

CONNECTIONS

East and North-East Asia Office
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Director's Message

Dr. Kilaparti Ramakrishna

2013 has been a banner year for our Office, for Songdo, for the Republic of Korea and the world. The year has seen a number of significant achievements in the delivery of our programme of work, building better relations with all of our various stakeholders, and in contributing to the success of UNESCAP Bangkok substantive divisions work in the subregion.



This year has seen the much awaited and most needed successful launch of the Green Climate Fund. This year has also seen the implementation of a crucial part of the Rio+20 outcome with the establishment of the High-level Political Forum and beginning the important work ahead in integrating the three pillars of sustainable development. In this context, it gives me particular pleasure to inform you of the completion of the report by UN Regional Commissions titled "Regional Perspectives on Sustainable Development: Advancing Integration of its Three Dimensions through Regional Action."

The central focus of the study is to showcase how Regional Commissions that already work on all three pillars of sustainable development are contributing to the global sustainable development agenda through their accumulated experiences and assets. We assisted the Executive Secretary of ESCAP in coordinating among the different Regional Commissions in preparing the report. The final report will be launched in New York in January 2014.

Let me also highlight the fact that the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) had its 18th Senior Officials Meeting in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Since naming our Office as the permanent secretariat to NEASPEC, we have seen how this body is increasingly relied on as the most useful multilateral mechanism in addressing priority issues of environmental protection in the subregion.

This Meeting agreed on a raft of new priorities, agreed to have a ministerial meeting on the occasion of a regional ministerial conference in 2015 and to developing a multiyear strategic approach to solving regions pressing environmental issues.

UNESCAP hosted senior officials from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in China, in collaboration with Nankai University, for a two-week long training programme on the operation of Special Economic Zones. I had the honor to open the programmes that offered a series of lectures, roundtable meetings and field visits to share the experiences and achievements of China in developing special economic zones.

As we move into the holiday season, it was timely to have the celebration of opening several international organization offices in our vicinity. The Green Climate Fund Secretariat had the inauguration ceremony on 4 December. The Korea office of the World Bank Group and the Global Green Growth Institute opened their offices in Songdo on the same day. We are looking forward to working with these organizations next year.

In the coming year, we will continue to work with our member countries and partners on improving and promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the North-East Asian subregion. And we hope that you will continue to support and work with us in making important differences in the growth of the subregion and the world.

Happy holidays!

K. Ramakrishna





Highlights

Eighteenth Senior Officials Meeting of NEASPEC

5 - 6 November 2013, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

The 18th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-18), hosted by the Ministry of Environment and Green Development of Mongolia, started off by commending the contributions of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) during the last 20 years to subregional environmental cooperation.

National delegates and participants called it a unique and comprehensive mechanism for collective effort in promoting and ensuring subregional sustainability and a key vehicle for practical cooperation among member States, especially on issues with cross-border impact. SOM-18 has therefore agreed to develop a strategy for long-term vision and planning.

The North-East Asian Marine Protected Areas Network (NEAMPAN) was launched at SOM-18. It is the most comprehensive MPA network in the subregion covering national MPAs in all seas of North-East Asia. The Meeting also endorsed new projects on DNA analysis for the conservation of Amur Tigers and a technical and policy framework for transboundary air pollution. It also noted the support from member States on activities including conservation of migratory birds habitats and low carbon city development.



Jamsran Batbold (second from left), State Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Green Development of Mongolia spoke during the opening session.

SOM-18 had a special session on Mongolia's Green Development Plan. The plan has the following five dimensions: climate compatible development, green economy and financing, equitable society, cultural heritage, and governance for sustainable development. The Meeting expressed its anticipation for collaboration between Mongolia and NEASPEC member States in the course of the implementation of the Plan.

For more information on NEASPEC projects, please visit at www.neaspec.org



A group of national delegates and participants at SOM-18 in Mongolia.



Activities

Regional Expert Group Meeting on Policy Options for Sustainable Transport Development

27 - 29 November, Incheon, Republic of Korea

ESCAP Transport Division and the ENEA Office, in collaboration with the Korea Maritime Institute and the Korea Transport Institute (KOTI), organized a regional expert group meeting to present findings of a joint study on policy options for sustainable transport development and discussed ways to enhance coordination of policies and strategies at national and city levels.



Senior transport policymakers and government representatives from over 20 Asia-Pacific member States, including the Pacific islands, the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries, as well as countries with large urban cities such as China, Indonesia and Thailand attended the two-day meeting. It was the first meeting that covered sustainable transport in the area of general transport, urban transport and green port and maritime transport.

Key recommendations from the forum included the crucial need for countries and cities to follow a course for developing sustainable transport systems through improving public transportation; integrating transport planning and reducing urban congestion; promoting walking and cycling by using appropriate technology; and enhancing the sustainability of the maritime sector, policy coordination and institutional capacity building.

International Symposium on Realizing Low Carbon Cities in North-East Asia

5 - 6 December 2013, Beijing, China

Improving subregional cooperation on low carbon city (LCC) strategies was the aim of this symposium that brought together experts, academics, subregional and international agencies and city representatives from across North-East Asia.

Countries in the North-East Asian subregion have undergone resource-intensive development paths accounting for one-third of the world's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and this is expected to rise as the average share of urban population is projected to grow to almost 70% in the subregion by 2020. As cities are the primary contributors to GHG emissions, there is a clear and immediate need to adopt an LCC approach to support long-term sustainability across the subregion.

Recognizing the pressing challenge and immediate actions needed, the ENEA Office as the secretariat of

NEASPEC, in collaboration with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, brought experts from member States and representatives of international organizations and NGOs together for an international symposium on "Realizing Low Carbon Cities in North-East Asia."

The symposium came to a general conclusion to launch a subregional platform for information sharing and communications, joint studies and assessments, and capacity building amongst all stakeholders. In terms of modality, the Symposium discussed an internet-based platform as the primary communication channel, and other joint activities such as workshops, trainings and field visits on specific themes or topics. The ENEA Office will work closely with international and national agencies working on LCCs to develop the platform.



The International Symposium on low carbon cities was collaborated with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Other News

2013 AP Conference "Revitalization and Development"

The 2013 Asia Pacific Conference was held at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University on 2-3 November. The theme of the

conference was "Revitalization and Development," aimed to bring together scholars from different fields such as economic development, tourism studies, environmental studies, international relations, comparative politics, sociology, and psychology to discuss the issue from different perspectives. The ENEA Office participated in the Conference and gave a presentation based on the 2013 theme study "Building

resilience to natural disasters and macroeconomic crises."

On a related note, the International Association for Asia Pacific Studies (IAAPS) of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University has an annual conference and provides a comprehensive platform for many scholars and students from all over the world to exchange ideas and views on further development of the Asia-Pacific region. We are pleased to be hosting the 5th IAAPS Annual Conference November next year in Incheon, Republic of Korea.

ENEA Office & Youth Engagement Activity

The following schools and groups visited ENEA Office for a briefing on the UN, ESCAP and the Office.

Date	School/Group
November 12	Seoul National University
November 13	Korea University
November 20	Hanam High School
November 28	National Model UN Korea
December 6	Let's talk with international organization leaders



Student audience from Incheon City, ROK.

Warm season's greetings!

As the year end is fast approaching, we wish to thank you for your cooperation in the past year and hope to continue working with you in the New Year 2014 and more coming years.

All of us at the East and North-East Asia Office wish you the best holiday season and a happy New Year!

