



5TH UNEP TUNZA SOUTH EAST ASIA YOUTH ENVIRONMENT NETWORK (SEAYEN) REGIONAL MEETING, SINGAPORE 18 JANUARY TO 20 JANUARY 2011

A SPECIAL REPORT ON THE 5TH UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN REGIONAL MEETING

The United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP ROAP), in line with its TUNZA youth engagement strategy in the Asia and the Pacific region, has established the UNEP South East Asia Youth Environment Network (SEAYEN) in 2005 with the partnership and collaboration of the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA) Council of Singapore.

The youth-led UNEP SEAYEN network is one of the first five established environment/sustainable development networks uniting young environmentalists and organizations in Asia and the Pacific Region. Other similar networks that represent the sub-regions in Asia include the South Asia Youth Environment Network (SAYEN), North East Asia Youth Environment Network (NEAYEN), Pacific Youth Environment Network (PYEN), and Central Asia Youth Environment Network (CYEN).

The National Youth Achievement Award Council of Singapore hosts the Secretariat for SEAYEN, whose membership comprises of 10 ASEAN member countries namely: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. An appointed organization in each of the ASEAN member country serves as the National Focal Point (NFP) for the youth network.

As part of the capacity building initiative, SEAYEN's secretariat, which is based in Singapore, organizes a regional meeting once every year. At the meeting, regional and country level SEAYEN activities and projects are reviewed, capacity building and training are conducted and an action plan for the year is developed.



James Soh, Executive Director, NYAA Council and Advisor, UNEP Southeast Asia Youth Environment Network, addressing at the Opening of the 5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Meeting.

Biodiversity and Climate Change

The 5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting was held in Singapore from 18 to 20 January 2011 at the Newater Visitor Center. The theme for the conference was "Biodiversity and Climate Change: Actions We Can Take." Biodiversity describes the variety of life on earth, which is essential for sustaining the living network and systems that provide us with health, wealth, food, fuel and a range of vital services that our lives depend upon. As human beings, we are an integral part of this diversity and are unique in that we have the power to protect or destroy it.

There is significant evidence that human activity is causing biodiversity to be lost at a very fast pace. Climate change is considered to be one of the biggest challenges faced by biodiversity today and is likely to become the leading driver of biodiversity loss by the end of the century. A rise in temperatures along with the growing uncertainty and unpredictability of natural events (rainfall, storms, drought, etc.) has increased the vulnerability of humans and natural systems.

Ongoing research reveals interesting examples and evidence of the impacts of climate change on plants and animals: variations in plant flowering and bird migration times and patterns; expansion or contraction of the geographical range of species; increase in pest load; and etc. It is widely acknowledged now that the loss of biological diversity will seriously impair the capacity of communities to adapt to climate change. Natural systems are essential for the survival of any life. Nature and ecosystems provide services that we often fail to understand or fully value.



Youth Representatives from ASEAN member countries with officials.

"Youth leaders should take appropriate actions both in the context of changing lifestyles as well as adaptation measures to handle the impacts of climate change."

***James Soh PBM MBE
Executive Director
National Youth Achievement Award Council and
Advisor, UNEP Southeast Asia Youth Environment Network***

5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting Opening Ceremony

At the opening of the 5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting on 19 January 2011, James Soh, Executive Director, National Youth Achievement Award Council of Singapore and Advisor, UNEP SEAYEN, encouraged the youth leaders from the ASEAN member countries to take appropriate actions both in the context of changing lifestyles as well as adaptation measures to handle the impacts of climate change.

Rainer Steinmetz, General Manager, Corporate Services, South ASEAN, Bayer (South East Asia) Pte Ltd also encouraged the youth leaders to be more pro-active and engage in mitigating the threat of climate change. Mr Steinmetz's message to the youth leaders was reinforced by Satwant Kaur, Information Officer, UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. She urged the youth to fully take advantage of the communications technology and the new media to spread the message and raise the level of awareness among the youth in ASEAN on the importance of taking care of our environment.



Rainer Steinmetz, General Manager, Corporate Services, South ASEAN, Bayer (South East Asia) Pte Ltd addressing the UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Meeting.



Ith Sophearom of Cambodia presenting the Cambodian country report.



Pondet Ananchai of Thailand sharing about the Thai environmental projects.



Brainstorming and group discussion among youth representatives.



Sharing of ideas among the youth leaders.

Proceedings of the 5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting

The 5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting was co-ordinated by Kenneth Wong, NYAA Gold Award holder and Chairman, NYAA Gold Award Holders' Alumni (GAHA), Environment Committee, and Oliver Goh, NYAA Gold Award holder and SEAYEN Youth Mentor.

During the meeting, youth leaders from the ASEAN member countries presented their country reports and shared their views and concerns with members of the SEAYEN. They were engaged in group discussion and brainstormed for ideas and solution. Many good ideas and suggestions were received from the meetings and members came up with project ideas on "Biodiversity and Climate Change: Actions We Can Take," which they will implement in their respective countries during the year.

Members also brainstormed on how to strengthen the partnership and collaboration between members of the network and pledged to work closely with the SEAYEN Secretariat in disseminating information about the environmental projects and activities, which they will carry out for the youths in their country. They were also encouraged to develop a strong network among the various environmental NGOs within their country.

"Youth leaders should be more pro-active and engage in mitigating the threat of climate change."

***Rainer Steinmetz
General Manager, Corporate Services, South ASEAN
Bayer (South East Asia) Pte Ltd***

During their visit to Singapore, youth members from SEAYEN visited the Singapore Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) and met the Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources, Dr Amy Khor, for a discussion. Youth members took turns to share with the Minister what they have done in their country and their proposed projects.

Minister of State, Dr Amy Khor, was very interested in what they do and the discussion was very fruitful. She also took the opportunity to share with the SEAYEN members about the government's policy on the environment and how the MEWR supports environmental groups in their effort to protect the environment in Singapore. After the meeting with the Minister, youth members visited the ENVision Gallery to know more about Singapore's environment.

James Soh, Executive Director, NYAA Singapore and Advisor, UNEP SEAYEN, also took the opportunity to share with youth leaders on the 3Ps concept (People, Private and Public) partnership. The youth leaders were very impressed with the wide range of environmental projects and activities, which are put in place by the NYAA Council in nurturing and developing the Singapore youth as Environmental Envoys. They were also impressed with various opportunities and platforms offered by the NYAA Council both at the national level and in the international arena.

Dorothy Claro, Manager, Corporate Communications, Bayer (South East Asia) Pte Ltd, also conducted a presentation on the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Programme. She also encouraged the youth to be pro-active and seize the opportunity provided to them by like-minded corporations and organizations.

One special highlight at the Singapore meeting was the election of national youth representative from each of the ASEAN member countries. The national youth representative will be the official liaison between the SEAYEN Secretariat and the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.



Dialogue session with the Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources, Dr Amy Khor.



Group photograph with Dr Amy Khor, Minister of State for the Environment and Water Resources, at the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources.



Interacting with Teo Ser Luck, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports and Ministry of Transport, at the Singapore Management University.



Visiting the ENVision Gallery at the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources.



Group discussion among the youth leaders from ASEAN.



Elected National Youth Representatives with James Soh, Executive Director, NYAA Council and Advisor, UNEP SEAYEN, and Satwant Kaur, UNEP ROAP Information Officer.

5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting Closing Ceremony

The 5th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting held in Singapore was a success and the youth leaders from the South East Asia region pledged to do their part to protect the environment and to be a catalyst back in their respective countries.

A Closing Ceremony cum Dinner was hosted by the NYAA Council where youth shared their experiences and provided support for each other. They also received the Certificate of Participation from the United Nations Environment Programme.



Satwant Kaur, Information Officer, UNEP ROAP, presenting the certificate of participation to Metia Febrita Putri Lembasi of Indonesia.



Taking a tour of the NEWater Visitor Center.



Visit to Chinatown by SEAYEN delegates.



SEAYEN delegates at Istana Kampong Glam, historic home of Malay Royalty in Singapore.



Learning about NEWater technology.



SEAYEN delegates and officials at the Closing Dinner event.

"Youth should fully take advantage of the communication technology and the new media to spread the message and raise the level of awareness among the youth on the importance of taking care of our environment."

**Satwant Kaur
Information Officer
UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**

This special report is compiled and published by
The National Youth Achievement Award Council Singapore
151 Lorong Chuan, #06-01B (Lobby A), New Tech Park,
Singapore 556741
Tel: (65) 67336753 Fax: (65) 67336754
Email: nyaac@singnet.com.sg

