Ministry of Transportation and Construction, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

Source: <http://eng.me.go.kr/user/envnews>, 15 November 2004



Hybrid car trial ride ceremony

Copyright ©The Ministry of Environment, Korea

3. South Korea to Host the 5th MCED

The 5th UN ESCAP (Environment and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development (MCED 2005) will be hosted by South Korea in Seoul in 24–29 March 2005. At the MCED 2005, approximately 62 environment ministers of the ESCAP member states, and representatives from international organisations and NGOs will gather to discuss the ‘Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific’ for the years 2006–2010 and reaffirm their commitment through a ministerial declaration.

Source: <http://eng.me.go.kr/user/envnews>, 4 October 2004



ESCAP MCED Working Level Negotiation Meeting
Copyright ©The Ministry of Environment, Korea

4. South Korea’s Major Paint Manufacturers Agree to Reduce VOC by 20%

On 13 January 2004, six major paint manufacturers in South Korea reached a

voluntary agreement to attain 20% reduction of organic solvent in their paint products by the end of 2005. This agreement marks a significant environmental movement as these companies account for 70% of the market-share in Korea’s paint industry. The VOC is generated from vehicle repairing and construction paints. The agreement sets a 2005 target of reducing organic solvent in construction paints by 20% compared to that of 2003. Once the target is attained, approximately 10,000 tons of VOC reduction is expected, which will in turn markedly contribute to Korea’s air quality improvement. With the agreement, the companies are now bound to undertake various programmes with the Ministry of Environment (MOE) to promote environment-friendly paint consumption patterns while expanding the market for low-VOC paints. More concretely, the Special Act on Air Quality Improvement in Seoul Metropolitan Area, which will go into force in 2005, will mandate supply of low VOC paints in the respective region. The MOE is to further expedite reduction of VOC by providing economic incentives like subsidies for low-VOC paint development.

Source: <http://eng.me.go.kr/user/envnews>, 4 February 2004

Lao PDR

||| Ketkeo Salichanh
||| Chief of Environmental Promotion Division
||| Department of Environment
||| Science Technology and Environment Agency
||| Prime Minister's Office



1. The Fifteenth Meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN)

The Fifteenth Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) was held on 3–5 August 2004 in Luangprabang, Lao PDR. The participants were National ASOEN Chairpersons and representatives from all member states. The meeting was officially opened by the Vice Governor of Luangprabang, H.E. Mr. Khampheng Saysompheng. This meeting included discussion on implementation activities of the Hanoi Action Plan, and the reporting on the progress of activities since the 14th meeting of the ASOEN in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 2003. This discussion covered key activities of the working group and task force of ASOEN that included:

- Haze Technical Task Force
- Coastal and Marine Environment
- Environmental Sustainable Cities
- Multilateral Environment Agreement
- Mature Conservation and Biodiversity
- ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation
- Water Resource Management
- Assessment for the Establishment of an ASEAN Regional Centre or Network to Promote Environmentally Sound Technology
- Implementation of the ASEAN Environmental Education Action Plan

Moreover, those attending the Meeting had discussed other issues such as:

- Vientiane Action Plan and its submission to the ASEAN Summit on 29–30 November 2004 in Vientiane, Lao PDR
- Creation of an ASEAN Biodiversity Centre



All delegates took a photo together as a souvenir in Luangprabang Province, Lao PDR
Copyright ©STEA

in 2005 which builds on the establishment of ASEAN Regional Biodiversity Conservation Centre

- Work plan for the first ASEAN Convention on Trans-boundary Smoke

On 6 August 2004 the First Senior ASEAN+3 Meeting was conducted. Those attending discussed cooperation in 10 areas, shared their experiences and carried out study visits between three dialogue partner countries.

2. Social Environment and Development Projects

Society is not be able to keep order and the economy will not be strong if a high percentage of the people still live in poverty. The Party's economic policy and the government economic development plan indicate the need for industrialisation and modernisation of the country. Special attention is paid to infrastructure development. It is believed that this will give impetus to the nation's economic growth. However, infrastructure development can create both positive and negative impacts on the natural and social environment. Specifically, development projects are, to a certain extent, very likely to cause social impact on people living around or adjacent to such projects. The impacts include: relocation, resettlement, loss of compensation, land use problems, loss of resources that provided the basis for people's livelihoods, loss of cultural and traditional assets and other problems that could affect people's living conditions and their interests. Therefore, social impact issues have become an important component of the impact studies of development projects. Outcomes of these studies should be transparent to all before any proposed projects can be implemented. The following projects could be examples: social impact of Nam Theun 2 Hydropower project, Nam Mang 3 Hydropower project, Xekaman 3 Hydropower project, Sepon Gold Mining project, among others.

Through practical experiences learned from dealing with social issues of various development projects, the Department of the Environment, STEA has realised that there is a need to establish the Social Impact Division. The Division has now been in place since 2003. It has the mandate to act as the secretariat of the Department of the Environment with the task of overseeing social impact studies, surveys, analyses and reviewing social impact assessment reports of development projects. Apart from that, the Division is responsible for giving comments and recommendations on the reports of the projects so that they can be in compliance with the relevant policies, Laws and regulations, namely the Decree on Resettlement and Compensation. These rules and regulations serve as guidelines for mitigating the social impact of the projects in order to safeguard the legitimate interest of the affected people. This ensures that owners fulfill their obligations of the development project in order to help the people affected recover their income generation opportunities, and to ensure that their living conditions are improved.

3. Strengthening Environmental Management Project Supporting the Propagation of Gender Issues in Environmental Protection

In mid July 2004, the Science Technology and Environment Agency (STEA) organised a consultation workshop on drafting a strategy on gender issues in environmental protection. It took place under the chairmanship of Dr. Viengsavanh Duangsavanh, Deputy Director General of the Department of the Environment, National Director of the Strengthening Environment Management project, STEA, with the participation of officials from: Xiengkhuang, Oudomxai, Champasack provinces, Min. of CTPC, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Industry and Handicraft,



Consultation workshop on drafting strategy on gender issues in environmental protection
Copyright ©STEA

Gender Resource Information and Development Centre (GRID Centre), and from departments and institutes within STEA totalling over 40 people. The objective of this workshop was to develop a draft strategy on gender issues in environmental protection. The workshop was financially and technically supported by Sida, Sweden. This activity will be carried out until 2005.

4. Lao National Environment Strategy

Recently, a National Environment Strategy was approved by Minister to the Prime Minister's Offices, President of the Science Technology and Environment Agency no. 01631/STEA-PMO, dated 18 August 2004 and it was endorsed by the Prime Minister on 27 August 2004 with no. 120/PMO.

The National Environmental Management Strategy is formulated to provide the general direction, targets, programmes and projects in relation to environmental protection to be implemented in the short term and long term - up to the year 2020. The strategy is issued to

enable the government's environmental policy and position regarding environmental matters to be communicated. It is also issued to encourage and foster the involvement and commitment of the Lao people in the course of environmental management in line with the socio-economic development of the nation; to give impetus to the implementation of the Environmental Protection Law and other environment and natural resources related Laws. It also serves the commitment of Lao PDR in its membership of regional and sub-regional Environmental Treaties and co-operative Agreements. The Environmental Strategy is also aimed at securing sustainable development, contributing to poverty eradication and at improving people's livelihoods.

The Environmental Management Strategy was formulated as a result of extensive coordination with various sectors concerned at both central and local levels. Its preparation has involved a long-lasting consultation process conducted at national and provincial levels. The success of the implementation of this Strategy will more likely be achieved, provided there is participation and support from all stakeholders, including external and international organisations, and most importantly, the active contribution of the people of Lao PDR.

The Strategy provides the initial important steps towards environmental protection, the process of natural resources conservation and the protection and promotion of human health. After having been implemented and having learned lessons from the early phases of its use, the document will have to be reviewed and revised. This is to ensure it fully reflects any new changes, and for it to be in line with the reality of the national social-economic growth.

Malaysia

Norhayati Mustapha and Wan Portia Hamzah
 Senior Analyst, Bureau of Environment, Science and
 Technology (BEST)
 Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)



1. Rumble in 'Bali Hai'

A RM40m marina project in the early stages of development on Pulau Tioman, the island of 'South Pacific' fame, has met with protests from environmental NGOs, marine scientists, divers, resort operators and tourists alike. At stake would be the livelihood of fishermen, boatmen and small traders, plus the well being of the island's many attractions, which include more than 200 endangered giant clams and 300 year-old corals. Radio phone-ins and a media-initiated opinion poll showed a resounding majority 'against' the marina. One dive centre operator urged authorities to focus instead on the island's problems of water supply and waste disposal, while the Malaysian Trade Union Congress called for a government-led independent and comprehensive review.

In response, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) issued a stop-work order until an Environmental Management Plan, a pre-set condition of the



WONDROUS SIGHT: Table corals such as this one will be destroyed if the proposed marina in Tioman is allowed to proceed.

Courtesy of The Star Online <http://thestar.com.my/news/>

project's EIA, is submitted. The Sultan of Pahang concurrently ordered a halt pending a report from the Marine Department. A positive outcome of this episode is a requirement subsequently set by MONRE, in that whereas before a preliminary EIA would suffice for projects in marine parks, a detailed EIA would now be required.

2. Illegal Import of Toxic Waste

In late 2003, a company was found to have falsified documents to transport hazardous waste from Taiwan. 11,879 tonnes of the waste, containing high levels of heavy metals, had been imported as copper sludge cake and stored in a brick-making factory in Labis, Johor. In June this year the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) confirmed that the brick making company would be prosecuted and the waste eventually sent back to the country of origin, stressing that Malaysia is 'not a dumping ground' for toxic waste.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Taiwan as well as the Malaysian Customs and Excise were promptly reminded not to allow the import of waste without approval documents as outlined in the Basel Convention for the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, 1980, of which Malaysia is a signatory. Taiwan, however, is not; so some difficulty is anticipated. Later in the month

another waste illegal consignment, also from Taiwan, was discovered in Johor port at Pasir Gudang. As of September, talks between the Federal government and the Taiwan authorities were still in progress.

3. Tougher Enforcement to Protect Turtles

Early in May this year 16 Chinese nationals aged 16 to 48 were detained for possession of 130 turtle carcasses, 30 turtle shells and 3 live turtles on board a China-registered trawler off Sabah. The turtles killed were of the hawksbill and green variety, both protected under Appendix 1 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), which prohibits commercial trade in animals and their parts. In a Kota Kinabalu (KK) magistrate court, 12 were found guilty for using a drift net to fish without a permit, and catching turtles in Malaysian waters, thereby jailed 8 months, while the 4 remaining, who are teenagers, were deported.

Barely had the news died down when in 25 June, 1,000 turtle eggs were seized by the Wildlife Department and KK City Hall at the popular Filipino market. While the seller, believed foreign, managed to flee, a Brunei national was booked for buying the eggs. The case is to be investigated under the Wildlife Conservation Enactment, whereby those found guilty of selling or possessing turtle eggs, will be liable to a fine of RM50,000 or a maximum of 5 years jail, or both.

4. COP7 to the Convention on Biological Diversity and MOP1 to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

Biodiversity and biosafety issues caught the headlines in early 2004. The frequency of reporting was not surprising since the Seventh

Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP7) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) took place on 9–20 February in Kuala Lumpur. It was the first time Malaysia hosted such a meeting. It was also in Kuala Lumpur that the First Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB), 23–27 February took place.

The urgency to address biodiversity loss was felt throughout COP7. In Malaysia, efforts to address the objectives of CBD were undertaken by various agencies. However, Malaysian scientists, in meetings prior to COP7, expressed that the country needed a greater commitment to biodiversity research and that a systematic, centralised inventory of its biodiversity be established.

Concerns of the impact of Genetically Modified Organisms or GMOs (known as Living Modified Organisms or LMOs in international treaties) to the environment and human health were largely initiated by the Malaysian delegation in one of the earlier meetings of CBD. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety finally came into force on 11 September 2003. A strong stand on the issues of liability and identification of LMOs traded was made at the First Meeting. It is now up to each country to put the necessary mechanisms in place to monitor consignments containing LMOs coming into the country.

5. The Water Dilemma

The state of water management nationwide has again been questioned. Malaysia is a tropical country blessed with ample rain but water shortages and flood woes are not uncommon. According to water experts, rainfalls are unevenly distributed temporally and spatially. This is true but problems of ancient pipes resulting in low or no water pressure in some areas, and a high level of non-revenue water (NRW), around 20–60%, are causing hardship to consumers as well as to state governments.

NRW is due to leakages from old pipes, theft of water and improper or inefficient billing systems. In Malaysia, water and resources such as timber and land, fall under State jurisdiction. States in Malaysia will not go to war with each other over water but disputes have occurred from time to time between states sharing the same water resources.

The former Prime Minister, prior to his retirement, made a bold move and persuaded all

states in the peninsula to surrender their water rights to the Federal Government so that supply management could be coordinated centrally. The new Prime Minister, after the elections, established a new ministry to specifically address and resolve the issues of water management. A holistic approach, a review of water privatisation and the role of the proposed National Water Services Commission will be studied.

Mongolia

Ayush Namkhai

Director General

Department of Environment and Sustainable Development

Ministry of Nature and the Environment



1. Law on Water Has Been Renewed

Mongolian State Great Khural /Mongolian Parliament/ has enacted a revised version of “Law on Water” on 22 April 2004. The contents of the law is as follows: to establish a structure of organisations in the water sector of Mongolia, and to determine the powers and functions of all stage governors, self-governing organisations of locals, governmental organisations on water issues, the Ministry of Nature and the Environment, the Government, and the Mongolian Parliament.

The law also includes river basin management, water cadastre, databases, water utilisation permission system, and water monitoring which will be useful for proper usage of water resources, rehabilitation, and other actions for water and water resources. Moreover, the protection of water and water surroundings as well as a special hygiene regime will be newly arranged in this law.

In accordance with this law, the improvement of water estimation has been amended and changed to the “Law on charges for utilisation of water and mineral water”, with the water use payments increased by 5 to 15 times.

2. “Water Policy Reform XXI”

In the framework of the implementation of the Water Law, the Mongolian Government has

issued a resolution No. 159 on the activities for a 15-20 year period under the “Water Policy Reform XXI”. The functions and directions of the activities are mainly intended to improve national management for water and water policy, and proper use of water resources.

There have also been improvements in water discharge regulations, as well as the establishment of water resource complexes when there is high discharge of large rivers and lakes. Improvements are needed for surface water and ground water use management in order to balance their rate of use by 2015.

3. The National Bureau of Clean Development Mechanism

The Kyoto Protocol, set out by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will come into force in February 2005. The National Commission for arranging and coordinating Clean Development Mechanism has been formed under the guidance of Ministry of Nature and Environment by a Ministerial order No 207, dated on 19 November 2004, which gave approval to work direction, project estimation, and concepts of the national bureau of Clean Development Mechanisms. Notification of the establishment of the bureau has been sent to the secretariat office of the UNFCCC.

4. Census of Deer (*Cervus elaphus L.*)

A board meeting of the Minister of Nature and Environment discussed the issue of deer distribution and resources and decided to start work on a survey in 2004. 31 teams have been carrying out the work, including specialists from the Biology Institute of the Academy of Sciences, local environmental bureaus, and local area protection departments and special protection areas. They worked in territories across 14 provinces in Mongolia. Consequently 4,570 heads of deer have been counted in a 102,672 km² area of territories.

As a result of this survey, it has become known that in comparison with the 1980's the number of deer have decreased by 14-15 times. The Government issued a decision to protect deer stock and assigned the related aimaks (provinces) to work out a special national programme for the protection of deer.

5. Bogd-Ochirvaani Buddhist Memorial

The Bogd-Ochirvaani Buddhist commemoration memorial has been built on Otgontenger sacred Mountain, in the national special protected area of Mongolia, through an initiative of the Minister of Nature and Environment. Otgontenger, an everlasting ice peak on the Khangai Mountain range is situated 4,021 metres above sea level and is a place of forest, steppes, and eternal ice peaks.

The Otgontenger Mountain has long been respected by local residents, and every four years there is a special ceremony of Takhilga. It became a tradition that the President, high-ranking leaders and local people participate in a state ceremony at the Otgontenger Mountain Takhilga. The 95,510-hectare area around the mountain has been protected as a national special protected area since 1992.

In recent years, the number of travelers to the Mountain has been increasing. They get

here by car, horse and other transport, which damage the fragile area and its ecosystem.

The Bogd Ochirvaani has been respected by locals since ancient times and this arrangement may become an invaluable investment for the protection of this area.

6. Garden Creation

In accordance with resolution No. 143 dated 12 August 2003 issued by the Minister of Nature and Environment for making a more comfortable recreation environment for citizens, work has started to create 0.609 hectares of roads and paths, 0.24 hectares of buildings and constructions, and 3.313 hectares of green land on the territory of Khan Uul district.

The garden construction work has been launched and mapping and technical solutions have been completed. Office building, deep well digging and 4-hectare land smoothing, and 940 m² of yard covering 206,800 m² area were completed. Several different trees such as silver aspen, bird-cherry tree have been brought from Russia and a total of 12,000 were planted in the garden.

Nepal

Phool Chandra Shrestha

Freelance Consultant



1. Nepal Feels Heat, Alarm Bells for Region

The snowcapped mountains for which Nepal is renowned worldwide could be a curse for her and for the entire region because they are melting at an alarming rate. It would not only submerge the coastal areas, but could also force millions of victims to seek refuge in high altitude areas like Nepal.

Studies reveal that Mount Everest, the tallest peak in the world, including eight of the world's tallest snowcapped mountains in Nepal are melting at a rate of 0.5 inch per year due to global warming and resulting in an alarming rise in sea levels.

According to Bikash Pandey, the Third Assessment Report of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, a network of over 3,000 scientists from 150 countries, estimates a sea level rise of 0.1 meter to 0.9 meter by the year 2100. It also predicts an appalling increase in temperatures. By 2100, the global temperature is estimated to rise between 1.4 degrees Celsius and 5.8 degrees Celsius.

The warming phenomenon of the Earth, triggered by the excess emission of greenhouse gases especially in developed and industrialised countries is already taking its toll on the unique and rich biodiversity of the poorer countries.

Source: The Kathmandu Post, 1 October 2004

2. Construction of Bio-track from Bagmati to Yamuna Begins

Construction of a bio-track from the Bagmati of Nepal to the Yamuna River of India has begun with the objective of protecting, conserving and promoting wildlife and forest products.

The bio-track is being constructed under the Terai Geo-Perimeter Programme of the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation and aims to facilitate the movement of wildlife from one place to another and is an effort to expand their habitation targets by linking up the 15 Wildlife Conservation Areas on the Indo Nepal border.

The President of the bio-diversity protection group in Banke Sridhar Upadhyaya said that with the cooperation of the World Wildlife fund linking the Royal Bardia National Park with other Wildlife Conservation Reserves in the region has already begun with the involvement of various local communities.

Nepal's Royal Bardia National Park, Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, Kanchanpur, Chitwan National Park, Parsa Wildlife Reserve and Annapurna Conservation Area will have a bio-track between them, which will then be linked up with 10 wildlife reserves in India.

Source: The Rising Nepal, 13 July 2004

3. Concern over Exploitation of Nepali Monkeys

Two US-based animal rights groups have expressed concern over the exploitation of Rhesus monkeys from Nepal in the University of Washington (UW) in the name of research. They have appealed to the Nepal government to stop sending live primates to the university.

Seattle-based Stop Animal Exploitation Now and the International Primate Protection League issued a press statement calling for the government of Nepal to end the relationship with the University of Washington to prevent harm to Nepali primates.

The animal rights groups have also expressed serious concern over the Nepal government's alleged exercise to legalise the exploitation of the primates. The statement also alleged that Nepal is allowing the United States to fund a monkey laboratory in Nepal.

The animal rights groups have also accused the University of Washington of causing harm to monkeys in its laboratory. One out of every four primates, or two every day on average, dies at the University of Washington either of disease or in experimentation.

Source: The Kathmandu Post, 8 June 2004

4. Medical Waste Disposal Directory

The days are gone for doctors, medical institutions and hospitals to escape their responsibility of disposing the hospital waste in an unscientific manner. Haphazard disposal of medical waste has been threat to public health and a source of environmental pollution for Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC).

At a press meeting, Kathmandu Metropolitan City stated that all hospitals and health care institutions in Kathmandu will have to follow the hospital waste management directory. National Dental Hospital (NDH), National Kidney Treatment Centre and Shahid Gangalal National Heart Centre will be following the directory

strictly under its first phase of implementation. Other hospitals and health institutions would follow it in time.

The directory was prepared by KMC and NDH and it will be useful for any hospitals and health care centres in the country as it is based on the World Health Organisation's standard. According to Ram Prasad Sharma, the executive officer of KMC, it has allocated a necessary budget for the implementation of the directory. KMC has already bought two special vehicles to collect medical waste from the sources, has also bought an incinerator machine and is set to buy an auto calve machine.

Source: The Kathmandu Post, 1 June 2004

5. Community Forests Aim to Reduce Poverty

The community Forestry Division (CFD) under the Department of Forests organised a national workshop on community forestry. The workshop focused on poverty alleviation, sustainable forest management and good governance. The concept of community forestry has been in practice since 1978. The programme is the first of its kind in the country and has been widely successful in conserving biodiversity and reforming the geosphere with the participation of local communities.

Nearly 1.1 million hectares of forests, or nearly 25% of Nepal's total forests, have been handed over to 13,000 user groups. About 1.4 million households, 35% of the total population benefit from this programme. Community forests have also contributed to making Nepal a practicing democracy besides empowering the people. About 35,000 women have reached leadership positions in the communities. Income generated from such forests has been used for poverty alleviation. The community forests earn Rs. 900 million annually. The fund is locally spent on the development of education, health, constructing roads and drinking water.

Source: The Himalayan Times, 5 August 2004

6. Supreme Court Tells Government to Probe Risks of Polythene Use

The Supreme Court ordered the Ministry of Population and Environment to carry out investigation into the manufacture and use of polythene bags in order to ascertain the hazards to people's health and to the environment.

The Supreme Court told the ministry that if the investigation ascertains that polythene bags pose a danger to public health and the environment, the production of these bags will have to be banned and alternatives to replace them must be explored. The order came in

response to a Public Interest Litigation filed by advocate Santosh Kumar Mahato a year ago. The petitioner accused the government authorities of allowing the illegal production of polythene bags.

The petition adds that such government action was contributing to the neglect of people's right to health and to a clean environment in the Kathmandu Valley. Although the Ministry of Environment and Population has already banned the production of polythene bags under 20 microns, the petitioner has sought a ban on all types of polythene bags.

Source: The Himalayan, 20 November 2004

New Zealand

Neil Ericksen, Director and

Claire Gibson, Information and Publications Officer

The International Global Change Institute (IGCI)

The University of Waikato



1. Review of Flood Risk Management

During 2004 New Zealand experienced two extreme flooding events; first in the Manawatu and Wellington regions in February and then the Bay of Plenty region in July. These events resulted in major economic losses and social and environmental disruption. Because they included failure in river control systems, the Government decided to review flood risk management and river control in New Zealand. The review will be carried out by the Ministry for the Environment in consultation with regional councils and central government agencies, including the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management. The purpose of the review is to assess current approaches to river control and flood risk management, identify operational strengths and weaknesses, and establish what changes may be required.

Responsibility for flood risk management was



Flooding in Whakatane, Bay of Plenty, July 2004
Copyright ©Larry Dixon

devolved to local government in 1989, therefore the review will also consider a regional council proposal to investigate river management and engineering issues, standards and best practice.

In the Bay of Plenty region, the International Global Change Institute (IGCI) at the University of Waikato is carrying out research into the effects of climate variation and change and land use change on future flood losses, and how best to reduce barriers to the development and implementation of integrated flood risk management policies in regional and district councils.

Source: www.beehive.govt.nz/

Ministry for the Environment, *Environz*, November 2004.

2. Changes to the Resource Management Act

The introduction of the Resource Management Act (RMA) in 1991 heralded an innovative approach to environmental planning in New Zealand. It focused on promoting the sustainable management of natural and physical resources and was regarded as a world leader. Any use and development of natural resources was required to take account of adverse environmental effects. Regional and district councils were to manage this through implementing effects-based policies and plans, and resource consent applications and approvals.

Implementation of the RMA by Government has been controversial for various reasons. Thus, a recent review of the RMA has resulted in moves to improve its implementation. Specific areas of focus include: balancing national and local interests; options for improving the local planning process by changing local plan requirements; giving more direction by Government to councils through national policy statements and standards on matters of national importance; improving the submissions and hearings process; improving resource consent decision-making; providing options for allocating natural resources; and improving capacity and practice in local government, including accreditation of decision-makers.

Source: Ministry for the Environment, Environz, August 2004.

Ericksen, N., Berke, P., Crawford, J., and Dixon, J. (2004). Plan-making for Sustainability. Aldershot, England. Ashgate.

3. New National Environmental Standards

Although the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) enabled Government to prepare national policy statements and standards, it chose not to, except for the coastal marine area which was required by the law. However, in 2004, the Government approved its first ever national environmental standards. They allow a consistent standard across regions so as to increase certainty in decision-making under the RMA. The standards cover: ambient standards for fine particles, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and ozone; prohibition of activities that produce dioxins and other toxics; the design of new wood burners in urban areas; and landfill gas collection and destruction.

The standards are based on research and scientific evidence and were developed by the Ministry for the Environment in consultation with local government, business and the community.

Source: www.beehive.govt.nz;

Ministry for the Environment, Improving the RMA: Progress Report on Achievements, 2004.

Ericksen, N., Berke, P., Crawford, J., and Dixon, J. (2004). Plan-making for Sustainability. Aldershot, England. Ashgate.

4. Fiordland Marine Area Created

In October the Government announced the creation of a new Fiordland Marine Area to protect the environment of Fiordland, a UNESCO World Heritage area with a globally unique environment and exceptional biodiversity. This initiative is a unique approach to marine resource management which was proposed by the Guardians of Fiordland's Fisheries and Marine Environment which represents community, Maori, commercial and recreational interests.

The proposed Fiordland Marine Area is expected to encompass around 918,000 hectares and to include the waters of Milford and Doubtful Sounds. It will include eight new marine reserves (9,430 hectares in total) and a



Milford Sound in Fiordland
Copyright ©Claire Gibson

new commercial fishing exclusion zone (36,000 hectares). A local advisory committee, the Fiordland Marine Guardians, will be established to advise central and local government.

It is expected that special legislation will be introduced to Parliament before the end of 2004 to create the new Fiordland Marine Area and management regime.

Source: [www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.cfm?](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.cfm?DocumentID=21094)

DocumentID=21094

Ministry for the Environment, Environz, November 2004.

Pakistan

Mushtaq Ahmed Memon
 Senior Policy Researcher
 Institute for Global Environmental Strategies



1. Decision on Kalabagh Dam is in Sight!

President Pervez Musharraf is expected to announce the construction of Kalabagh dam in the coming weeks. He thinks a broader consensus is not possible on such a mega project having various economical, environmental, and political implications. Various technical and political committees were formed to build the consensus among various stakeholders, but so far they have failed. The major conflict is on the amount of water available. The proponents of the dam suggest that 40 million acre feet (MAF) of water had been wasted over the last 27 years because of the delayed decision. The opponents suggests that there are already water shortages leading towards severe economic and environmental consequences for downstream people, and this dam will keep most of the 3 out of 4 provinces dry. They are of the opinion that there should be smaller reservoirs on the Indus river, mainly downstream, to improve the water availability for agriculture as well as to support bio-diversity. If the decision is taken by the President, after 30 years of controversies, then this will be one of the major decisions by his government.

Sources: Daily "The News" 7 September 2004, Daily "The Dawn" 13 October and 16 November 2004



Downstream stakeholders for Indus water
Copyright ©Author

2. Arsenic Monitoring and Mitigation Project for Clean Drinking Water

The government has approved a 35.8 million rupees project to monitor and mitigate arsenic for the provision of clean drinking water. The arsenic problem in Pakistan was traced through various tests. According to a recent study, 30% of the total population of Pakistan has access to drinking water provided by local water providers in the public sector. Out of these consumers, 80% were bound to face the threat of contamination that could have a serious impact on people's health. This situation in southern Panjab province and central Sindh province is alarming and somewhat similar to that of Bangladesh, considering the socio-economic background of the rural areas. Recently, Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) has also developed low-cost



Drinking Water in Rural Areas of Pakistan
Copyright ©Author

arsenic removal techniques using clay-pitchers, plastic gravity flow and ceramic cartridges. However monitoring of over six months indicated that clay-pitcher arsenic removal filtering was the most feasible technology.

Source: Daily "Dawn" 3 October 2004

3. Karachi Mayor Calls on Kitakyushu Mayor for Environmental Cooperation

Karachi Mayor, Advocate Naimatullah Khan,

called on Kitakyushu Mayor, Koichi Sueyoshi on 4 August 2004 to discuss environmental cooperation. Karachi is the biggest city in Pakistan with approximately 10 million inhabitants. Karachi is a port city, with two major ports, and attracts many economic immigrants from within Pakistan and from neighbouring countries. This influx of population is putting enormous pressure on the public services and environment. The water supply and sanitation, and solid waste management are becoming critical issues for the city government, which has taken on more responsibilities in the wake of current decentralisation of the local governments in Pakistan. The Karachi Mayor was keen to seek technical cooperation for solid waste management, as Japanese cities have very effective and efficient systems. He was of the opinion that Kitakyushu city's experiences can guide Karachi to develop and implement local level action plans for effective solid waste management. Kitakyushu Mayor was willing to work with Karachi, as these relations can help to develop trade links between Kitakyushu Port and Karachi Port.



Karachi Mayor calls on Kitakyushu Mayor for Environmental Cooperation
Copyright ©Author

4. IUCN Environmental Media Award 2004 for Asia Goes to Pakistan

The World Conservation Union, IUCN, is holding its 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok on 17-25 November. The announcement for media awards has already been made for the regional winners. In Asia, the winner is Mr. Massoud Ansari of the monthly magazine, Newline. He is being awarded for his story, "The Untold Story." This is about one of the major oil spills along the coast of Karachi, the biggest city in Pakistan. The Tasman Spirit, a Greek-registered oil tanker carrying approximately 67,500 tonnes of crude oil, drifted close to Karachi harbour and was grounded. In the process it developed cracks along its base and the tanker split in two and began to disgorge huge amounts of oil into the water. It has been estimated that between 24,000 to 26,000 tonnes of oil that are now in the sea have entirely destroyed the area's marine life, and the environment may never recover. The health effects due to fumes and direct contact with the oil were devastating. The authorities were never fully equipped nor fully mobilised in time to control the disaster. The submerged rear section of oil tanker was finally towed out of the area after 6 months leaving a legacy of

irreversible environmental consequences and long-lasting court and insurance cases on claims and counter-claims.

Sources: IUCN / Reuters October 2004, Daily "Dawn" 7 March 2004, Daily "The News" 7 September 2004

5. National Workshop on the Improvement of Urban Air Quality

Clean Air Initiative for Asian Cities (CAI-Asia) together with local stakeholders and international organisations will hold a National Workshop on the Improvements of Urban Air Quality on 13–15 December in Lahore. The objectives of the workshop are to galvanise air quality management efforts in Pakistan and to strengthen air quality management in the main urban areas of Pakistan (e.g. Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad / Rawalpindi, Peshawar, and Quetta). The Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) has undertaken a nation-wide baseline study of air quality monitoring in major cities for Enercon and UNDP. The workshop will arrive at recommendations on how to move toward better air quality management in Pakistan. The federal Minister of the environment will open the workshop.

The Philippines

Merlin M. Magallona

Professorial Lecturer and Director

Institute of International Legal Studies

University of the Philippines Law Centre



1. Storms, Landslides, Death, and Deforestation

Super typhoon “Yoyong”, preceded by storms “Winnie” and “Violeta”, devastated the eastern coast of Luzon on the first two days of December, leaving in its path a death toll of more than 1,300 mostly caused by landslides and flash floods, together with hundreds of logs coming down from the mountains. Until the second week of December, miners and military men were still in searching for survivors in the mud flows and ruins. The National Disaster Coordinating Council has estimated that at least 19,789 families in the region were displaced by “Yoyong”.

Apparently attributing the landslides and floods to widespread deforestation, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo blamed illegal logging in the area. She vowed to make the illegal loggers pay for the death of more than 1,000 persons and the destruction caused by landslides and flash floods. “We shall prosecute them the way we do terrorists, kidnappers, drug traffickers”, she said as reported in the press.

Visiting Real, the most devastated coastal town in Quezon Province, after typhoon “Yoyong”, the President told the newspaper reporters, “I’m canceling all [logging] permits here and suspending issuance of all others”. Later, she urged Congress to amend environmental laws to provide for heavier penalties for illegal loggers.

On account of this disaster that mobilised the international community into humanitarian assistance, President Macapagal-Arroyo imposed a nationwide log ban. She required Secretary Michael Defensor of Environment and Natural Resources as well as Secretary of Justice Raul Gonzales to prosecute big-time illegal loggers within a month. Secretary Defensor later ordered a logging ban in the towns of Real, Infanta, Dingalan and General Nakar in Aurora Province.

In Congress, the total log ban bill that had been pending for years was rushed for approval in the House of Representatives. If enacted into law, the log ban would be for 25 years.

Information made available to the press says that in Quezon and Aurora Provinces, which bore the brunt of “Yoyong”, more than 216,000 hectares of forest lands in Quezon and Aurora provinces have been placed under logging concessions and covered by timber license agreements, industrial tree plantation lease agreements, and industrial foreign management agreements. A total of 106,254 hectares are under timber license agreements issued to three logging companies in Aurora and Quezon provinces.

Sources: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 1, 2, 3 December 2004; Today, 3, 4 and 5 December 2004; The Daily Tribune, 5 December 2004; Malaya, 12 December 2004; The Japan Times, 1, 2 and 5 December 2004; The Daily Yomiuri, 5 December 2004; Financial Times, 2 December 2004.

2. Clean Water Act of 2004 Takes Effect

Known officially as the “Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004”, a comprehensive water management law took effect on 6 May 2004. It was approved by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on 22 March 2004 after enactment by the Congress of the Philippines. It covers water management “in all water bodies, . . . primarily to the abatement and control of pollution from land based sources.”

Among other policy pronouncements, the new law aims to “streamline processes and procedures in the prevention, control and abatement of pollution of the country’s water resources.” It also calls for “a holistic national programme of water quality management” and for enforcement of “a system of accountability for short- and long-term adverse environmental impact of a project, programme or activity.”

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is the primary implementing agency of the new law. It shall designate “water quality management areas”, each to be managed by a governing board in the implementation of this law. For the upkeep of water bodies in each area, the “area water quality management fund” is to be established. The DENR is empowered to implement a wastewater charge system which will be established on the basis of payment to the government for “discharging wastewater into the water bodies” in each water quality management area.

The new law defines the share of local government units in the management of water quality within their territorial jurisdictions. It provides for incentives and rewards for individuals and private entities for outstanding and innovative projects, technologies or activities in water quality management. Incentives include tax exemptions and credits. Pollution of water bodies is the main burden of the law’s penal and civil liability provisions.

Source: CD Technology Asia, Laws Philippine Edition

2004 Bulletin; Files of Bills Division, House of Representatives, Constitution Hill, Quezon City.

3. Office of Environmental Ombudsman Created

Complaints against public officials who fail to enforce the country’s environmental laws or to act on such complaints may now be submitted to the newly created investigative arm of the Ombudsman, the Office of Environmental Ombudsman. The new office was formally opened by Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo in a signing ceremony with the agreement of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) on 3 February 2004.

With more than 40,000 members nationwide, the IBP has offered to take up pro bono cases that may be brought against public officials in the new office. In a press interview, Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio said that the country has some “130 environmental laws, and yet the people are frustrated and discouraged to pursue cases against public officials.”

The Ombudsman is an office created by the Constitution to investigate acts of any person or public official, which may be “illegal, unjust, improper, or inefficient”. It may also investigate any public official or government office in order “to order, prevent, and correct any abuse or impropriety in the performance of duties.”

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 4 February 2004.

4. Farmers Protest Cutting of Trees in Building Road

Organised farmers in Hacienda Looc, a coastal area 90 kilometers from Manila, lit 4,000 candles in protest against the government road project which they claimed would lead to the cutting down of 4,000 trees. Together with the farmers, the people of Hacienda Looc formed a unity organisation to prevent the bulldozing of the road site that would traverse farm lands and

fruit trees.

“The death of our trees”, said Leonardo Sevilla, the chairman of the unity group, “means the demise of our farming community we now mourn our impending death should the government push through with the road project”. Road construction is part of the Nasugbo-Ternate Tourist Road, a component of the Project Calabarzon of the national government. The master plan of this Project was prepared by a development agency of the Japanese government for the relocation of labour-intensive subcontracting firms connected to multinational corporations of Japan.

The plains of Hacienda Looc covers more than 1,700 hectares of agricultural land, planted with rice, corn, vegetables and sugarcane. Its upland area produces mango, banana, jackfruit and star apple. Road construction in Hacienda Looc have been at a standstill because of the community-based protest.

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2 November 2004.

5. Bath-Sharing to Conserve Water

“Start sharing baths with your partners to

conserve water!”

To dramatise its water conservation policy in Metropolitan Manila, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) issued this statement as a warning on a looming water crisis.

The rainless past two months have reduced the water level of the Angat Dam, the main source of water for the more than 10 million residents of Metro Manila. The NWRB reported last 8 January that the water level of Angat Dam had gone down 4.75 meters below the safe level.

Secretary Elisea Gozun of DENR said: “We are sounding the alarm early to avoid a water shortage. We are worried that the situation will worsen during the summer months.” But earlier, since 15 December of last year, the water supply to Metro Manila residents had been reduced, resulting in 80,000 households without water, according to NWRB executor director Ramon Alikpala.

Source: Philippine Daily Inquirer, 9 January 2004.

Russia

Anatoly Lebedev

Chairman

Non Government Environmental Organisation

Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC)



1. Oil Pipeline Development Plans and Governmental Tricks

The issue of Siberian oil for the Pacific market during 2004 remained one of the top priorities both for the Russian government and the environmental community. Early in the winter, state controlled “Transneft” conducted a rapid campaign of reaching an agreement with the governors of all territories from Irkutsk to Primorye on the so-called new trail pipeline. The new project was named “Siberia-Pacific” and designated to start not from Angarsk as before, but from Taishet in West Siberia, meaning the involvement of more oil from that region and an increase in the top annual capacity of the pipeline from 50 to 80 million tons. Learning from the experience of the previous project and environmental opposition to it, the company also conducted a broad campaign of public discussion and hearings in all the territories involved. Regional environmental NGOs, being deeply involved in the pipeline issue last year, discovered a big set of procedural and informational violations and gaps in the process and documents on this pre-investment stage, and in the registered series of public expertises, which legally may be conducted before or simultaneously with a state one. However, the company ignored all public criticism, refused to present any documents for public scrutiny, and created a fake NGO specially for that to avoid following the

democratic procedure. Meanwhile, there are many announcements from specialists, that the whole of Siberia can never provide that much oil. Therefore, “Transneft” is currently waiting for the next round of lawsuits from NGOs.

Source: Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC), own analysis



Oil pipeline construction on the Baltic Sea coast area.
Copyright©Alexander Sutyagin, project “Monitoring BTS”
(Baltic Pipeline System)

2. New Structure — New Problems

Following the framework of administrative governmental reform, which occurred in 2004, the Ministry of Nature Resources was comprehensively re-organised in Russia. All the processes were constantly followed by strong and active criticism from the environmental community. The first changes targeted the state forest service and environmental protection system. The re-organising of forest service

co-incided with the process of drafting a new Forest Code by the government as a trial to launch the privatisation of the forests. Being troubled with that and organising a broad public campaign of optimisation Forest Code, the environmental community did not pay enough attention to the real situation in the forest areas and communities, which have sunk into corruption and destructive logging. As to an environmental protection system, there is a new model targeted to separate nature resource management and control from the inspection of industrial activity. Thus two different state agencies were born in the autumn – the Control Agency of Resource Use under the Ministry of Nature Resources with departments of protected territories and environmental impact assessment, and the State Service of Ecological, Nuclear and Technological Control under federal government, with its own impact assessment. Both are designated to have no rights for commercial activity, with similar restrictions on the Forest Agency, another department of the Ministry. Generally seeming reasonable, specialised resource use inspection once more got no authority to control either wildlife management or fisheries. Thus a new group of agencies and services make the whole system even less efficient than before.

Source: Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC), own analysis

3. Illegal Logging as Community Based Timber Industry

Many regional administrations and governments of the forest-rich areas from North-West Russia through to the Far East were constantly looking for any leverage point to tackle the problem of illegal logging and timber market. Since Primorye was a main player of the problem in the middle 1990s, many ways to get the system under control were created and experienced here. There was a special transport certification of fresh logs, limitations on the number of



Forest inspector on the ridge along reserved Bikin River, Primorye

Copyright ©Galina Stetskaya, NGO "Eco-Patrol"

timberyards and customs checking points, efforts to ban logging and trade of endangered species, creation of special inspecting task forces etc. Other regions added to that experience in their own way, usually just weak administrative methods, cancelled by prosecutors later in light of contradicting Civil Code and state customs rules. Instead, illegal business got stronger over the years, put down roots into local communities both in Russia and China and finally brought many analysts to essentially another perception of the problem. The state system of forest management had failed on the level of forest inventory and maintenance, which had become a private business. In contrast, those who work illegally brought much less impact to the forests than official leasers. Additionally from the viewpoint of local community, all the profit that came to illegal loggers and traders from Chinese wholesalers, including all bribes, remained in the community, while official fees and taxes were taken away for the budget and never returned. Therefore, a progressive approach to illegal logging is now to identify community based small illegal brigades, separate them from the whole corrupted system and try to support them officially, giving some forest leases with a public control.

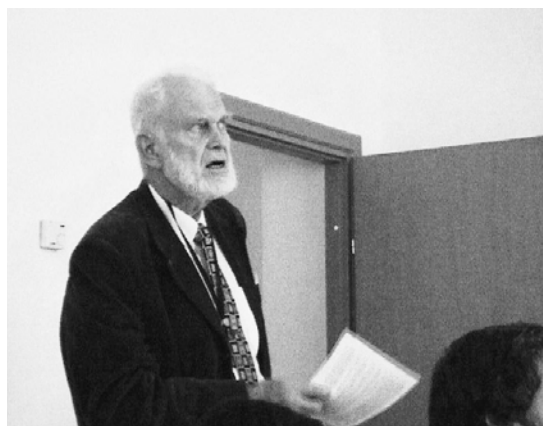
Source: Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC), own analysis

4. Russia Will Get Green Party

During last several years, the Russian environmental movement suffered with increasing pressure from the state in terms of opportunities to get any real influence on the general policy of economic development and strengthening institutions of civil society. After the Civil Forum of 2000, the official anti-ecological strategy of the state government was announced. The core and almost only goal of the government and president become making money, which, for a resource-dependent country, meant increased and unlimited exploitation of natural resources and a deep impact on the environment. On the other hand, having no political will and skills to achieve appropriate control over illegal resource use, the government challenged businesses to increase quantitative pressure on the environment to gain more legal profit. After the last presidential and Congressional elections of early 2004, it became clear that environmental mentality will be absent in State Duma and new government. This gave birth to an initiative from the top environmental politician in Russia, academician Alexei Yablokov, to try to create a new Green Party, designated to unite most active regional environmental groups and target any official position in the State Duma in the future. This

process was much more difficult than it seemed, since most active regional groups are still too dependent on foreign grants and have no political experience. Also, there are several parallel regional and national initiatives, consolidated with some power from the democratic environmental community. Nonetheless, at the end of the year, the party was registered, an Executive Board created and in some regions local initiative groups prepared their first conferences. There is hope that in 2005, the Green Party of Russia will appear on the political scene.

Source: Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC), own analysis



Academician Alexei Yablokov,
initiator of Russian Green Party in process
Copyright ©Anatoly Lebedev

Singapore

Koh Kheng-Lian

Director

Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL)



1. Ministry of Environment and Water Resources (MEWR)

On 1 September 2004, the Ministry of the Environment (ENV) was renamed the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR).

Source: mewr_feedback@mewr.gov.sg.

The MEWR Mission is for Singaporeans to have a clean living environment and to enjoy a high standard of environmental public health protected against the spread of communicable diseases. The following are its main aims:

- the provision of a first-rate environmental infrastructure for solid and liquid waste disposal, and for storm water;
- the implementation of pollution control measures; and
- the establishment of high public health standards through education, surveillance and enforcement.

Source: <http://app.env.gov.sg/view.asp?id=SAS442>

2. Restructuring of National Environment Agency

Pursuant to the restructuring of the Ministry of the Environment on 1 July 2002, the National Environment Agency (NEA) has undergone further refinement in its set up. Currently, the organisational set up with two of its major

divisions, i.e. the Environmental Protection Division (EPD), and the Meteorological Services Division (MSD) undergoing restructuring in 2003 and 2004 respectively. The EPD implements programmes to monitor, reduce and prevent environmental pollution. It is also responsible for the operation of four refuse incineration plants and off-shore landfills in Singapore. In order to conserve energy resources and landfill space, it is rigorously implementing programmes to minimise waste generation, and maximising recycling and energy conservation. EPD works closely with MSD in air pollution.

Sources: <http://app.nea.gov.sg/>; NEA Annual Report 2003/04

3. Animals and Birds (Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes) Rules 2004 (No. S 668)

The above rules are made under the Animal and Birds Act (Chapter 7 of the Laws of Singapore).

As from 15 November 2004, a licence is required from the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) under the above rules to house and use animals for teaching and research. Any person or licensee who contravenes the regulations may be liable to a conviction or a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or both. The licensee must ensure that

the handling, care and treatment of any animal used for any scientific purpose comply with the rules. The licensee must appoint an institutional animal care and use committee in relation to his or its research facility. The functions and duties of institutional animal care and use committee are set out in the rules. The power of the Director – General of the Animal and Birds Act is set out and includes the dissolution of the licensee’s institutional animal care and use committee if it is not discharging its function. A propose project will not be approved unless it complies with requirements set out in the rules.

4. SARS: Chua Mui Hoong, *Defining Moment: How Singapore Beat SARS*

The book, published in 2004, chronicles how Singapore combated the disease, with the full backing of its Government. It is remarkable how virus globalisation with fast travel worldwide can carry zoonotic diseases to far flung places. It aptly describes impact of viral globalisation of zoonotic diseases which crosses frontiers. SARS provides an example of how amazing and fast the SARS virus travelled - from a Singapore tourist in HK (Esther Mok) who contracted it there, she spread it within a short period of time to a number of people in Singapore. She spread the virus to her parents and pastor and they died. Another victim who went to her ward spread it to his brother who in turn spread it to his family and fellow stallholders in the Pasir Panjang Wholesale Centre, etc. In Singapore 33 dead, 238 infected from Feb – May 2003.

Source: <http://www.egazette.com.sg/egazette/current/sls/040668.pdf>

5. Capacity Building in Environment

- Asia Pacific Centre for Environmental Law: It will be conducting a course for the Singapore Environment Institute in December 2004 on Understanding Environmental Laws: the Singapore and International Perspectives for senior officials in the various government ministries. APCEL members have participated in numerous international environmental law conferences during 2004.
- Singapore Environment Institute (SEI)
 - >SEI facilitated the establishment of the international agency task force (IATF) to develop a coordinated environmental training framework to harness the competency of all agencies to fulfill one of the goals of the Singapore Green Plan 2012 to build capacity. One of the aims of IATF is to develop a database that would provide information on environmental training programmes and resources in Singapore.
 - >Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Expert Workshop (30 August – 3 September 2004) This Workshop is Co-organised by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the Singapore’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the SEI, the purpose of the workshop was to provide a forum for the sharing of experiences and exchange of views among Government, Private-sector and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) practitioners, academics, professionals from international and intergovernmental agencies, and other selected professionals involved with the design and implementation of science and technology strategies and policy in SIDS.

Sri Lanka

Nalaka Gunawardene

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

TVE Asia Pacific (www.tveap.org)



1. Tsunami Deals a Massive Blow to Coastal Sri Lanka

The earthquake-triggered tsunami that swept across the Indian Ocean on 26 December impacted Sri Lanka with devastating force, creating the worst natural disaster in the island nation's history. It flooded two thirds of the coastline, causing massive damage in the north, east and south: over 30,000 dead, 4,000 more missing, one million displaced and US\$ 1.5 billion worth of property loss. As Sri Lanka's best known foreign resident Sir Arthur C. Clarke summed up, "For millions of Sri Lankans, the day after Christmas was a living nightmare that mimicked the celluloid horrors of (the movie) *The Day After Tomorrow*."

Environmentalists immediately noticed that areas with mangroves and corals were relatively less affected. IUCN-the World Conservation Union said that lagoons, mangrove stands, sand dunes, *Cassuarina* plantations along the beach and beach rock-outcrops had reduced the damage caused by the tsunami. These had acted as barriers that broke the force of incoming sea water. This news comes too late to save most of Sri Lanka's corals and mangroves that have been destroyed in recent decades to build shrimp farms, hotels and other projects. Soon after the disaster, the government said it will strictly enforce an existing law that bans all constructions within 300 metres of the shoreline.

Source: <http://www.iucn.org/places/srilanka/TsunamiN.htm>

2. New Measures to Ensure Better Air Quality

The government announced in late 2004 that it will introduce strict measures to improve air quality. With vehicular emissions being the main contributor to air pollution, all vehicles not conforming to new emission standards will be banned from 2006, it was announced at the First National Symposium on Air Resource Management held from 2-4 December in Colombo. The standards have already been adopted, but vehicle importers and owners have a grace period to clean up their act. Experts and policy makers also discussed ways to reduce indoor air pollution, which are higher than safe limits, particularly in rural areas, exposing women and children to health risks.

Meanwhile, the Air Resource Management Centre of the Ministry of Environment has introduced Sri Lanka Air Quality Index (SLAQI) for reporting daily and weekly air quality. It monitors five major air pollutants – ground level ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. Monitored data are expressed on a scale of 1 to 500: higher values indicate a greater impact on human health. To enable easier public understanding, the scale is divided into six categories beginning

with 'good' and ending with 'hazardous'. In coming years, data gathering will be expanded.

Sources:

1. *Air Resource Management Centre:* <http://www.airmacsl.org/index.html>
2. *Clean Air Sri Lanka:* <http://www.cleanairnet.org/caiasia/1412/propertyvalue-13725.html>
3. *SLAQI:* http://www.airmacsl.org/whts_new.html#srilankaair

3. Sri Lanka's Amphibians under Threat

Sri Lanka's amphibians are dying out at an alarming rate, with more than half of worldwide extinctions being reported from the country. The Global Amphibian Assessment announced in September 2004 that 19 out of 35 global instances of extinction had been reported from this Indian Ocean island with a high level of biodiversity. This is the first time that each of the 5,743 amphibian species known to science has been analysed in order to assess their threat status and distribution.

Much of the species loss in Sri Lanka is due to habitat destruction, mainly deforestation, according to IUCN-the World Conservation Union, one of the partners in the survey. This loss is particularly worrying as recent studies have uncovered new species of frogs in Sri Lanka that were unknown to science. It was only in 2002 that more than 100 new rainforest frog species were discovered from Sri Lanka, creating new excitement in scientific circles. That increased the country's known frog diversity by more than five-fold, turning it into an amphibian hotspot. The Wildlife Heritage Trust of Sri Lanka, a non-profit research group that made the discovery, has been mapping the distribution of these species. They urged the need for more attention for the conservation of the remaining rainforests that are constantly under pressure. So far, conservation efforts have focused mostly on mammals such as elephants.

Sources:

1. <http://www.globalamphibians.org/summary.htm>
2. <http://www.wht.org/New-08-99/Amph-general.htm>
3. http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/10/1010_021010_srilankafrogs.html

Vietnam

Pham Huu Nghi

Professor, Editor in chief

Institute of State and Law

Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences



1. Orientations for Improving Environmental Standards

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has been collaborating with relevant ministries, departments and localities to work out orientations for revising environmental standards in order to facilitate the State management of the environment and ensure sustainable socio-economic development.

Relevant agencies are expected to adjust a number of environmental standards between now and 2005. Parameters of dust, chemicals and gas emission concentration will be added to air pollution standards. In addition, standards for gas emissions from vehicles in every region will be adjusted in terms of vehicle tonnage and engine technology.

New environment standards will be established for thermo-electric and chemical fertiliser production, seafood and rubber processing, and oil refinery.

By 2002, 102 standards with more than 360 environmental parameters had been applied nationwide.

The current system of environmental standards includes standards of surrounding environment quality, measuring pollution, sample collection and analysis. The standard for surrounding environment quality needs to be improved after nine years of application.

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

2. ADB Funds Central Urban Environment Projects

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the State Bank of Vietnam (SBV) on 6 February signed a credit agreement for a project to improve the quality of urban environment in six towns and their surrounding areas in the central region.

Under the agreement, the ADB will lend Vietnam US\$44m to help expand and upgrade urban environmental infrastructure, strengthen urban management and planning, and increase community participation in the planning of urban services in the six project towns - Dong Ha, Ha Tinh, Lang Co, Quang Ngai, Tam Ky, and Thanh Hoa.

The project is estimated to cost \$97.6m, of which \$44m (equivalent to 46%) is financed by the ADB loan from the ADB-affiliated Asian Development Fund. The loan has a 32-year maturity, including an eight-year grace period, with an interest rate of 1% per annum during



The project is estimated to cost \$97.6m
Copyright ©Vietnam.net

the grace period and 1.5% per annum thereafter.

In addition, Agence Française de Développement (AFD) will provide two loans totalling about \$31.8m, while Provincial People's Committees will finance the remaining \$21.8m.

The project will improve drainage, sanitation, and solid waste systems, making the six towns less prone to water pollution and flooding and benefiting a population of nearly 700,000.

Source: Vietnam.net

3. Sci-tech Institute Helps Improve Environment in Craft Villages

The institute, which belongs to the Hanoi Technology University, has recently assisted a noodle-making village in Bich Hoa Commune, Thanh Oai District, Ha Tay Province, 20km west of Hanoi, in making biogas shafts for cooking, and helping the village solve its pollution problem.

Waste from noodle-making and manure from livestock breeding are collected in underground tanks. Gas released from the fermentation process is used for cooking, replacing the traditional fuels like firewood or kerosene. The biogas shafts benefit local people by improving the environment and reducing their daily living costs.

Prof. Dr. Dang Kim Chi at the institute said this is only one of various efficient solutions the institute has provided for traditional craft villages nationwide. Other solutions include special machines to collect wood dust in wood products villages, and technical methods to collect solvent used in lacquer-making processes or to separate heavy metals from sewage in villages producing zinc-coated iron sheets.

Vietnam boasts a great number of traditional craft villages. Ha Tay Province is proud of

around 1,000 villages.

However, most of them face serious pollution and solutions have been lacking for years.

Source: Vietnam News Agency

4. Environment Management to be Computerised

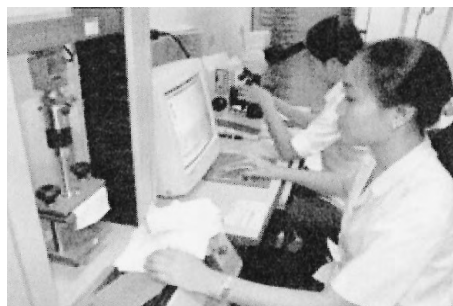
On 13 October, the Prime Minister approved a strategy to apply and develop a system based on IT to manage natural resources and environment to 2015.

Under the strategy, the State administrative management system on natural resources and environment will be computerised to meet e-government standards and ensure the automation of processing natural resource and environmental data.

The strategy also points out that by 2010, 50-100% of surveys, observation equipment of the natural resources and the environment will be computerised. By 2015, the sector will have its own internal functional network.

Currently the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has only the Environment Protection Department with acceptable IT facilities and a synchronous system of servers, stations and peripheral equipment.

Source: Government Office



Civil servants of Environment Protection Dept., MNRE
Copyright ©Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Afterword

Looking back on 2004, the news items concerning natural calamities were exceptionally numerous: the great floods in Bangladesh and New Zealand, damage from typhoons in Japan and the Philippines, a massive earthquake in the Chuetsu area of Niigata Prefecture, Japan, the worst ever earthquake off the coast of Sumatra, and the tsunami in the Indian Ocean. The great earthquake off the coast of Sumatra and the resultant tsunami in the Indian Ocean, among others, was the worst ever disaster in history, causing more than 300,000 fatalities and possible fatalities in twelve countries. But the calamity occurred on 26 December – that is, after we received most of the manuscripts that should have reached us, so Sri Lanka's report was the only one that described this disaster. In fact, Indonesia had the largest number of victims, and India, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh and many other countries also suffered an enormous number of lost lives and victims several times larger. We express our sincere sympathy to the people of these countries and hope that they will recover from the devastation of the calamity as early as possible.

The Top News on Environment in Asia celebrates its seventh year of publication. We inaugurated this initiative with 8 countries in 1998, then increased the number of participating nations to 13, 16 and 18, and this year we have published the news from 19 countries. At the end of the year we published a summary of the book for publicity and thanks to this effort, the publication won favourable coverage in a leading newspaper.

In November 2004, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) opened a website where we disseminate the latest information in real time about the environment and sustainable development, including environmental policy trends in various countries and regions around the world. This IGES EnviroScope (<http://enviroscope.iges.or.jp>) automatically gathers in real time new information that arrives at the websites of participating organisations and posts it in news headlines, and at IGES we plan to use this and other tools, and continue to enhance our capability as a base for disseminating the latest information on the environment.

Previous Articles of Top News on Environment in Asia

Contents of the 1998 Top News on Environment in Asia

[China] Ren Yong, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. Enactment of the State Council Ordinance Concerning Environmental Management for Construction Projects
2. Promotion of National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA)
3. The Yangtze River Flood Caused by Abnormal Climate Conditions, but Worsened by Ecological Destruction in the Middle and Upper Reaches

[India] Maithili Iyer, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. Biodiversity Bill to be Discussed in the Winter Session of the Parliament
2. High Court Issues Notice to Manage Fly-ash Disposal
3. Proposed Ban on New Diesel Vehicles in the National Capital Region (NCR)

[Indonesia] Mohamad Soerjani, Institute for Environmental Education and Development (IEED)

1. Efforts to Socialise the New Environmental Management Law in Indonesia
2. Sustainable Development: Principles and Implementations
3. The Indonesian Biodiversity Foundation
4. New Eco-tourism Development, Depok, Indonesia

[Japan] Yohei Harashima, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. Enactment of the Law for the Promotion of Measures to Tackle Global Warming
2. The Emerging Environmental Pollution Caused by Exogenous Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals
3. Preparatory-Phase (Activities) of Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET)
4. Establishment of the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

[Korea] Tae Yong Jung, National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES)

1. Posting Toxic Chemicals Control Act and Regulations
2. Reforming of Green-belt (Development Restriction Area)
3. First Ever Ecological Survey Planned on DMZ

[The Philippines] Merlin M. Magallona, University of the Philippines (UP)

1. Environmental Policy in the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998
2. Environmental and Natural Resources Officers for Philippine Cities

[Singapore] Chia Lin Sien, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)

1. New Measures to Combat Maritime Pollution
2. Singapore Ratifies International Maritime Conventions
3. Study on Energy Efficiency
4. The Haze Continues

[Thailand] Tongroj Onchan, Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)

1. Salween Logging Scandal
2. Forest Encroachment and the Right of People to Live in Thailand's Dwindling Forest

3. The Effects of El Nino and the Worst Forest Fires
4. Thai-Burmese Gas Pipeline Project
5. Inland Prawn Farming

Contents of the 1999 Top News on Environment in Asia

[Cambodia] Kol Vathana, International and Public Cooperation, Ministry of Environment (MoE)

1. Participation in the Second Regional Forum for Southeast Asia of the IUCN World Commission for Protected Areas
2. Workshop on "Awareness of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance"
3. "Management of Forests and Elimination of Illegal Forest Activity" Begins
4. Workshops on Development of Local Forests
5. Drafting of a "Sub-Decree on the 23 Protected Areas Management in Cambodia"

[China] Zhou Xin, Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy of State Environmental Protection Administration (PRCEE)

1. Twentieth Anniversary of the Enactment of "The Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China"
2. Highlighting Pollution Control: Evident Results Achieved
3. Increase of Investment in Environmental Protection
4. Ecological Conservation in the Yangtze and Yellow River Basins

[India] Maithili Iyer, Tata Energy and Resources Institute

1. Supreme Court Tightens Emissions Standards in Delhi
2. Ministerial Directive to Use Fly Ash for Construction Purposes
3. Negotiations for a Biosafety Protocol

[Indonesia] Mohamad Soerjani, National Research Council

1. Provincial Autonomy in Regional Development
2. Profile of the Environmental Minister
3. Sustainable Development and Provincial Autonomy
4. Environmental Impact Analysis New Regulations 1999
5. Timber Plantation

[Japan] Yohei Harashima, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. Crested Ibis Hatching
2. Accident at the Conversion Building in the Nuclear Fuel Processing Plant
3. Law Concerning Special Measures for Dioxin Contamination
4. First Tripartite Environmental Ministers Meeting among China, Japan, and Korea
5. IGES Hosts the 1999 Open Meeting of the Human Dimensions of the Global Environmental Change Research Community

[Korea] Seung Woo Kim, Korea Environment Institute (KEI)

1. Reforming of the Greenbelt Policy
2. The Dong-gang Controversy
3. New Plan to Improve Nakdong River Water Quality
4. New System to Regulate the Use of Disposable Products
5. Nuclear Radiation Leak Accident

[Malaysia] Wan Portia Hamzah and Norhayati Mustapha, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

1. National Coastal Zone Policy
2. The Dugong - A Creature Threatened?
3. Hope for Biodiversity
4. The Sungai Selangor Dam
5. Pesticide Danger in Rivers?
6. Climate Change Scenario
7. Decisive Action on Toxic and Hazardous Waste

[Mongolia] Ayush Namkhai, Development and Environment Center (DEC)

1. Draft Law on the Fauna of Mongolia
2. Natural Disaster Mitigation Country Programme
3. Programme for Protection of the Air
4. Regulation for Issuing Permits to Import, Sell and Use Ozone-Depleting Substances
5. Natural Disaster (Drought)

[Nepal] Bishnu Bhandari, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. Nepal Establishing a Trust Fund for Biodiversity Conservation
2. Vikarm Tempo Banned in Kathmandu
3. Forest Fire in the Himalayan Region
4. Drought in the Himalayas

[The Philippines] Merlin M. Magallona, University of the Philippines (UP)

1. A New Comprehensive Clean Air Law
2. Garbage Crisis in Metropolitan Manila
3. Policy of Sustainable Forest Management

[Singapore] Chia Lin Sien, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)

1. Policy Statements by Minister of the Environment, Singapore
2. The Deep Tunnel Sewerage System (DTSS)
3. Join the OPRC Conventions and Accepts Annex V of MARPOL 73/78
4. Annual Oil-spill Exercise
5. Suspension of Import of Live Pigs and a New License for Selling Chilled Pork

[Thailand] Tongroj Onchan, Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)

1. Anchovy Causes National Conflict
2. A Conservation Angle From Zemin's State Visit
3. A Controversial Movie "The Beach"
4. Confusion over Public Land Encroachment near Sri Nakharin Dam
5. Protest against the Coal-fired Power Plant Project

[Vietnam] Pham Huu Nghi, Institute of State and Law, National Center for Social and Humanities

1. Launching of Environmental Protection Policy
2. Hoi An and My Son to Become World Heritages
3. Worst Floods in Forty Years

[Southeast Asia] Chia Lin Sien, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)

1. UNEP Commissions Review of Marine Pollution of East Asian Countries
2. Tenth Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment, Bangkok
3. Regional Consultative Workshop on the East Asian Seas (EAS) Programme to Discuss Issues Concerning Liability and Compensation for Oil Spill Damage and Clean-up

Claims

4. An Update on the Regional Haze Situation in Southeast Asia
5. Nipah Virus Epidemic in Peninsular Malaysia

Contents of the 2000 Top News on Environment in Asia**[The Asia-Pacific Region]****Masakazu Ichimura, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN/ESCAP)**

1. Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED) 2000
2. State of the Environment in Asia and the Pacific 2000
3. Regional Action Programme (RAP) for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific 2001-2005
4. Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment
5. Environmental Cooperation in North-East Asia

[The Asia-Pacific Region]**S. Tahir Qadri, Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

1. Impact of Forest Fires on the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

[Bangladesh] Khandaker Mainuddin, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)

1. Devastating Flood Hit South-West Region of Bangladesh
2. Sound Waste Management; an Immediate Necessity for Dhaka City
3. Suspended Particulate Matters Remain High in the Air of Dhaka City
4. Red List on Endangered Wildlife

[Cambodia] Khieu Muth, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia

1. Floods in Cambodia
2. National Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 1994
3. New Sub-Decree of Air Pollution
4. Coastal and Marine Problems

[China] Zhou Xin, Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy (PRCEE), The State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA)

1. The Second Revision of the Law of Air Pollution Prevention and Control
2. Great Efforts Taken to Realize the Target of "One Control and Double Attainments"
3. Beijing Initiates the "Green Olympic Action Plan"
4. Sandstorms Hit Beijing and Tianjing Municipalities

[India] Prasad Vaidya, The Weidt Group

1. India Joins the GLOBE Program
2. Draft Rules for Recycling/Management of Lead Acid Batteries
3. Supreme Court Clears Sardar Sarovar on the Marmada River
4. State Governments Fund Participatory Water Harvesting Programs

[Indonesia] Mohamad Soerjani, Institute for Environmental Education and Development

1. National Conference on Natural Resource Management
2. Indonesian Sectoral Agenda 21
3. Environmental Toxicology, Pollution Control and Management
4. National Flora and Fauna Loving Day, 2000
5. Caring for the Future

[Japan] Yohei Harashima, Takushoku University

1. The Basic Law for Establishing a Recycling-based Society
2. Regulation of Exhaust Gases from Diesel Vehicles in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area
3. ESCAP Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development
4. G8 Environment Ministers' Meeting
5. Illegal Transfer of Hazardous Wastes to the Philippines

[Korea] Hoi-Seong Jeong, Korea Environment Institute

1. The Illegal Toxic Discharge of the Eighth US Army
2. The Suspension of the Planned Construction of Yongwol Multi-Purpose Dam
3. The Establishment of the Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development (PCSD)
4. Environmental Impacts Investigation on the Saemankeum Reclamation Project

[Lao PDR] Viengsavanh Duangsavanh, Technology and Environment Agency

1. The Environment as Public Responsibility
2. Local Environmental Management
3. Environmental Impact Assessment
4. Public Involvement in Nam Theun 2 Hydro-Power Project
5. Press Release on Climate Change

[Malaysia] Norhayati Mustapha, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)

1. Timely Review of Highland Development
2. Foiled Toxic Waste Shipment
3. Climate Change Update
4. Millennium Tree Planting
5. Beach Clean-up
6. Recycling Launch

[Mongolia] Ayush Namkhai, Development and Environment Center; Dondogiin Enkhbayar, Ministry for Nature and Environment

1. Law on Tourism
2. Law on Banning the Import, Export and Trans-boundary Movement of Hazardous Waste, and Concerning its Export
3. National Action Programme on Climate Change
4. Natural Disaster
5. Establishment of the "ECO ASIA" Institute

[Nepal] Phool Chandra Shrestha, Freelance Consultant Bishnu B. Bhandari, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. Nepal's "Gift to the Earth"
2. Restoration of the Churia Foothills as a Biological Corridor
3. Nepal Rhino Count 2000
4. Grassroots Conservation Initiatives in Rural Nepal
5. Ban on Old Vehicles in Cities in 2001

[The Philippines] Merlin M. Magallona, University of the Philippines

1. Garbage Avalanche Killed More Than 200 People
2. Hazardous Waste Shipment Sent Back to Japan
3. Lawyers Demand Compensation for Victims of Toxic Waste Contamination in Former U.S Military Bases
4. Oil Spill by Singaporean Tanker

[The Russian Far East] Alexander Sheingauz, Economic Research Institute

1. New Administration for the Use of Natural Resources
2. Voluntary Forest Certification Begins
3. New Protected Area Is Established in Amurskaya Oblast
4. International Workshop on Sustainable Forest Management
5. New Method of Oil Waste Utilization

[Singapore] Chia Lin Sien, Institute of South East Asian Studies

1. Sewage Contamination of Water Supply in Public Buildings
2. Review of Long-Range Comprehensive Concept Plan
3. Waste Collection in Singapore
4. Chemical Spill Stops Fishing and Swimming
5. Deep Tunnel Sewerage System (DTSS): First Tender For Changi Wastewater Treatment Plant
6. Virus Outbreak of Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD)

[Thailand] Tongroj Onchan, The Mekong Environment Resource Institute (MERI) and Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)

1. Protest against Thai-Malaysian Natural Gas Pipeline
2. The Violent Pak Moon Dam Protest at the Government House
3. The Car Free Day Campaign
4. Costly Dike Causes Water Pollution
5. Mishandling of Radioactive Waste

[Vietnam] Pham Huu Nghi, Deputy Director of State and Law Journal, Institute of State and Law, National Center for Social Science and Humanities

1. Sanctuary for the Ho Guom Turtle
2. Large Flood in Cuu Long River Delta, South Vietnam
3. Effects of the Ho Chi Minh Highway Project on Cuc Phuong National Garden

Contents of the 2001 Top News on Environment in Asia

[The Asia-Pacific Region] Tim Higham, United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-ROAP)

1. The Asia-Pacific Regional 'Platform' for WSSD
2. Asia-Pacific Civil Society Perspective on WSSD Heard
3. Strengthening Regional Capacity for Environmental Law and Conventions
4. Japanese Company Helps Empower UNEP Education, Awareness and Training Work
5. Industry Outreach and Networking

[The Asia-Pacific Region] Lester R. Brown, Earth Policy Institute (EPI)

1. Dust Bowl Threatening China's Future

[The Asia-Pacific Region] Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. ECO ASIA 2001
2. Regional Preparation for the WSSD (Johannesburg Summit)
3. COP 7
4. Illegal Logging in Indonesia
5. New Bill on Managing the Three Largest Rivers in South Korea
6. Korean Environmental Education Act in the Offing
7. Developments on Environmental Management Accounting in Asia

[Australia] Gerard Early, Approvals and Legislation, Environment Australia

1. Environmental Law Reform
2. Extension of the Natural Heritage Trust
3. National Action Plan on Salinity and Water Quality
4. Sydney Harbour Federation Trust
5. Australia's Virtual Herbarium

[Bangladesh] Khandaker Mainuddin and Dwijen Mallick, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)

1. Buriganga, the Most Polluted River in Bangladesh
2. Arsenic Contamination in Groundwater poses Serious Health Threat
3. Banning of Polythene Bags is high on the Agenda of the Government of Bangladesh
4. Bio-diversity Conservation Programme Launched in the Sundarbans

[Cambodia] Khieu Muth, Ministry of Environment

1. Survey in Lomphat Wildlife Sanctuary
2. Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific
3. The 6th Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment (15-16 MAY 2001)
4. Japanese Royal Couple in Cambodia

[China] Zhou Xin, Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy (PRCEE), The State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA)

1. New Restrictions on Automobile Manufacture and Emissions
2. Beijing Strengthening Environmental Protection to Realize "Green Olympic"
3. The Law of Desertification Prevention and Control
4. Air Quality Forecast in 47 Key Environmental Protection Cities

[India] Prasad Vaidya, The Weidt Group, USA; Maithili Iyer, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratories, USA

1. Ban on Plastic Bags Widens
2. State Governments Follow through on Rainwater Harvesting
3. Energy Conservation Act
4. Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Bill

[Indonesia] Mohamad Soerjani, Institute for Environmental Education and Development (IEED), Member of the National Research Council Indonesia

1. "Clean Ciliwung River Campaign," Jakarta
2. Integrated Chemical Management and Safety
3. National Workshop on Environmental Education
4. Novel Approach to Organic Waste Composting
5. Environmental Policy Revitalization

[Japan] Yohei Harashima, Takushoku University

1. Controversy on Ratifying the Kyoto Protocol
2. Reconsidering the Land Reclamation Project at the Isahaya Bay
3. Enforcement of the Law for Recycling of Home Appliances
4. Inauguration of the Ministry of the Environment

[Korea] Jeong-Gue Park, Korea Environment Institute (KEI)

1. Environmental Efforts Driven by the 2002 FIFA World Cup Hosted by Korea and Japan
2. Conservation of the Tumen River
3. Eco-Technopia 21
4. Saemankeum Reclamation Project

[Lao PDR] Soukata Vichit, Science Technology and Environment Agency (STEA)

1. Integration of Environmental Concerns into Socio-Economic Development Plans
2. The First State of Environment Report
3. The First Sectoral EIA Regulation
4. EIA for Gold Mine
5. Program to Improve Environmental and Social Management

[Malaysia] Wan Portia Hamzah and Norhayati Mustapha, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)

1. Focus on Wetlands
2. Natural Heritage of Belum to Remain
3. EIA for All Projects
4. Prestigious Award for Malaysians Committed to Turtle Conservation
5. Transfrontier Protected Areas

[Mongolia] Ayush Namkhaj, Development and Environment Center; Dondogiin Enkhbayar, Ministry for Nature and Environment

1. Air Pollution in the Capital
2. Amendments Made to the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment
3. Determination of List, Estimation of Size and Percentage of Payments and Charges
4. Pasture Overgrazing Increases
5. Census of Argali Sheep (Ovis Ammon) Population
6. Drought for Three Years Running

[Nepal] Phool Chandra Shrestha, Freelance Consultant

1. Kumrose Community Forest Earns from Eco-tourism
2. Arsenic Contamination in Groundwater
3. Lake Phewa Plan Adds Woes
4. Leasehold Forestry in 16 More Districts
5. National Policy on Wetland Management

[New Zealand] Jacquelyn Harman; Neil Ericksen, The International Global Change Institute (IGCI), The University of Waikato

1. New Zealand Takes Steps Towards Ratifying the Kyoto Protocol
2. Moratorium on Field Trials of Genetically Modified Organisms Lifted
3. Ten Years Under the Resource Management Act (1991)

[The Philippines] Merlin M. Magallona, University of the Philippines

1. Garbage Crisis and the Semirara Controversy
2. President Estrada Calls Military to Assist in Garbage Disposal
3. Smoking Ban Starts June 2001
4. Congressional Measure for Wildlife Resources Conservation Signed into Law

[The Russian Far East]

Alexander Sheingauz, Economic Research Institute

1. New Russian Target Program on Ecology and Natural Resources
2. New GEF Project on Ecosystem Conservation in Khabarovskiy Krai
3. International Conference on Sustainable Forest Management
4. Exhaustion of Fish Reserves in the Sea of Okhotsk
5. A Surge of Poaching in Ussuri Taiga

[Singapore] Koh Kheng-Lian, Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL), Faculty of Law National University of Singapore

1. Industrial Water ("NEWater")
2. Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, 2001
3. Resources Conservation & Waste Minimization
4. Draft Singapore Green Plan 2012
5. Capacity Building in Environmental Management

[Thailand] Tongroj Onchan, The Mekong Environment and Resource Institute (MERI)

1. Phetchabun Flash-Floods and Mudslides: Death Toll

1. Climbs to More Than 120 People
2. Ban on Inland Prawn Farming
3. GM Food Will Be Labeled
4. Bangkok Faces Garbage Crisis

[Vietnam] Pham Huu Nghi, Institute of State and Law, National Center for Social Science and Humanities

1. The Project to Improve and Purify the Environment of the Tolich, Lu, and Set Rivers in the Capital City of Hanoi
2. The Oil Overflow Incident On the Sea of Vungtau
3. The National Seminar on Abidance with and Enforcement of Environmental Laws

Contents of the 2002 Top News on Environment in Asia

[The Asia-Pacific Region]

Tim Higham, United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-ROAP)

1. Asian Brown Cloud Study
2. ASEAN Haze Agreement Signed
3. UNEP Project to Harness the Potential of ICT for Environmental Protection
4. Sweden Supports UNEP Initiative to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions
5. Japan Company-Funded UNEP Project Empowers Education

[The Asia-Pacific Region]

Lester R. Brown, Earth Policy Institute (EPI)

1. Water Deficits Growing in Many Countries

[The Asia-Pacific Region]

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. The Second Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly
2. APFED's Message to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)
3. The Eighth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP8) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
4. New "Bio Carbon Fund" Launched by World Bank
5. Yellow Dust-Storm over the Skies of Northeast Asian Cities
6. Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Held
7. The Second China-Korea-Japan Tripartite Roundtable on Environment Industries

[Australia] Gerard Early, Approvals and Legislation, Environment Australia

1. State of the Environment
2. Natural Resource Management
3. Sustainable Schools
4. Australia and Japan Unite to Protect Migratory Birds
5. World's Biggest Marine Reserve

[Bangladesh] Khandaker Mainuddin, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)

1. Workshop on Capacity Building for Preparation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA)
2. Total Ban on Two-Stroke Autorickshaws in Dhaka City
3. Noise Pollution Caused Environmental and Health Problems in Dhaka City
4. Citizens and Environmental Groups Demand Protection of Rivers and Water Bodies

[Cambodia] Khieu Muth, Ministry of Environment

1. 1st Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS) Program Summit
2. The 8th ASEAN summit
3. Training Workshop on Climate Change Issues

[China] Zhou Xin, Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy (PRCEE), The State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA)

1. The Fifth National Conference on Environmental Protection
2. The Law of Environmental Impact Assessment
3. Anti-Desertification Combating in China
4. The Second Assembly of Global Environment Facility in Beijing

[India] Kirit S. Parikh, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Integrated Research and Action for Development

1. Civil Society Groups Get Action on Air Pollution in Delhi
2. Supreme Court Protects Tribals' Right
3. India Ratifies the Kyoto Protocol and Hosts COP8
4. Parliament Passes Bio-Diversity Act
5. International Recognition for Indian Environmentalists

[India] R Uma, Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI)

1. India Moves to Eliminate the POPs
2. Regional Workshop on Household Energy Indoor Air Pollution and Health
3. Asian Brown Cloud
4. Auto Fuel Policy
5. The Eighth Session of the Conference of Parties (COP8) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

[Indonesia] Mohamad Soerjani, Institute for Environmental Education and Development (IEED), Indonesian National Research Council

1. Indonesia at the World Summit on Sustainable Development
2. Sustainable Development Plan of Action on Women and Children
3. The Earth Charter
4. Cooperation with Environmental Counseling Association in Nagasaki (ECAN)
5. The International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF): Teaching Materials

[Japan] Yohei Harashima, Takushoku University

1. Conclusion of the Kyoto Protocol and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)
2. Trouble at Nuclear Plants
3. New National Strategy on Biological Diversity
4. Food Safety Scandals

[Korea] Jeong-Gue Park, Korea Environment Institute (KEI)

1. Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project
2. Comprehensive Measures for Water Supply Special Act of the Four Major Rivers and Establish the Water Pollution Prevention Plan
3. Seoul Metropolitan Air Quality Improvement

[Lao PDR] Somsanouk Phonnakhoth, Science Technology and Environment Agency (STEA)

1. Keys Environmental Issues in Lao PDR
2. 1st ASEAN+3 Environment Ministers Meeting
3. Lao Environmental Fund
4. Environmental Education and Awareness Programme
5. Climate Change Actions Further Developed

[Malaysia] Norhayati Mustapha and Wan Portia Hamzah, Bureau of Environment, Science and Technology (BEST), Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)

1. Tora! Tora!
2. People Power Succeeds in Re-locating Incinerator
3. Genetic Engineering

4. Participation of Local Communities in Wetland Conservation

[Mongolia] Ayush Namkhai, Development and Environment Center; Dondogiin Enkhbayar, Ministry for Nature and Environment

1. Renewed Law on Land
2. Dangerous Forest Fires and Forest Pests
3. Regional Project on Yellow Dust-Storm
4. Polar Researchers Jubilee

[Nepal] Phool Chandra Shrestha, Freelance Consultant

1. Melting Ice on Everest
2. Land Degradation Combat Plan Underway
3. Tons of Expired Pesticides Stored
4. Plan to Make Daman Second Botanical Garden
5. Medical Waste Contributes to Pollution

[New Zealand] Jacquelyn Harman; Neil Ericksen, The International Global Change Institute (IGCI), The University of Waikato Sustainable Development in New Zealand

1. A Sustainable Development Strategy for New Zealand
2. Monitoring Sustainable Development in New Zealand
3. An Evaluation of Progress on Ecological Sustainable Development

[The Philippines] Merlin M. Magallona, University of the Philippines

1. World Bank Report on Air Pollution
2. Malampaya Project Won Award in World Summit on Sustainable Development
3. Philippines Ranks Low in Environmental Survey
4. Legislative Attempt Failed to Suspend Implementation of Clean Air Act
5. Destruction of Coral Reef Continues Unabated

[The Russian Far East]

Anatoly Lebedev, Bureau of Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC)

1. Russian Taiga Has Lost Much of Its Wilderness
2. Certification in Forestry Does Not Mean Environmental Sustainability
3. Russia is Sinking under Nuclear Waste and Spent Fuel
4. Payment for Waste Disposal into Environment Shifted to the Budget
5. Forest Strategy as a Way to Hide Illegal Timber

[Singapore] Koh Kheng-Lian, Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL), Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

1. National Environment Agency (NEA)
2. The Singapore Green Plan 2012: Beyond Clean and Green Towards Environmental Sustainability
3. Environment Recycling
4. Capacity Building

[Thailand] Tongroj Onchan, The Mekong Environment and Resource Institute (MERI)

1. The Establishment of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
2. The Smoking Ban
3. Labeling of Genetically Modified Foods
4. Flooding in the North and the Northeast

[Vietnam] Pham Huu Nghi, Institute of State and Law, National Center for Social Science and Humanities

1. Establishment of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
2. Establishment of Vietnam Environment Protection Fund

3. U Minh Thuong Forest is Burnt

4. Limits on the Number of Motorbikes to Re-establish the Traffic Order and Reduce Environment Pollution in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City

Contents of the 2003 Top News on Environment in Asia

[The Asia-Pacific Region]

Tim Higham, United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP)

1. Afghanistan Conflict Environmental Damage Chronicled
2. Northeast Asia Dust and Sand Storms Project Initiated
3. South Asia State of the Environment Reports Target Policy Makers and Youth
4. ASEAN Fire Haze Agreement Takes Effect
5. Chinese Minister Xie Wins UNEP Sasakawa Environment Prize

[The Asia-Pacific Region]

Lester R. Brown, Earth Policy Institute (EPI)

- China Losing War with Advancing Deserts

[The Asia-Pacific Region]

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

1. The Kyoto Protocol
2. South Asian Regional Conference on Transition towards Sustainable Development
3. Second Meeting of the Kitakyushu Initiative Network
4. The Second and Third Meetings of the Promotion of Asia Forest Partnership (AFP)
5. Enactment of the "Environmental Education Promotion Law"
6. UNEP FI 2003 Global Roundtable in Tokyo
7. The Third World Water Forum (WWF3)
8. The International Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Transport

[Australia] Gerard Early, Australian Government Department of the Environment

1. More Protection for the Great Barrier Reef
2. New Heritage Legislation
3. First Marine Plan under Australia's Oceans Policy
4. Sustainable Cities Initiative

[Bangladesh] Khandaker Mainuddin, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS)

1. UNDP will Support Cleaner and Environment Friendly Ship-Breaking
2. Conference on Sanitation Held in Dhaka
3. Laws to Regulate the Operation of Brick-kilns
4. Relocation of Tannery Cluster from Dhaka City to New Industrial Estate
5. Integrated Action Plan to Save the River Buriganga

[Cambodia] Khieu Muth, Ministry of Environment

1. ASEAN Environment Year 2003 (AEY)
2. The 1st Ecotone Seminar Phase II and The 3rd Meeting of Southeast Asian Biosphere Reserve Network (SeaBRnet)
3. Cambodia Protected Area Law

[China] Zhou Xin, Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy (PRCEE), The State Environmental Protection Administration of China (SEPA)

1. China Won 2003 Outstanding National Units Ozone Award
2. Information Disclosure of Corporate Environmental Performance
3. China Council for International Cooperation on

Environment and Development

[India] Kirit S. Parikh, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Integrated Research and Action for Development

1. Civil Society Vigilance Helps Arrest Threats to Taj Mahal
2. Pesticides Residue in Bottled Water and Soft Drinks
3. ISO 14000 Rating for Industrial Townships
4. Capacity Building in Environmental Economics
5. Volvo Environment Prize 2003 for Ecologist and Environmental Activist Dr. Madhav Gadgil

[Indonesia] Mohamad Soerjani, Institute for Environmental Education and Development (IEED), Member of the National Research Council, Indonesia

1. Community Empowerment of Farmers and Fishermen
2. Agroforestry
3. The Eight National Science Congress 2003
4. Jakarta Declaration on Clean Development Mechanism
5. Challenges and Opportunities to Develop Sustainable Development

[Japan] Yohei Harashima, Faculty of International Development, Takushoku University

1. Controversy on Tax against Global Warming
2. New Regulation on Exhaust Gases from Diesel-Powered Vehicles
3. Troubles at Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) Power Plants
4. The 3rd World Water Forum
5. Enactment of the Law for Promotion of Environmental Education

[Korea] Sang-il Hwang, Korea Environment Institute (KEI)

1. Conservation and Convenience Conflict at Mt. Bukhan
2. Schools Boycotted to Protest Nuclear Dump Site
3. A Typhoon Hits Regions of South Korea
4. Five Oil Companies Agree on Protecting Soil Near Gas Stations and Depots

[Lao PDR] Ketkeo Salichanh, Department of Environment, Science Technology and Environment Agency, Prime Minister's Office

1. The Inaugural Meeting of the National Environment Committee (NEC)
2. Provincial Environmental Action Plan and Strategy
3. National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
4. National Strategy on Environment Education and Awareness

[Malaysia] Norhayati Mustapha, the Bureau of Environment Science and Technology (BEST), Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)

1. Good News for the Seas
2. Tough Actions Follow Highlands Damage
3. Ramsar Recognizes Johor Wetlands
4. Breakthrough in Water Resource Management

[Mongolia] Ayush Namkhai, Department of Environment and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Nature and the Environment

1. Household and Industrial Waste Law Enacted
2. Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development
3. The Basin of Uvs Lake Placed on the World Natural Heritage List
4. 2004 Declared as Year of Water
5. No Land Reclamation Carried Out
6. Distribution and Reserves of Mongolian Khulan Horse

[Nepal] Phool Chandra Shrestha, Freelance Consultant

1. Four Ramsar Sites
2. Fertiliser from Capital's Waste from Next Year
3. Environment Issues Well Considered in Kali Gandaki 'A' Project
4. Biogas Plants Effective Carbon Dioxide Controllers
5. Nepal Needs Green Projects

[New Zealand] Claire Gibson; Neil Ericksen, The International Global Change Institute (IGCI), The University of Waikato

1. Agricultural Emissions Research Levy
2. Water Quality of Rotorua Lakes
3. Moratorium on Genetic Modification
4. Do Good Environmental Plans Make a Difference?

[The Philippines] Merlin M. Magallona, Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines

1. Thousands of Passenger Motorcycle Drivers in Protest against Clean Air Law
2. Drivers of Passenger Vehicles Inflicted with Tuberculosis Due to Air Pollution
3. Potable Water Sources Drying Up in Cebu Province
4. Environmental Clearance Application through Internet
5. Asian Development Bank Official Critical of Clean Air Law Implementation

[The Russian Far East]**Anatoly Lebedev, Non Governmental Organisation - Bureau for Regional Outreach Campaigns (BROC)**

1. Oil Pipeline Development Plans and Governmental Strategy
2. "Nuclear Deputies" to Be Excluded from the Next Congress
3. Environmentally Exhaustive Fishing Quota Bidding Abolished
4. New Forestry Code

[Singapore] Koh Kheng Lian, Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL)

1. The United States of America and Singapore Free Trade Agreement, 2003 (USSFTA)
2. Singapore Infectious Diseases Act, Chapter 137
3. Malaysia-Singapore Reclamation Case and Marine Environment
4. Capacity Building

[Thailand] Tongroj Onchan, The Mekong Environment and Resource Institute (MERI)

1. Gasohol: The Bio-Fuel for Cleaner Air
2. The Potash-Mining Project in Udon Thani
3. The New Salween Logging Scandal
4. The Thai-Malaysian Gas Pipeline Disputes

[Vietnam] Pham Huu Nghi, The Institute of State and Law, National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities

1. Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park Wins World Heritage Listing
2. Symposium on: "Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development in Viet Nam"
3. Vietnamese Scientist Awarded Blue Planet Prize
4. Oil-Shipwreck on Saigon River