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As before, this issue too contains news and views from the East and North East Asia. But one topic dominates all others, the Rio+20 Conference held in Rio de Janeiro on June 20-22. The Conference concluded its deliberations by adopting a far reaching document, appropriately titled the "Future We Want." The UN General Assembly promptly endorsed the document by consensus on July 27th, thus beginning the implementation of many of the important decisions that Rio+20 had taken. I had the honor to join the very small but highly effective delegation led by UN Under Secretary General and

UNESCAP Executive Secretary, Noeleen Heyzer from Asia and the Pacific at this Conference in Rio.

The Rio+20 Conference brought together world leaders to commit to a more sustainable economic, social and environmental future. SRO-ENEAA member nations demonstrated high level participation, and were well represented by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, South Korean President Lee Myung Bak and Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev along with foreign ministers from Mongolia and Japan. Premier Wen explained to the conference, creating "a green and prosperous world" should be "the ultimate goal we should pursue as we work together to advance the global process of sustainable development."

These words were put into action by SRO-ENEAA member nations. China pledged US\$6 million to the UNEP trust fund for sustainability and environmental projects in developing nations and over US\$31 million to help least developed countries and African countries respond to climate change. Japan committed US\$6 billion dollars in development assistance to help developing countries minimize damage from natural disasters and move toward renewable energy. Other countries in the subregion likewise had announced significant steps to realize the outcomes of Rio.

South Korean President Lee Myung Bak played a pivotal role in transforming the Global Green Growth Institute into an international organization with signatures to the treaty by fifteen other nations. This was the first time South Korea led the effort to create an international organization.

I am inspired by the dedication of SRO-ENEAA member nations to the goal of sustainable development. The collective determination of the leaders of the subregion underscores the priority SRO-ENEAA places on sustainable development and regional cooperation. We will work tirelessly with our Member States as well as with all relevant stakeholders in implementing the results of the Rio Conference. We are moving closer to the "Future We Want" and the real achievement of Rio+20 is the launch of the global movement that has already contributed to the growing global consensus on the need to build a future that balances the needs of our people and our planet.

K. Ramakrishna



Highlights

Rio+20: The Future We Want

United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

At the June 20-22, 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), better known as the Rio+20 Conference, high level representatives from around the globe came together to renew their commitments to sustainable development. The world leaders focused their attention on economic, social and environmental strategies that promote a sustainable future for our planet and humanity.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General and UNESCAP Executive Secretary Noeleen Heyzer explained, "The message from the countries of Asia and the Pacific is that getting it right means that Rio+20 must rebalance the pillars of sustainable development...It is time to reset global development, to forge a new development

paradigm, and to find new engines of sustainable growth."

The Rio+20 conference marks the 40th anniversary of 1972 Stockholm Conference on Human Environment, 20th anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and the

"Asia and the Pacific is home to two thirds of the people of our world. We accept our shared responsibility to help create the future we want"

- ESCAP Executive Secretary
Dr. Noeleen Heyzer

10th anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa. Just like previous conferences in 1972, 1992 and 2002, global leaders came together again to consider strategies to meet current development needs without compromising the needs of future generations. UNCSD representatives explained, "Seen as the guiding principle for long-term global development, sustainable development consists of three pillars: economic development, social development and environmental protection."

The Asia-Pacific region is especially aware of the challenges facing sustainable development models. As the region leads the way in economic growth, the region is also experiencing increased social disparities, depleted resources and strained ecosystems. Executive Secretary Heyzer noted, "The key to moving forward, to forging more inclusive and sustainable prosperity, is to use our development challenges, such as poverty and wide disparities in social and physical infrastructure, as new engines of growth."



Other regions demonstrated an equally enthusiastic commitment to sustainable development. Governments, UN systems and IGOs, the private sector and civil society organizations made over 750 voluntary commitments to move toward sustainable development. Those commitments were backed by more than US\$500 billion in funds and actions and included promises such as planting 100 million trees by 2017, greening 10,000 square kilometers of desert and empowering 5,000 women as entrepreneurs in green economy businesses in Africa.

Executive Secretary Heyzer summarized the role of UNESCAP in moving our globe closer to sustainability, "Asia and the Pacific is home to two thirds of the people of our world. We accept our shared responsibility to help create the future we want – and believe that the outcomes of Rio+20 offer the best chance of our generation. ESCAP, as the regional development arm of the United Nations in Asia and the Pacific, with the new mandate from this outcome document, will do so together with our sister regional commissions."



Activities

Golden Years: Ageing Asian Societies

Asian Symposium on Building Sustainable Ageing Societies

UNESCAP SRO-ENEA, together with the National Population and Family Planning Commission of China (NPFPC), organized the Asian Symposium on Building Sustainable Ageing Societies on 5-6 July 2012. In 2010, 1 in 10 persons living in North-East Asia was 65 years or older. In 2025 their proportion will increase to 1 in 5 persons, and in 2050, it is projected to reach 1 in 3 persons. In response to this dramatic change, over 100 participants joined the ageing symposium, including, senior governmental officials and representatives of intergovernmental and civil society organizations from fifteen countries.

The symposium provided a platform for sharing experiences and good practices in building sustainable ageing societies. Symposium participants discussed strategies of dealing with ageing against the background of International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) +20, Millennium Development Goals, and the Second Global MIPAA (Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing) Review, and their adequate inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals to be formulated as a result of decisions taken at Rio+20.

Success of the symposium can be measured by the number of conclusions agreed to by the participants. Recognizing the value of scientific studies, symposium attendees recommended enhancing evidence-based policy making. Participants also examined the differences between the ageing



experiences of men and women, and underlined the need for long-term care for all older persons, including community-based care, as well as the need for accreditation of elderly care services as care industries develop. Lastly, participants recommended development of a knowledge platform for further exchange of information among governments and relevant stakeholders.

Mongolia Mission: Inspecting Inspections

Inspection and Quarantine Procedures in Mongolia

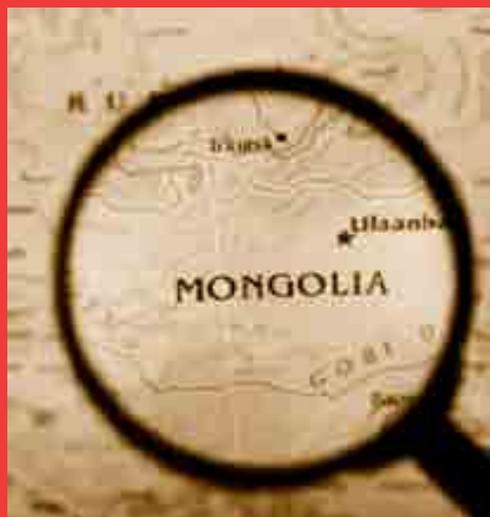
SRO-ENEA Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Andrea Goldstein joined other UN representatives, international experts and high-ranking Mongolian officials July 4-5 to discuss modernizing the Mongolian General Agency for Specialized Inspection (GASI). The successful meeting allowed international participants to experience first-hand the inspection and quarantine facilities of Mongolia and develop recommendations for improvement.

After reviewing the Mongolian GASI procedures and visiting local facilities, meeting participants agreed that Mongolia faces several challenges to improve its operation. These challenges include burdensome paperwork procedures and deficiencies in necessary technology, assessment procedures and facilities. To

respond to these challenges, representatives from China, Japan and the Republic of Korea offered their expertise and best practices.

Chinese experts discussed their inspection and quarantine procedures at ports and measures to implement a "Quick Customs Clearance" process to increase efficiency. Japanese experts described their success in using technology to increase transparency, predictability and consistency. Representatives from the Republic of Korea gave a comprehensive overview of animal and plant inspection and quarantine procedures and conducting risk assessment and management.

The meeting concluded with participants agreeing to move forward. UNESCAP agreed to help coordinate international agencies and support existing activities. GASI is eager to identify and prioritize specific areas for capacity building and training and other international organizations agreed to provide further expertise and support.





Activities

NEASPEC - Transboundary Marine Pollution

Experts Consultation Meeting Share Multilateral Initiatives

North East Asia marine ecological communities face some of the highest pollution levels in the world. To respond to this problem, UNESCAP SRO-ENEA subregional members must join together and commit to repairing and preserving marine ecosystems. The recent NEASPEC Experts Consultation Meeting held in June 2012 on the topic "Environmental challenges related to transboundary marine pollution" provided a forum for consultations among member states and representatives of existing multilateral initiatives for marine environmental cooperation.

As a result of the meeting, the experts suggested a number of potential themes for NEASPEC engagement. One of such initiatives may focus on the establishment of the subregional network of marine protected areas (MPAs) for sharing of successful experiences and practices and exchange of data.

Bridging Europe and Asia: SRO-ENEA mission to Russian Federation

In July 2012, UNESCAP SRO-ENEA Director, Mr. Kilaparti Ramakrishna and staff visited Moscow. On an official mission to meet with high-level government officials from various ministries and government agencies, UN system organizations and scientific community to get insights about Russia's priorities in strengthening multilateral cooperation in North-East Asia and Asia-Pacific as a whole.

In a series of meetings in Moscow, the high-level representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Natural Resources and Environment, National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and other leaders underlined the growing interest of Russia in developing its Far East region and strengthening ties with its North-East Asian neighbors. The recent establishment of the Russian Ministry for Development of Far East and the hosting of the 2012 APEC Summit in Vladiv-

ostok are vibrant examples of such priorities.

Russia has been a key donor of NEASPEC activities by funding projects on nature conservation and transboundary air pollution. Both sides exchanged ideas and proposals on how to further develop fruitful cooperation in the subregion, especially in light of the need to come up with concerted actions in follow-up of the Rio+20 Conference.



Mr. Nuritdin Inamov, Director-General, Russia Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Amur Tigers and Leopards: Now or Never

SROENEA Teams Up With WWF to Conserve Amur Tigers and Leopards

The Amur leopard and tiger's last remaining habitat is shared between the Russian Federation and China. The animals remain highly endangered, but thanks to cooperative efforts from government and non-government agencies their habitats are being protected and their numbers are increasing.

In July 2012, SRO-ENEA and the Far East Office of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Russia organized the NEASPEC meeting on "Nature Conservation in Transboundary Areas in North-East Asia" in Vladivostok, Russia. The meeting consisted of a one-day seminar on conservation of the Amur tiger and Amur leopard and a two-day field trip to a tiger habitat in the Orinoe hunting estate. The meeting was preceded by the 6th International Ecological Forum "Nature without Borders" organized by the Administration of Primorkiy Kray, which gathered prominent participants from all subregional countries to discuss the most pressing transboundary environmental challenges in North-East Asia.

The NEASPEC meeting participants included approximately 30 researchers, NGO representatives and government officials from China and Russia. The group welcomed the recent development of bilateral cooperation agreements between different scientific and government agencies on provincial and state levels. In this regard, NEASPEC activities on nature conservation will focus on establishing a cooperation platform that will bring key stakeholders together to consolidate existing transboundary cooperation for protecting tigers and leopards.





Activities

Transboundary Air Pollution in North-East Asia

NEASPEC Expert Consultation Meeting in Russia

From 9 to 10 July 2012, SRO-ENEA and the Scientific Research Institute (SRI) "Atmosphere" organized a NEASPEC Expert Consultation Meeting on Transboundary Air Pollution in North-East Asia in Russia's most beautiful city - St. Petersburg.

The meeting gathered about 20 representatives of member States and scientific community to review the progress of the current NEASPEC project by examining reports produced by national consultants. After discussing this mapping exercise and identifying current gaps and opportunities for joint action, the meeting also considered a set of possible mid to long-term objectives for strengthening subregional cooperation on this important issue by taking stock of more than 30 years of the successful application of the Convention on the Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution in pan-European region. Particularly, the meeting noticed that currently there exists no subregional/regional mechanism that covers all aspects of transboundary air pollution, such as modeling, monitoring and impact assessment, which calls for strengthening of the existing instruments both in terms of programme and geo-



graphic coverage and establishing close collaboration between them.

In this regard, NEASPEC will embark on solidifying subregional cooperation and expanding membership of the existing instruments on transboundary air pollution in North-East Asia.



Events

East Asia By the Numbers

Conference to Strengthen Capacity to Produce and Use Statistical Information for Sustainable Development

As the international community strives to improve the social and economic conditions of all people, diverse measures must be incorporated to accurately assess the impact of policies and actions. While macro-economic statistics such as GDP have been heavily relied upon to determine measures of improvement, it is equally important to consider micro experiences and living conditions on a human level.

To better understand these micro-factors, UNESCAP and the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) will co-organize a statistics conference in September 2012 hosted in Beijing, China. The conference is titled, "Strengthening National Capacity to Produce and Use Statistical Information for Inclusive and Sustain-

able Development in East and North-East Asia." The conference will focus on sharing and understanding new instruments to measure well-being and progress.

As part of the conference, speakers will share the elements that contribute to defining and shaping the quality of life of citizens. Panel discussions will focus on the progress that sub-regional countries have made in improving the quality of life of its populations, and how it is measured. Additionally, conference participants will utilize recommendations and conclusions from the recent Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development to recognize broader measures of progress to complement GDP in order to better inform policy decisions.



of world population



of world GDP & international trade



of global CO₂ emissions



of global citizens above 65 years old



Other News

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Student Organize Model United Nations ESCAP

Students Use ESCAP Commission for Model United Nations Event

This month Korean high school students organized and hosted a unique Model United Nations conference, simulating ESCAP's Committee on Environment and Development. Students posed as national delegations of Asia-Pacific countries and discussed policies and strategies for the use of sustainable planning, use of water resources, regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy resources.

Model United Nations is an engaging event which allows students to act as delegates and collaborate to find realistic solutions to actual international issues. While many Model United Nations events are hosted throughout Asia, this event was inspired and organized by high school students and specifically focused on elements of the ESCAP mission. ESCAP SRO-ENEA Environmental Affairs Officer Sangmin Nam encouraged the students and shared his experiences as the keynote speaker of the event.



The initiative and intellect of the participants of the Model United Nations event illustrates the valuable role of young people in finding sustainable solutions for global development.

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