

CONNECTIONS

East and North-East Asia Office
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Director's Message

Dr. Kilaparti Ramakrishna

As the East and North-East Asia Office of UNESCAP, we work on several fronts with our member States and various stakeholders. We strive in the end to have a positive impact on all, particularly on the lives of women and girls, elderly, marginalized or vulnerable, including persons with disabilities. Our recent meeting in Sendai, Japan that is still reeling from the devastating earthquake and tsunami of 2011, that took lives of many, especially the elderly, is reflected on the work we carry out in the name of supporting and promoting inclusive and sustainable development for all.



ESCAP, in close cooperation with the International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS) at Tohoku University, addressed the vital need to have updated and reliable disaster statistics for helping governments and those tasked with disaster risk management and effective disaster response, highlighting the need to be sensitive to the different needs of the marginal and most vulnerable segments of society.

Experts agreed on the establishment of partnership to be the basis for developing an evidence-based framework on disaster risk reduction and acknowledged the considerable progress made by countries, development partners, agencies and civil society in the area of disaster data collection and dissemination

As the deadline to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is fast approaching, two conferences on post-2015 agenda and international Official Development Assistance (ODA) took place back to back in Seoul last month. Organized by our colleagues at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Republic of Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), these two important events were under the themes "The Seoul Post-2015 Conference: Implementation and Implications" and "Post-2015 Development Framework and the Role of Official Development Assistance," respectively.



They covered a range of issues, including post-2015 development agenda, implementation mechanisms and partnerships, suggestions on the implementation of the post-2015 development goals and challenges ahead among others. At both events, I delivered a presentation about the global process on developing the sustainable development goals.

The insights and analysis shared during the conferences are pivotal at this juncture in order to strengthen development coordination and provide comprehensive implementation framework towards the post-2015 development agenda.



K. Ramakrishna

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Highlights

The First Asia Carbon Footprint Network Meeting

30 - 31 Oct 2013, Seoul, Republic of Korea

The First Asia Carbon Footprint Network (ACFN) was launched with 14 member organizations to share knowledge and expertise on carbon footprinting.

ESCAP and the Korea Environmental Industry and Technology Institute (KEITI) have jointly facilitated dialogue among agencies and experts in East Asia on the current status of carbon footprinting programmes and potential areas of cooperation by holding seminars and workshops since 2011. The Asia Carbon Footprint Workshop held in Seoul in 2012 took a decision to launch the new initiative.

The first ACFN meeting was organized by ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office and KEITI from 30 to 31 October 2013 in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

It is the first regional network in the world, dedicated to promoting carbon labeling programme and maximizing the efficiency of our limited time and resources," Dr. Kilaparti Ramakrishna, Director of ESCAP ENEA Office said in his opening remarks.

The meeting consisted of two parts: a seminar on sharing of practices on carbon footprinting and other related programmes and activities; and a discussion on detailed programmes and opera-



tional modalities for the Network's Secretariat moving forward. Representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the European Union, international organizations and private enterprises presented the trends and prospects of carbon footprinting activities.

Overall consensus of the meeting from the member agencies is to create a website for information and knowledge sharing and regularly hold training and workshops for capacity building and promoting development scheme in the Asian region.

China, Japan, Republic of Korea and Thailand have made significant progress in launching and operating carbon labeling programmes or

carbon footprint programmes that highlight the climate-specific dimension of products. The ACFN is expected to play an important role as the regional platform to share knowledge and expertise among the member organizations.



The first Asia Carbon Footprint Network with 14 member organizations from the region

The Carbon Footprint of Products (CFP), a new initiative for many, is to determine the carbon intensity of products during their life cycle. In this regard, carbon footprint programmes could play a key role in market-based mechanisms as well as help support consumers, producers and markets to move towards low carbon pathways.



Activities

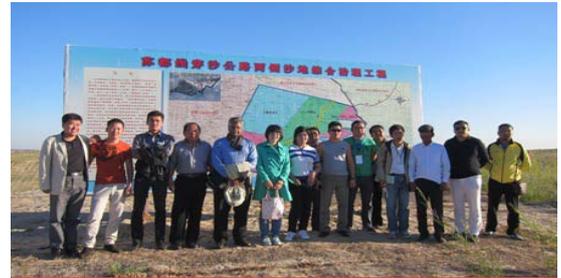
Training Workshop on Combating Desertification in North-East Asia

22 - 28 September 2013, Beijing, China

The Training Workshop on Combating Desertification was jointly held by the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC) Secretariat and the Institute of Desertification Studies (IDS) of China. The Workshop was attended by 10 Mongolian participants from a range of professions and background, including government officials, researchers and media representatives. The training workshop consisted of two parts: (i) lectures on policies and technical measures, and (ii) field study in Inner Mongolia.

Similar to Mongolia, China faces challenges of severe desertification. Desertification threatens over 25% of its landmass (over 2.6 million km²), affecting more than 400 million people in total. Factors contributing to desertification in China include over-grazing, overuse of water and changes in land use. A comprehensive range of topics relevant to desertification control had been covered during the training workshop, including China's desertification control approach, results and case studies, as well as its national policies on desertification control and forestry were discussed.

A field study was organized to visit a number of sites in Inner Mongolia to understand the application of the desertification control measures and approaches in



A field trip to Inner Mongolia during the Training Workshop on Combating Desertification in Northeast Asia

the field. Sites visited include: organic agricultural practices in Heiyupaizi Village; aerial seeding afforestation and seedling nursery in Bairin Right Banner; integrated sand control project of Tuha Line and Sudu Line, where roads were built into the mobile sand dune areas solely to build sand grids with straws to stabilize sand and eventually to grow shrubs for further and long term stabilization; and the Uranaodu Ecological Experiment Station for research.

The field trip provided the opportunity for participants to observe field practices and exchange directly with local professionals on their experiences, technical details and discuss applicability of the desertification measures in their respective local context.

Expert Group Meeting on Improving Disaster Data in Asia and the Pacific

30 September - 1 October 2013, Sendai, Japan

More than 35 experts from Asia-Pacific National Disaster Management Agencies and National Statistical Offices, United Nations agencies, donors and civil society gathered in Sendai to develop a way forward in building an evidence-based resilience system through improved collection and dissemination of disaster data.

With the support of the Tohoku University, the Expert Group Meeting agreed on the development of a set of "core data" for resilience related to the different aspects of policy making, planning, programming and monitoring of disaster risk management and, to the extent possible, climate change.

In Asia and the Pacific, a region most prone to disasters and the adverse effects of climate change, timely and reliable data is vital to reduce damage and losses from disasters. Data is critical in reducing risks, as well as preparing for, responding to and recovering effectively from disasters. Such data needs to be inclusive and disaggregated to ensure that no vulnerable groups are left out, for example elderly persons or persons with disabilities.

Currently, the lack of reliable data and robust regional

mechanisms hinder ESCAP member States' ability to develop resilience and to respond to disasters swiftly through evidence-based policy making, planning and programming.

The meeting concluded with an agreement on the need to develop a set of minimum basic core set of data, a road map starting now through to 2014 that includes the establishment of an expert group to take this forward.

ESCAP and other development partners, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM), Japan International Cooperation Agency, International Research Institute for Disaster Science (IRIDeS) and Tohoku University will work together in moving the initiative forward.

Outcome conclusions from the meeting will be presented to the third Session of the ESCAP Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on 27-29 November 2013.



Activities

Expert Group Meeting on Conservation and Rehabilitation of Habitats for Key Migratory Birds in North-East Asia

10 - 11 October 2013, Incheon, Republic of Korea

Organized by NEASPEC, the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) reviewed subregional and national challenges related to the conservation of migratory bird species and their habitats; and to develop the implementation plan for the project components, including joint survey and study, capacity building on habitat management, strategy and awareness raising for habitat conservation and rehabilitation.



A participant gives a presentation during the EGM on Migratory Birds in Northeast Asia

The Meeting gathered national experts from China, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, and Russian Federation (via video link), as well as experts from national and international programmes, including BirdLife International, East Asia-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), Korea Waterbird Network, Korea Society of Environment and Ecology (KSEE) and Environmental Ecology Research Foundation (ERF).

Experts agreed to have a joint study with a focus on transboundary areas, including Dauria International Protected Area (China, Mongolia and Russia) and the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DPRK and ROK). The final confirmation of selecting the Protected Area is subject to consultation with the national focal point of Russia. With regard to the study at the Demilitarized Zone, the Meeting recommended actively exploring the possibility of DPRK's involvement in the joint study.

North-East Asia: Prospects of Energy Cooperation

15 October 2013, Daegu, Republic of Korea

The 22nd World Energy Congress was held in the Republic of Korea that brought together governments, business leaders and other delegates from more than 100 countries around the world for exchanging insights into the global energy sector and sharing access to the leading global energy markets.

ENEA Office hosted a side event during the Congress under the title of "North-East Asia: Prospects of Energy Cooperation." North-East Asia accounts for around one-third of the world's energy consumption and encompasses some of the most resource-rich and most resource-dependent countries in the world. In particular, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea are ranked among the top five importers of major fossil fuels, accounting for 26 percent and 48 percent of world imported oil and coal in recent year, respectively.

Experts reviewed key challenges of energy security and sought the way for facilitating dialogues in the region. Dr.



The Northeast Asia Energy Cooperation Forum during the World Energy Congress 2013

Ramakrishna delivered welcoming remarks and moderated the first session on energy security and cooperation in the Northeast Asian region.

The session addressed to create synergy through expanding cooperation among neighboring countries to pan-pacific region and to promote cooperation between high-level government officials in Northeast Asia to complement existing mechanisms, which focus on technical aspect as the nuclear safety is directly linked to a nation's security.



Upcoming Events

Eighteenth Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of NEASPEC

5-6 November 2013, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

The Eighteenth Senior Officials Meeting of NEASPEC will be organized by ENEA Office and hosted by the Ministry of Environment and Green Development of Mongolia in Mongolia.

The meeting will serve as a key environmental dialogue forum in North-East Asia, bringing together over 40 delegates from ENEA member States and international agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The SOM will review progress of on-going projects and consult among member States on the development of new activities with regard to (i) transboundary air pollution, (ii) nature conservation and (iii) Marine Protected Areas Network in North-East Asia, and adopt final decision on the way forward. It is also expected to discuss potential activity areas such as dust and sandstorms and Eco-efficiency Partnership.

Regional Expert Group Meeting on Policy Options for Sustainable Transport Development

27-29 November, Incheon, Republic of Korea

The Rio+20 Summit renewed global commitment to sustainable development and recognized that transport and mobility are central to sustainable development. In order to fulfill these commitments Asian countries need to adopt and implement various innovative policies, strategies and approaches thereby ensuring economic, environmental and social sustainability of transportation systems.

ESCAP in collaboration with the Korea Maritime Institute and the Korea Transport Institute (KOTI) is organizing a regional expert group meeting with the objectives to: (i) present findings of a joint study on policy options for sustainable transport development; (ii) exchange views and share knowledge, policies and best practices on selected aspects and key elements of sustainable transport development; (iii) discuss ways to enhance coordination of policies and strategies at national and city level and implementation proven best practices in their country/city. On the final day of the meeting, KOTI will invite the participants to a site visit to sustainable urban transport system.

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

Bridging Science, Policy and Promoting Corporation

5-6 December 2013, Beijing, China

Low Carbon Cities in East and North-East Asia



Jeju, Republic of Korea



Shanghai, China



Yokohama, Japan

The symposium is jointly organized by ENEA Office, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to review and discuss key issues on low carbon city (LCC) development in the subregion, and to exchange views on the potential of forming a subregional LCC partnership network.

The symposium will seek views from distinguished experts and international agencies on approaches to best address these challenges and opportunities in the subregion as well as to explore on the need of a subregional partnership as a platform to bring together agencies and key stakeholders.

Incheon Sister & Friendly Cities Summit 2013

The International Symposium on Sustainable Cities: Empowering Local Governments through Capacity Building was held in conjunction with the Incheon Sister and Friendly Cities Conference on 26-28 September 2013 in Songdo. Representatives of local governments, planning officials, UN agencies, multi-lateral and regional development banks discussed on strengthening institutional and technical capacity to address poverty reduction, urban development, urban transport and water and sanitation. ENEA Office organized and hosted a session on low carbon city development.

UN Day Celebrations

In October, we celebrated UN Day that marked the 68th anniversary of the founding of the UN Charter. The Office joined the local marathon by running with around 10,000 participants and promoting the UN's core value of respecting diversity. We also supported 2013 UN World Peace Festival, and provided a briefing on the UN and ESCAP to local and international students from primary and middle schools with multicultural backgrounds.



A group photo of UN staff and other participants for Songdo Run



Students diligently take note during the briefing

World Conference on Building Sustainable Future of Asia-Pacific

Director of the ENEA Office attended the 2013 International Conference of Organization of the Families of Asia and the Pacific in Macau on 21-25 October. This was a joint conference with the 25th biennial World Conference of International Federation of NGOs for the Prevention of Drugs and Substance Abuse, addressing a variety of topics, including the role of families in the future, drug and substance abuse, decriminalization of drug consumption, money laundering, women's and children's rights, and criminality and civic education. Dr. Ramakrishna moderated a session on youth and ageing. ENEA Office also took the opportunity to meet with Macau and Hong Kong government officials in charge of ESCAP matters.



Dr Ramakrishna (third from left) moderating a session at the Intl Conference on the sustainable families of Asia-Pacific

ENEA Office & Youth Engagement Activity

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

Date	Schools/Organizations
Thursday, 12 September	Gyesan Girls' High School
Friday, 13 September	Seok-Jeong Girls' High School
Thursday, 10 October	Incheon International Relations Foundation
Thursday, 24 October	Global Children's Festival & MACK Foundation