



Photo: Md.Huzzatul Mursalin, Bangladesh

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III. On the Calendar

Shamshad Akhtar of Pakistan to Head UN Asia-Pacific Regional Development Arm

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed seasoned economist Shamshad Akhtar of Pakistan as the new head of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Ms. Akhtar will succeed Noeleen Heyzer of Singapore, who will continue to serve as Special Advisor of the Secretary General for Timor-Leste.

Since 2012, Ms. Akhtar has served as the Secretary-General's Senior Advisor on Economic Development and Finance and as Assistant Secretary-General in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The former Governor of the Central Bank of Pakistan has also served with the World Bank as well as the Asian Development Bank.

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



Photo: Shamshad Akhtar. UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

UN Green Climate Fund Headquarters Opens in Korea

The Green Climate Fund headquarters were officially opened for business on 4 December 2013 in its new host country, the Republic of Korea. The Fund was temporarily hosted in Bonn, Germany, but has moved to its permanent headquarters in Songdo, Incheon City.

The Green Climate Fund (the Fund) is a new multilateral fund that was agreed by Parties at the 2010 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change conference held in Cancun, Mexico, and designated as an operating entity of the Convention's financial mechanism. The Fund's Governing Instrument was developed and approved in 2011. The Fund's purpose is to promote, within the context of sustainable development, the paradigm shift towards low emission and climate resilient development pathways by providing support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Joey Salceda, Governor of Albay, Philippines will serve as co-chair of the board of directors of the Green Climate Fund, along with Germany's Manfred Konukiewicz. They will serve for a term of one year.

Source: gcfund.net

Secretariat of the Pacific Community Takes on Leadership Role for Pacific Engagement in Post 2015 Development Agenda

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) will embrace a leadership role in supporting its island members to engage strategically in influencing the post-2015 global development agenda. This was one of the decisions taken by the organisation's members at the 8th Conference of the Pacific Community hosted and chaired by Fiji on November 18–19, 2013, at the Vale ni Bose in Suva. SPC's members include 22 Pacific Island countries and territories along with Australia, France, New Zealand and the USA.

The Pacific Community has requested SPC to assist islands members to develop shared solutions; analyse and communicate information to Permanent Missions to the United Nations, based in New York; facilitate collaboration to ensure that Pacific territories are informed and represented through partnerships with the independent Pacific states; and build the capacity of members to contribute effectively to the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDGs are expected to replace the current internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which expire in 2015. The convergence between the post-MDGs High Level Panel process established by the United Nations Secretary-General and the development of SDGs will be discussed at the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2014.

The Pacific region now has a rare opportunity to exert influence on the SDG development process through several different channels. Fiji currently chairs the G77+ China, a grouping of 133 developing countries to the United Nations, and Nauru chairs the Alliance of Small Islands States, which comprises 44 nation states and observers. Both groupings play a significant role in determining the shape of the international agenda. In addition, Nauru, Palau and Papua New Guinea participate in the Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs, established by the UN in January 2013.

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

Pacific Conservation Conference Ends with Action Strategy for Nature Conservation

The nature conservation conference has taken place every 4-5 years since 1975 and is the region's premier event for biodiversity. The 9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, held from 2 to 6 December 2013 in Suva, Fiji, concluded with an Action Strategy for Nature Conservation as a guiding framework for conservation in the Pacific for the ensuing five year period, a high-level statement on key actions to achieve nature conservation outcomes in the Pacific, as well as the Laucala Declaration on Conservation in Oceania. The conference, which was based on the theme "Natural Solutions – Building Resilience for a Changing Pacific", was attended by government representatives, NGOs, development partners, international organizations and Pacific Island communities.

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

Philippines Launches US\$8.17b Haiyan Rebuilding Plan

The Philippine government launched an \$8.17 billion plan on 18 December 2013 to rebuild the lives of millions battered by Super Typhoon Haiyan.

President Benigno Aquino appealed for international assistance and private sector pledges to help his government rehabilitate hundreds of devastated communities and increase their resilience to natural disasters as well as the adverse impacts of climate change.

Reports say the death toll from Typhoon Haiyan stands at more than 5,000 with 1,779 still missing. The typhoon displaced as many as four million and destroyed around \$563 million worth of crops and infrastructure.

More than 12 million people have been affected by the monster typhoon that left behind catastrophic scenes of destruction and despair when it made land-fall on November 8, the government said. It left entire communities without immediate access to food and medical care.

The Philippines' post-typhoon reconstruction could take as long as 10 years, with the leadership of President Benigno Aquino put to a test amid complex problems such as property rights, missing title deeds and land zoning, experts said. The task will likely take longer and cost more than the rebuilding of Indonesia's Aceh province after the 2004 tsunami, they said.

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

UN Develops Innovative Early Warning Tool for Drought Prone Asia-Pacific Regions

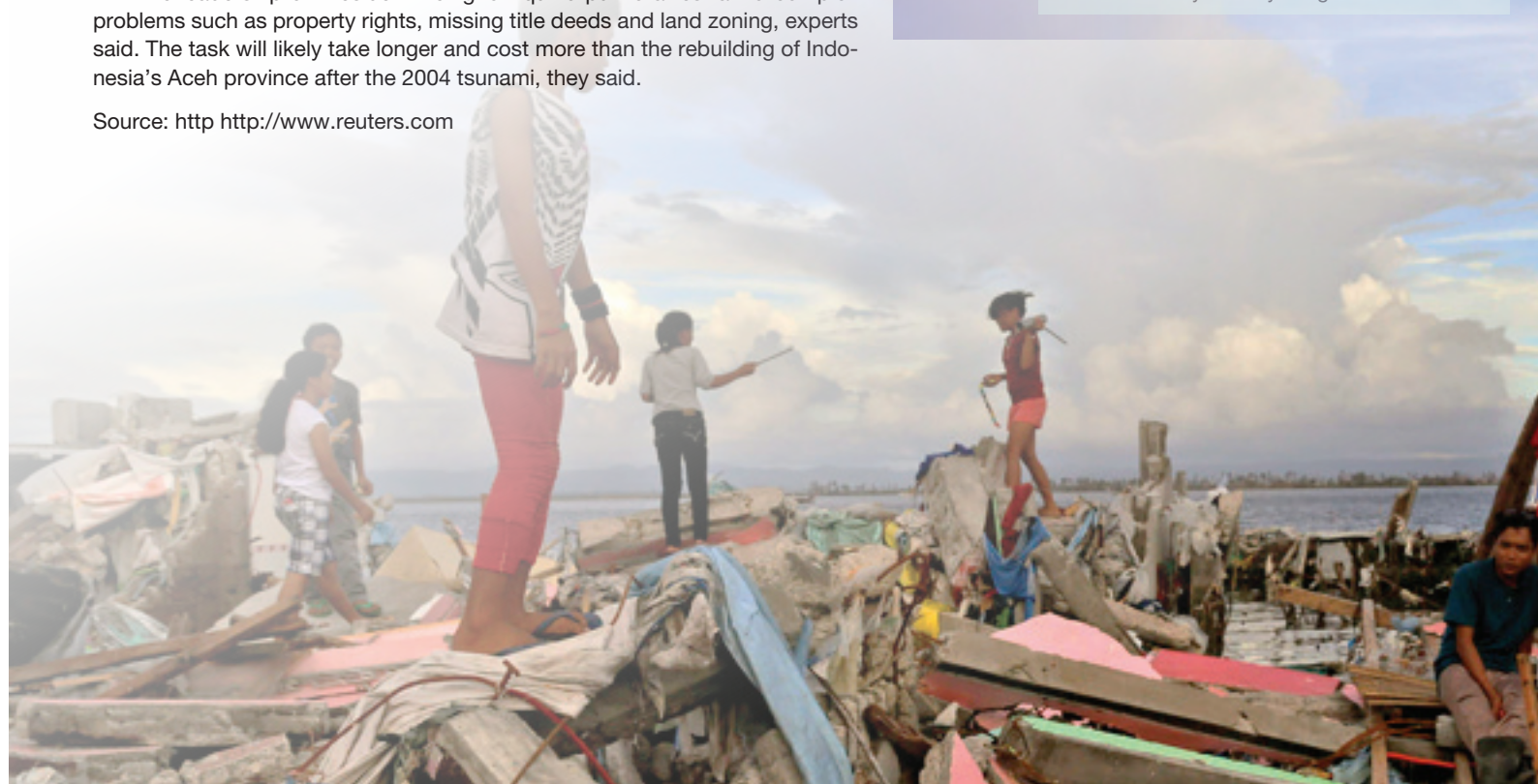
Senior officials from governments across the Asia-Pacific region agreed late November on a set of collective priorities and ground-breaking initiatives that will build resilience to natural disasters and further enhance regional cooperation, at a meeting convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Bangkok.

ESCAP's long-standing Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP) announced the development and operationalization of a new regional mechanism on drought. With this mechanism, the monitoring and early warning capabilities of drought-prone countries will be significantly strengthened through the effective use of space-based information provided by service nodes in the region.

Initially supported by Chinese and Indian space agencies, the regional drought mechanism will provide monitoring and early warning services and capacity building for drought-prone countries in the region. Mongolia is already piloting the mechanism, and Cambodia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka are expected to join soon as pilot counties.

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

Photo: Kevin Frayer/Getty Images



Timor-Leste Economy Predicted to be Among Worst Hit by Climate Change

Economic losses from climate change could reach as much as 10% of Timor-Leste's annual GDP by 2100, making it one of the worst hit in the Pacific, according to a new Asian Development Bank (ADB) study. Under a medium emissions scenario, Fiji, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu could see temperatures rise by 2-3°C by 2070, which could lead to significant decreases in rain-fed agriculture, reduced fish catches, widespread coral bleaching, and falling tourism numbers.

According to the report, the most significant economic losses would be felt in PNG, where climate change impacts could trigger a loss of up to 15.2% of its GDP by 2100. Potential losses to Timor-Leste's economy could total as much as 10% of annual GDP, while potential losses estimated for other strongly affected countries including Vanuatu (at 6.2%), Solomon Islands (at 4.7%), Fiji (at 4.0%), and Samoa (at 3.8%). Along with a temperature increase of up to 3°C in some areas, Timor-Leste could also see a sea level rise of up to 1.29 meters by 2100.

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

Fourteen Asian Countries Sign Dry Ports Agreement

Fourteen countries signed the Inter-government Agreement on Dry Ports early November. The Agreement underscores the countries' pledge toward achieving the shared vision of an integrated and sustainable inter-modal transport and logistics system.

The agreement aims to promote international recognition of dry ports, facilitating investment in dry port infrastructure, improving operational efficiency and enhancing the environmental sustainability of transport. It also signals a move to a more sustainable growth path. Dry ports create the conditions for the much-needed shift of cargo flows from road transport alone to intermodal options - using road services in combination with more energy-efficient, less polluting alternatives such as rail, short sea shipping and inland waterways. Countries that signed on the agreement include Armenia, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand and Vietnam.

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

Thailand Environment Minister Allots About USD28.26m for Green Projects

Natural Resources and Environment Minister Vichet Kasemthongsri has earmarked approximately US\$28.26 million to improve natural resources and environmental management in Ratchaburi, Prachin Buri and Pathum Thani provinces in Thailand. The provinces will become models for environmental protection efforts, Mr Vichet told about 100 senior environmental officials during a meeting to explain his policy.

The minister said he had selected the provinces to showcase his environmental management policies. Ratchaburi will be a model for forest and water resources management, Prachin Buri will showcase industrial pollution management and Pathum Thani will be a model for urban environmental problems resolution, he said. A total of 46 projects, worth about US\$28m, will be implemented.

The major projects include a water diversion project in Pha Chi River in Ratchaburi, as well as maintenance of reservoirs, sluice gates, water pipelines, groundwater wells and a 13,000-rai forest plantation also in Ratchaburi province.

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

UN Calls for Governments to Make Disaster Risk Reduction Integral Part of Longer-Term Development Plans

Building a more resilient Asia-Pacific was the focus of a 3-day meeting that took place 27-29 November 2013 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, Thailand, which brought together senior government officials from more than 25 countries.

The devastating Super Typhoon Haiyan was cited as the most recent example of a relentless series of shocks that has battered the Asia-Pacific region over the last few years, highlighting the crucial need for a more comprehensive approach to building resilience so that countries can withstand, adapt to and recover from natural disasters.

Convened by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific as part of a series of events on disaster risk reduction this week, the Third Session of the Committee on Disaster Reduction brought policymakers and experts to discuss how to integrate disaster risk reduction into development plans, poverty reduction strategies and budgets across all levels of governments.

Delegates from across Ministries of Finance and Planning, Environment, Natural Disasters and key regional Space Agencies also focused on developing effective early warning and monitoring systems that make use of space and other technologies.

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



Coastal Forum Confirms Nature-Based Solution Key for Climate Change Adaptation

More than 200 delegates representing local communities, government agencies, academics, NGOs and media from Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam gathered at the Second Annual Coastal Forum from 15-18 October in Soc Trang Province, Viet Nam, to share experiences, lessons learned and good practices for climate change adaptation in the coastal zone, highlighting nature-based solutions. The event was organised by IUCN, the Vietnam Administration for Seas and Islands (VASI), German Development Cooperation (GIZ), the Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) and Soc Trang Provincial Peoples' Committee. The Forum is an activity of the project "Building Resilience to Climate Change Impacts in Coastal Southeast Asia", funded by the European Union. After two years of implementation in eight coastal provinces of Thailand (Chanthaburi and Trat), Cambodia (Koh Kong and Kampot), and Viet Nam (Soc Trang, Can Gio, Kien Giang and Ben Tre) more than 30 pilot project activities, specifically tailored to the unique characteristics of each site have been designed and are being implemented to enhance the adaptive capacity of people and the ecosystems on which they depend to cope with the anticipated impacts of climate change and plan for disaster risk reduction. These pilot projects demonstrate that development based on bottom-up planning and soft solutions provided by natural ecosystems are instrumental in bringing about desired solutions for coastal communities in adapting to climate change.

Source: IUCN

Threatened marine ecosystems get boost from US\$4.5 million grant from the GEF

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved a project to support the Capturing Coral Reef and Related Ecosystem Services Project, with US\$4.5 million in grant funding provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This regional project will design innovative models for valuing mangrove, sea grass and coral reef ecosystems services to inform policy and decision making for improved environmental stewardship of these critical resources.

The project focuses on Indonesia and the Philippines, where coral reefs and related ecosystem services are critical to livelihoods, food security and climate resilience, and includes activities to quantify the value and market potential of coral reef and mangrove ecosystem services; forge community-led innovation in capturing and sustaining benefits from marine eco-system services and enhancing resilience in the face of climate change; and promote behavior change through outreach and widely disseminate scientific information to inform policy- and decision-making.

The GEF grant will be administered by the Global Change Institute of the University of Queensland. The University is contributing US\$2 million in additional financing and research partners will provide another \$3.9 million in contributions. An additional \$21.9 million in parallel co-financing is provided by World Bank-financed projects: the Coral Reef Rehabilitation and Management Program-Coral Triangle Initiative (COREMAP-CTI) in Indonesia and the Rural Development Project in the Philippines.

Source: <http://e-news.aseanbiodiversity.org>

Mt. Makiling Forest Reserve Declared as 33rd ASEAN Heritage Park

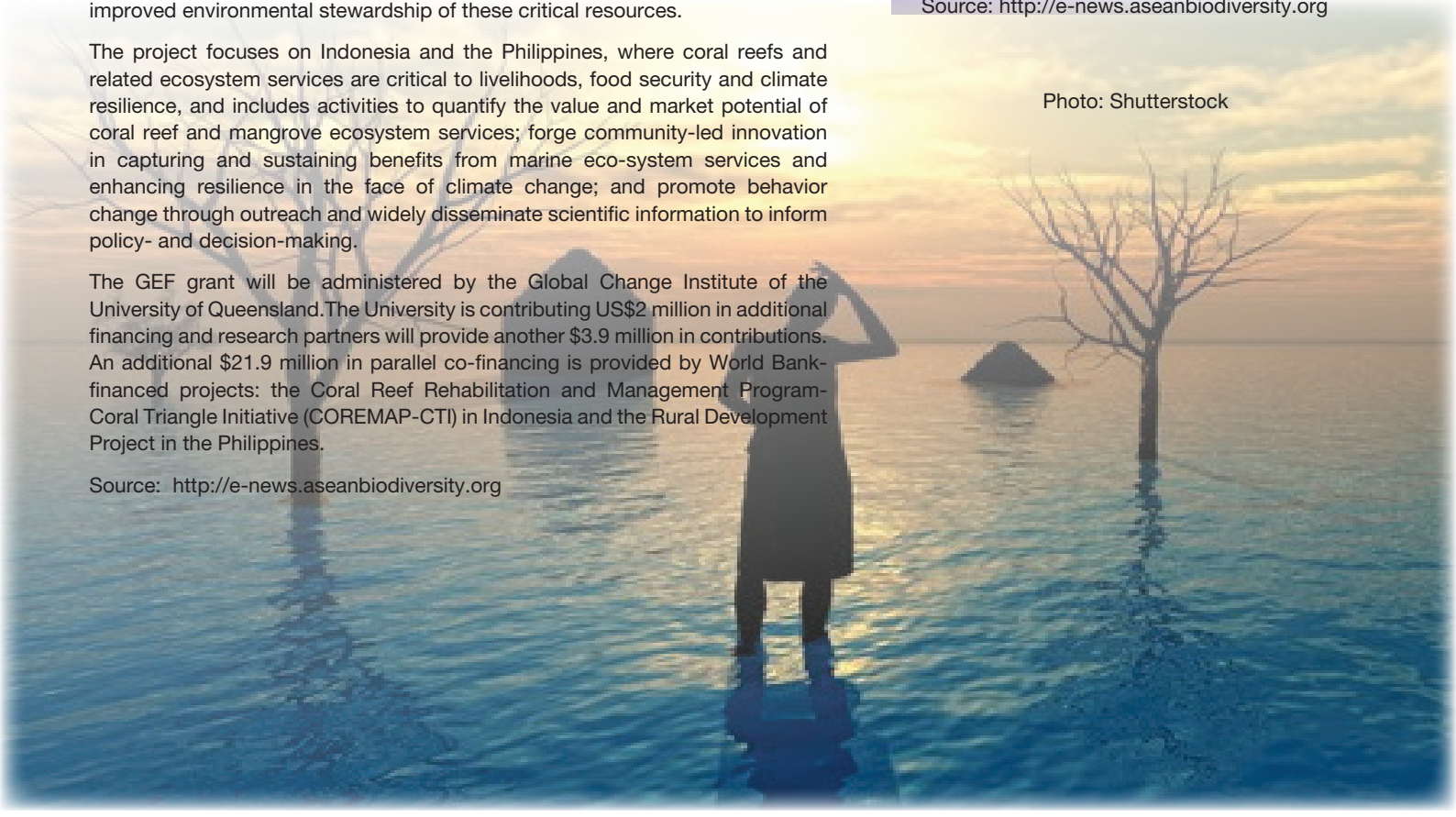
Ministers responsible for the environment from the 10 ASEAN Member States have approved the nomination of Mount Makiling Forest Reserve (MMFR) as ASEAN's 33rd Heritage Park. The certification of declaration as an ASEAN Heritage Park (AHP) was presented during a ceremony held at the Makiling Botanic Gardens on 3 October 2013, which was witnessed by the AHP managers of the other 32 AHPs.

The declaration was officially announced by Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje of the Philippines' Department of Environment and Natural Resources in his keynote address during the Fourth AHP Conference in Tagaytay City, Philippines. MMFR in Los Baños, Laguna joins four other AHPs in the Philippines, which include Mt. Apo Natural Park, Mts. Iglit-Baco National Park, Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, and Mt. Malindang Range Natural Park.

In approving the nomination, the ASEAN Environment Ministers noted that MMFR is a well-known destination for scientists and tourists alike, because of the reserve's prominence as an outdoor laboratory for forestry and its mountain peaks, and boiling mud and hot springs. The reserve is also recognized for its high conservation importance and is one of the Philippines' 18 centers of plant diversity and 32 key ecotourism sites. The nomination was approved at the 14th Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment held on 25 September 2013 in Surabaya, Indonesia.

Source: <http://e-news.aseanbiodiversity.org>

Photo: Shutterstock



The Fifteenth Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting (IG15) of the EANET

The 15th session of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET) took place in Chonburi, Thailand from 15 to 16 December 2013. This was organized by the Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific (RRC-AP) and the Network Center for the EANET and was hosted by the Government of Thailand. Representatives from its thirteen participating countries, namely Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam gathered to discuss and consider the Draft Third Report for Policy Maker, the Review on the State of Air Pollution in East Asia, and Draft Report on Future Development of the EANET. UNEP along with experts from various intergovernmental organizations and academia provided substantive inputs to the meeting.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.eanet.asia/>

Pacific Youth Call on Governments to Invest in Farmers and Fishers and Stronger Policies to Conserve Natural Resources

Around 25 young leaders from Pacific countries met in Suva, Fiji, November 29-Dec 1, 2013 to foster cooperation, exchange, discuss and strengthen the capacity of these young leaders on themes and issues related to Post Rio+20 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The meeting provided a forum for dialogue and exchange among the participants on actions and activities they undertake in their individual countries. The meeting also resulted in a Pacific Youth Environment Network (PYEN) Action Plan which outlines actions and activities that Pacific youth will undertake in 2013/14.

The 6th PYEN meeting resulted in a Pacific Youth Statement on UN Post 2015 Agenda that called on Pacific governments to invest and empower Pacific farmers and fishers by providing them with resources to sustain their livelihoods and more stringent policies to prevent the exploitation of natural resources in the subregion. In addition, youths called upon their governments to strengthen ocean patrols, implement tougher policies to protect ocean resources as well as policies to monitor and regulate mining in the Pacific. They also proposed Pacific governments to train and establish a youth volunteer corps to help in ranging and patrol activities. Following the PYEN meeting, youths participated in the 9th Pacific Conference 9th Pacific Islands Conference On Nature Conservation and Protected Areas, from 2-6 December 2013.

Training Workshop for National Designated Entities under the Climate Technology Centre and Network

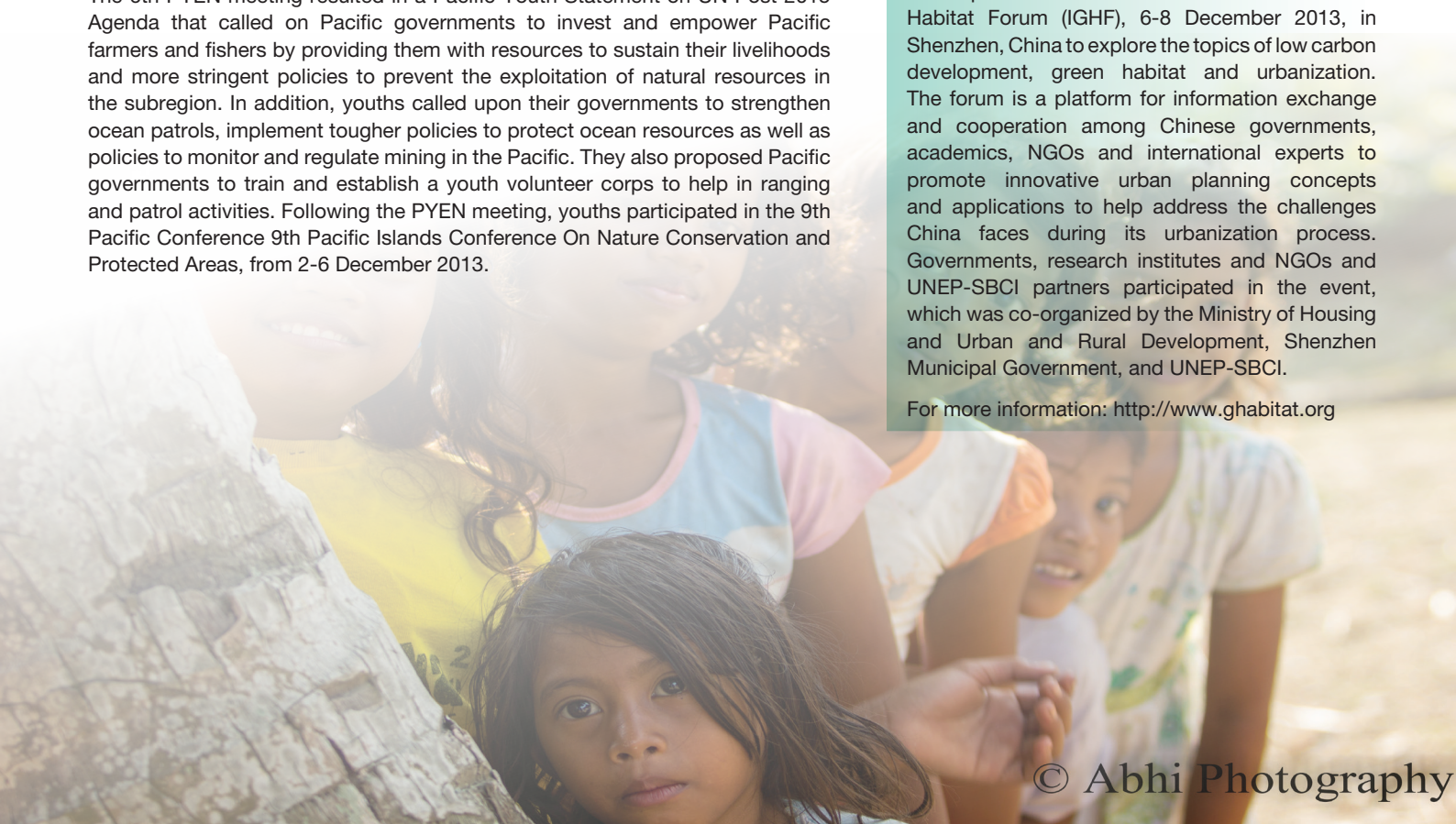
The First Training Workshop for National Designated Entities under the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) was held on 11-13 December 2013 in Cha-am, Thailand to share perspectives and initiate a dialogue on the tasks that National Designated Entities (NDE) must perform to ensure effective engagement with the CTCN.

CTCN was created by Parties to the UN Climate Change Convention to promote accelerated, diversified and scaled-up transfer of environmentally sound technologies in developing countries for climate change mitigation and adaptation. UNEP was chosen to host the CTCN, together with UNIDO, with the support of 11 partner institutions. Countries have been requested to nominate a NDE which will play a critical role in ensuring that requests for assistance submitted to the CTCN reflect national socio-economic and sustainable development priorities, as well as engaging ministries, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders.

Tenth International Green Habitat Forum

UNEP Sustainable Buildings and Climate Initiative (UNEP-SBCI) partner, China Merchants Property Development hosted the 10th International Green Habitat Forum (IGHF), 6-8 December 2013, in Shenzhen, China to explore the topics of low carbon development, green habitat and urbanization. The forum is a platform for information exchange and cooperation among Chinese governments, academics, NGOs and international experts to promote innovative urban planning concepts and applications to help address the challenges China faces during its urbanization process. Governments, research institutes and NGOs and UNEP-SBCI partners participated in the event, which was co-organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban and Rural Development, Shenzhen Municipal Government, and UNEP-SBCI.

For more information: <http://www.ghabitat.org>





Myanmar Government Announces Formation of High Level Committee on Climate Change

In the inaugural address of the Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA) Stakeholder Workshop in Nay Pyi Taw, His Excellency U Win Tun, Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry (MoECAF) announced that the Government of Myanmar approved the formation of a 'Myanmar Climate Change Alliance Committee'. Under his Chairmanship, the Vice-Chairs will comprise of two Deputy Ministers whilst the Secretary of the Committee will be the Director General of the Department of Planning and Statistics. Members will comprise of 28 Directors General of related government line agencies.

The announcement set the tone for the proceedings of the stakeholder consultation workshop, which saw participation from representatives of 21 ministries, civil society and private sector stakeholders. Over the course of the two days, participants were introduced to detailed activities and planned results to support Myanmar in developing a climate change strategy, awareness and capacity to tackle climate change. The workshop provided stakeholders with a clear understanding of activities, planned results and expected roles for the MCCA. Participants agreed to coordinate and streamline their activities to ensure effective implementation of the MCCA programme and wider environmental initiatives.

Source: reliefweb.int

5th Forum on Eco-Innovation and UNEP Roundtable on Eco-Innovation

The 15th Forum on Eco-Innovation and the UNEP Roundtable on Eco-Innovation organised by the European Commission and UNEP took place in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 12-13 November 2013. The event, entitled "Cutting waste... Resource efficiency and eco-innovation for sustainable food chains", explored solutions to enhance the sustainability of food supply chains by highlighting the business rationale for tackling food, resource efficient and eco-innovative solutions for processing, packaging and retailing food, and opportunities for businesses to partner and network.

The event gathered European and Asian actors from the private and public sectors, technical institutions and intermediaries working with small and medium sized enterprises to better understand the impact of food waste and potential of resource efficiency and eco-innovation measures to create new business opportunities, as well as positive environmental and social benefits along the entire supply chain, with a particular focus on processing, packaging and retailing.

Read More: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecoinnovation2013/2nd_forum/

Bridging the Knowledge and the Science to Policy Gaps, Regional Scoping Meeting

This scoping meeting was organized by UNEP in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea and the Korean Environment Institute and was held in Bangkok on 28-29 November 2013. National Governments in Asia-Pacific, regional and sub-regional organizations, and development assistance agencies identified underlying causes and possible solutions building on ongoing environmental monitoring and reporting programmes. The meeting also looked at data/information management initiatives such as UNEP-Live – a web-based platform developed by UNEP with potential for supporting environmental data/information management and assessment activities from national to global scales.

Asian Judges Create Network on Environment

An Asian Judges Network on Environment was formally launched in Manila, marking a new stage of cooperation among justices charged with enforcing environmental laws and helping to preserve Asia's natural capital. The Second Asian Judges Symposium on Environment, held in Manila from 2 to 5 December 2013, drew eminent judges and representatives of courts, environment ministries, prosecutor's offices, the legal profession, and civil society from the Asia Pacific region and beyond.

The Asian Development Bank hosted the event in partnership with the Supreme Court of the Philippines, with Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno in attendance. Other partners included UNEP, World Wildlife Fund, United States Agency for International Development, and the Freeland Foundation. The symposium covered a broad range of topics, including recent judicial innovations in environmental cases in the region, and increasing understanding of the true economic value of natural capital and its contribution to socioeconomic development.

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

Promoting Resource Efficiency in Asia Pacific Cities

The UNEP Global Initiatives for Resource Efficient Cities organized two workshops in Asia-Pacific to operationalize resource efficiency at city levels. The first workshop was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 2 to 3 December 2013 and the other in Shenzhen, China, from 5 to 6 December 2013.

Cities participating in the Southeast Asian workshop included the host city, Bangkok, Thailand; Danang, Vietnam; Makati, Philippines; and Semarang, Indonesia. The Shenzhen meeting focused on resource efficiency in Chinese cities and was held back-to-back with the 10th International Green Habitat Forum organized by the China Merchants Property Development Corporation. The Forum was attended by four Chinese cities including Hong Kong and Shenzhen. Key leaders of the national government also participated.



The 15th Meeting of the Asian Regional Partners Forum on Combating Environmental Crime

This 15th Meeting of the Asian Regional Partners Forum on Combating Environmental Crime (ARPEC) was organized on 22 November 2013, back-to-back with the Second Network Workshop of the Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste. With an informal membership open to any interested entity, representatives from governmental enforcement agencies, private sector, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations met to discuss current work, future initiatives and emerging ideas. The meeting focused on enforcement tools developed by the ARPEC partners, updates from partners, and future cooperation and collaboration.

Addressing the Environmental Impacts of Cross-Border Illicit Trade in Intellectual Property-Infringing Goods

As a part of a joint effort to build the capacity of countries in the region on the environmentally safe disposal of IP-infringing goods, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade, UNEP and the World Intellectual Property Organization organized a two-day regional workshop from 21-22 November 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop, which was held in conjunction with the ESCAP Trade and Investment Week, brought together around 80 representatives from governments, the private sector, NGOs and intergovernmental organizations to engage in dialogue on the interplay between trade in IP-infringing goods, inclusive development and environmental sustainability.

The workshop is the first of its kind in Asia-Pacific to tackle the environmental side effects of trade in illicit goods. During the two days, participants explored the complex topic of environmentally safe disposal of intellectual property-infringing goods. The workshop was held to share experiences and ideas between the policymakers and also to facilitate more discussion between all stakeholders involved in trade and disposal of IP-infringing goods.

First Asia Pacific Meeting on Consumption and Production Seeks Sustainable Solutions, Greener Growth

Representatives from more than 50 countries met on November 7-8 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand to craft a regional roadmap that will set consumption and production in the Asia Pacific region on a more sustainable path.

Close to 100 governments, private sector, civil society and academia participated in the First Asian Meeting of 10-Year Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), which looked at strategies and joint actions to advance sustainable consumption and production in the region.

The Regional Meeting on the 10YFP was organized by UNEP with the government of Thailand, the 10YFP Board Representative Governments of the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of Korea and with the financial support of the European Union. The meeting was preceded by the Regional SWITCH-Asia Policy Support Component (PSC) networking event and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting. SWITCH-Asia PSC is supported by the European Commission.

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

The Second Network Workshop of the Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste

This second annual meeting of the Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste (REN) brought together customs and environmental authorities from 25 REN participating countries and partner organizations. This was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 21 to 22 November 2013. The meeting was also used as a platform to update participants on activities and achievements of REN, discussed cooperation and collaboration with participating countries and relevant partner organizations, and identified country needs for capacity building as well as the REN work plan and next steps.

REN is a project financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and implemented by UNEP in 25 countries in Northeast Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia.

Joining Forces to Tackle Illegal Movement of Hazardous Waste in Asia Pacific

More than 100 representatives from 30 countries met in Bangkok, Thailand on November 9, 2013 to look at ways in which they can promote better cooperation and synergies in combating illegal transboundary movements of chemicals and waste in the Asia Pacific region.

Participants, who included national environmental authorities, customs, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, are part of global and regional networks that work on illegal movements of chemicals and waste. These include the Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic, Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste and the Asian Network for Prevention and Control of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes.

Discussions included strengthening the implementation and enforcement of international and national law on controlling illegal traffic of waste. The joint meetings was preceded by the first meeting of the Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic, a newly created enforcement network that promotes parties' compliance with the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.



UN Presented China South-South and Triangular Cooperation Champion Award

The UN praised the Chinese Government for its continuous and substantial contribution to South-South development in the context of green economy and sustainable development during the closing ceremony of the Global South-South Development (GSSD) Expo in November, 2013.

UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner said, "China, like many developing countries, is challenged with the issue of balancing environmental and economic development. But in the global development dialogue in South-South Cooperation, China shows the world significant efforts have been made in the green transition in the economy."

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation awarded the Chinese government the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Champion Award to honor the contribution made by the Chinese government in promoting South-South cooperation, especially in the cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Africa and other regions. Vice Minister, Wu Xiaoqing received the award on behalf of the Chinese Government.

For more information, contact: zhijia.wang@unep.org

Sharing Lessons in the South on Ecological Civilization and Green Transformation

The Forum on Ecological Civilization and Green Transformation was held at UNEP Headquarters during the GSSD Expo 2013. Governmental and non-governmental institutional leaders shared knowledge and experiences in the Forum for promoting sustainable development and South-South Cooperation.

Wu Xiaoqing, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection of China said that Chinese policy makers and economic planners continue to develop the concept of ecological civilization to further unearth an appropriate balance between human well-being and the nature for global sustainability.

This Forum was convened by the UNEP-International Ecosystem Management Partnership with support from the Secretariat of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development and the UNEP Headquarters.

For more information, contact: Jian.liu@unep.org

UNEP-Tongji Green Economy Textbook and Piloting Project Launched

UNEP and Tongji University signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Green Economy (GE) Textbook and Piloting Project to promote global higher education on the Green Economy. This project will share the GE theories and practices through the network of Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES) and the Regional Offices of UNEP so as to enhance the understanding of youth towards sustainable production and consumption and green development in regions, countries and the world.

For more information, contact: zhijia.wang@unep.org; mahesh.pradhan@unep.org

Wild and Precious Exhibit in Beijing Capital International Airport

The Wild and Precious International Airport Exhibition was unveiled in November, in China's Beijing Capital International Airport.

This is the first-ever collaborative awareness initiative between the Airport, UNEP, the GoodPlanet Foundation and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Focusing on the theme of UNEP's campaigns in the prevention of illegal wildlife trade, the Airport will display posters and videos on the campaign using 80 display boards and 28 LED screens in Terminal 3 over the next six months. The passenger traffic of Beijing International Airport has 80 million people every year on average.

For more information, contact: hao.chen@unep.org

UNEP Information Sharing Platform WeChat Launched

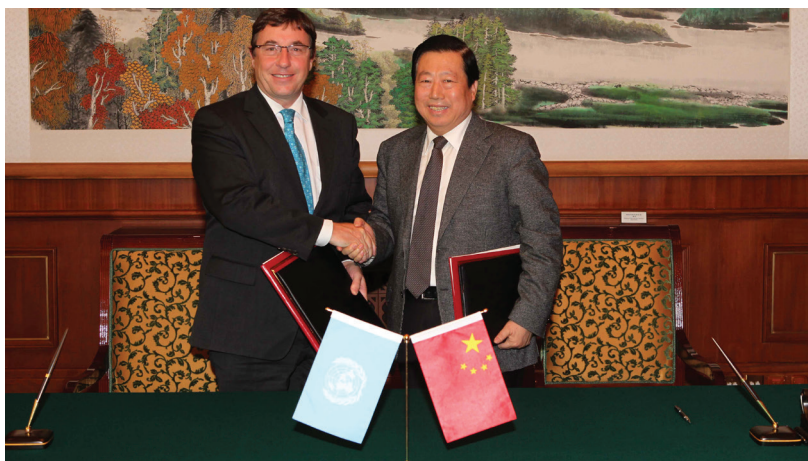
UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner launched UNEP's official WeChat platform to promote information sharing, especially in Chinese spoken regions. Mr. Steiner emphasized the importance of social media in raising public awareness for the environment and recommended the UNEP WeChat platform to the public.

With about 400 million users, Wechat is among the largest social media platforms in the world.

For more information, contact: zhijia.wang@unep.org; liangbin.liu@unep.org



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UNEP and China Strengthen Strategic Partnership

In November, UNEP and the Chinese Government, represented by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to boost the existing partnership.

The renewed MoU (2013-2017) will continue to strengthen the strategic partnership of bilateral support and cooperation in common areas between China's national priorities, UNEP's Medium Term Strategy and the UNEP Country Framework on China.

Areas of cooperation focus on China's prominent environmental issues, capacity building to developing countries and projects collaboration in the area of mutual interests.

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UNEP Hosts Discussion on Environmental Policy with Chinese Government

UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, hosted discussion on environmental policy and submitted policy recommendations to the Chinese government during the Annual General Meeting of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development (CCICED AGM) in November in Beijing, China.

Themed "Environment and Society for Green Development", the CCICED AGM 2013 discussion collected policy recommendations from China's Ministry of Environmental Protection, the National Development and Reform Commission, the CCICED experts team and UNEP.

UNEP and the CCICED also signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance and consolidate cooperation in the field of environment and development, including the sharing of CCICED's products on green development, performance evaluation of CCICED policy research, capacity building programmes and technical support from UNEP among other areas of collaboration.

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China and Emerging Markets Finance the Future We Want

The world's premier financial organizations met during the UNEP Finance Initiative 2013 Global Roundtable in Beijing, China, to discuss whether the world has the capability to finance the environmental challenges it faces. At the heart of the talks lies how to realign the financial system to finance a low-carbon, resource-efficient and sustainable path.

The two-day conference also focused on China, emerging markets and the global economy, providing insight into how emerging markets were dealing with these global challenges. How China's Ecological Civilization Policy is implemented and how it will transform the Chinese economy will determine whether China is a leader in greening the global economy.

See: <http://www.unep.org/newscentre/>

UNEP-Tongji Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development Hold Annual Board Meeting

The 10th Board Meeting of the UNEP-Tongji Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development (IESD) of Tongji University was successfully convened in Beijing in November.

During the meeting, IESD reaffirmed its development strategy to promote sustainable development education on a global scale, to strengthen academic research in the environmental field, especially on climate change and harmful chemical management, and to grow into a think tank of UNEP in research, education and outreach.

UN Under-Secretary-General and UNEP Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner, appreciated the long-term partnership between UNEP and Tongji University and noted that he expected fruitful results through a cooperation project on the Green Economy textbook. Mr. Wan Gang, Chinese Minister of the Ministry of Science and Technology, and Mr. Wu Xiaoqing, the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, ensured their support to IESD in the cooperation on technological innovation, climate change and South-South chemicals risk management.

The Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity Highlighted

The Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity (TEEB) was deemed as an important tool to promote the evaluation of natural capital so as to better implement the Convention on Biological Diversity during the International Workshop of Biodiversity and Green Development in November in Beijing.

Chinese Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Mr. Li Ganjie, Country Coordinators of UNEP and the UN Industrial Development Organization and stakeholders from governments, NGOs, enterprises and industry associations attended the workshop.

2014

10-14 March	National Ozone Officers Network (NOOs) Meeting and Customs Officers Training for Pacific Islands Countries	Tonga
19-21 May	11th Asia Pacific Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production	Bangkok
14-25 July	1st Asia Pacific Summer School on Resource Efficiency and SCP	Bangkok

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