

Tropical Coasts

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The Role of Media in Sustainable Development



Media for Sustainable Development

Leo Rex C. Cayaban

Issue Editor

History was made on 12 December 2003 when top-level policy makers from 12 East Asian countries met in Putrajaya, Malaysia and adopted the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA). The adoption of the SDS-SEA is unprecedented, in that it now provides countries in the region with a common framework of actions for attaining the goal of sustainable development.

But for the SDS-SEA to be effectively implemented, word has to get out. To put it more aptly, the message of the value of our seas, the severity of environmental challenges, and the opportunities created by the SDS-SEA to address these challenges should be brought to the multitude of stakeholders for whom this strategy was developed. If there was one stakeholder group that could get the word out, it would be the media.

This issue of *Tropical Coasts* attempts to capture the insights of one of the most dynamic sectors of society: the media and its role in sustainable development. More than just finding and reporting stories for public consumption, the media has a myriad of functions that can further the cause of improving the quality of life. If sustainable development is about changing attitudes, adopting new policies and taking action, then the media has a major role to play.

Media's capacity to reach a wide audience is instrumental in building awareness to coastal environmental issues – a must-have for active stakeholder participation. Coastal management endeavors that forge successful partnerships with the media can therefore go a long way. Resurreccion's article (page 4) takes a look at how coastal management efforts in the Philippines actively involves the media in the activities and even provides suggestions on how media could be exposed more to coastal and marine management issues for a more factual and effective reporting.

Mangahas (page 10) follows with the futility of conducting environmental communication campaigns without considering the socio-cultural underpinnings of a particular issue. His is a warning. What, for instance, would a simple fisher make of a colorful brochure, "half the content of which he does not understand." This brochure could find itself put into more practical use given the context of a fisher's need to feed his starving family.

The world is indeed becoming a smaller place, no small thanks to the far-reaching abilities of electronic media. Television and the Internet in particular have the ability to reach a truly global audience. But electronic media not only informs, it could also facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences between countries. Hong (page 14) provides a look on how electronic media can facilitate the creation of a media mechanism to support sustainable development efforts in the East Asian region.

Advocacy is another area where media can have a telling effect. Almeida (page 18) shares the experiences of an NGO in Cambodia, as it uses traditional and non-traditional media strategies to raise public awareness on environmental issues, inform stakeholders of their rights and promote active involvement in advocacy activities for the empowerment of local communities.

The youth is never far behind new technology. Today's tech-savvy youth enjoy a mind-boggling level of information access the likes of which were unthinkable just a generation ago. With the Internet fast becoming a part of the youth's lifestyle all over the world, Custodio's article (page 32) offers ways on how cyberspace can be used to educate and build environmental awareness for society's most precious sector.

Roxas (page 36) makes us step back and watch as she picks apart the very nature of media to expose its multiplicity. Whether it may be government media, commercial or mainstream media or even alternative media, its multiplicity can reach diverse levels of audiences. As the world develops strategies and plans of actions with concrete targets for attaining sustainable development (such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development), media's multiplicity can translate such action plans into forms where people can relate and identify with, moving them to act.

Yoshida (page 38) provides a glimpse into the world of Japanese fisheries, its challenges for sustainability, and on how journalists can do their part in promoting awareness on the plight of one of Japan's most ancient trades. Yoshida expounds on the skills and techniques the journalist of today would need to cover complex environmental issues.

To enhance media's role in implementing the SDS-SEA, and other related instruments, the media must be made fully aware of the constraints and challenges to be met when working on the environmental front. The articles in this issue of *Tropical Coasts* provide many examples of such challenges and offer some means on how to address them.

If sustainable development is to be realized, then a well-informed public is already half the battle. Just like any other stakeholder who stands to lose if the continued degradation and unsustainable use of the world's resources are left unabated, the media's role will be telling. The coming years will be interesting ones. Perhaps by then the world's media can find itself not only telling the story of sustainable development, but also actively making it happen. ■

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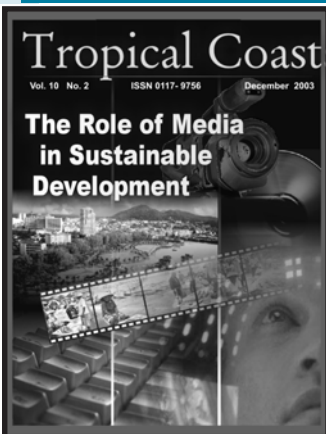
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The Media in Development

Media is finding itself active in covering environmental issues as world concern grows. As a major stakeholder, media has a role to play in sustainable development. But is media's role finished and done with at the end of every story broadcast or article?



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The adoption of the Putrajaya Declaration on 12 December 2003 paves the way for a strategic regional approach in developing and managing coastal and marine resources in the East Asian region.

Introduction

The people in the coastal areas in Bataan, from *barangay* (village) residents, schoolchildren, to government and office employees, clean the coastal areas of the province. They pick up solid waste strewn around the coastal areas and on the water, which damages the coastal and marine environment.

The activity has become popular that the residents have adopted it and organized regular coastal cleanups in the whole province twice a year and in the coastal municipalities weekly or monthly. It has become a regular school, community and corporate activity where the participants do their share in cleaning the environment, while enjoying the camaraderie and self-fulfilment it brings.

Raising Public Awareness on Coastal and Marine Concerns through the Media

Called *Kontra Kalat sa Dagat* (Movement Against Sea Littering) the volunteer work initiated by the *Bigay Galing sa Kalikasan ng Bataan* or *BIGKIS-Bataan* in the Philippines, which started on 19 September 1999, earned not only many awards and citations, but more importantly, a cleaner, more habitable—and profitable—environment for the residents and other stakeholders.

The waterways were declogged which prevented flooding, and red tide no longer exists since 2002. With clean seawater the fishes and mud crab reappeared, in return giving more food and income to the people.

William Azucena, officer-in-charge of the *BIGKIS-Bataan* Project Management Office, said that besides the environmental and economic gains, the activities helped increase the people's sense of volunteerism and cooperation, and made them realize that they have power through their collective work. They have also developed a behavioral change, he said, by no longer throwing their solid waste anywhere.

In Batangas Bay, Philippines, a demonstration site for the implementation of integrated coastal management (ICM) program under GEF/UNDP/IMO Regional Programme on Partnerships in the Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), the residents also engage in similar activities and more along the coasts.

They engage in waste recycling and segregation, materials recovery and redemption, and tree planting on riverbanks, among others. They involve practically everybody in the community — from the residents, local officials, public and private employees, and industries.

The Media and the Bataan and Batangas ICM Projects

These coastal environment management initiatives in Bataan and Batangas would not be known to many people in the remote areas in the two provinces, and throughout the

Philippines, if not through the mass media.

With the newspaper articles and television and radio broadcasts — especially in the remote areas — and in the country as a whole, many people were informed about the pro-environment activities. More people were able to learn about the concerned issues, problems being addressed, the interventions being made, and the benefits they would get in return.

The Bataan and Batangas experiences showed that the media, with its capacity to reach a great number of people, plays an important role in helping raise the people's awareness, and in this case, about the issues concerning the coastal and marine resources, which is the very life of the people and communities around them.

In this way, media not only gives the stakeholders directly affected in the communities, but also those outside the communities, the hope that something can still be done to solve the existing problems, but also indirectly helps them formulate policies and decide on actions they have to take.

This role of the media was played to the hilt in Bataan and Batangas. And it paid off because, besides telling the people the issues, explaining their causes deeper and the possible solution/s available, the



The stories and photographs of children picking up waste or planting mangroves make the public realize the urgency to clean and protect the environment for the benefit of the future generation.

people were able to realize that they have an important role in — and they have the power to — solving the problems confronting their coastal and marine environment.

How Did the Media Help Popularize the Bataan and Batangas Coastal and Marine Protection Projects?

BIGKIS-Bataan successfully mobilized the media for *Kontra Kalat sa Dagat* and other related activities which were organized later, such as mangrove planting, supplemental livelihood program, and the formulation of a coastal zoning and sea-use plan.

The 20 newspapers, 8 local TV networks and 3 radio stations carried stories on the environmental activities and the issues surrounding

the environmental problems in the province. The newspaper agencies carried news/feature stories and photographs, while the TV networks and radio stations made news broadcasts and interviews.

The stories and photographs of children picking up waste and planting mangroves gave the readers, radio listeners and TV watchers the lasting impression of the urgent need to clean and protect the environment for the children and the future generation.

Besides the mass media, BIGKIS-Bataan also popularized the activities through the use of audio-visual materials like videos, which were shown in schools, government and private offices, ferries and buses, two national TV channels and a local cable TV station. It also printed and disseminated posters, leaflets and other handouts.

On top of these, BIGKIS–Bataan ensured close partnership with the media by having two of its members, including the provincial information officer, in the information and education committee of the Provincial Coordinating Council of the ICM.

In Batangas, the province's 75 print and broadcast reporters, four radio stations, and a TV channel helped in informing the *Batangeños* about the coastal management strategies.

At the same time, the Batangas Bay Region Environmental Protection Council implementing the integrated coastal management project helped the mediemen familiarize and educate themselves on the coastal environment issues in the province thus, also provided them a wide array of materials to write about —

through news briefings, bay tours and ecological camps.

Evelyn Estigoy, deparment head of the Provincial Government – Environment and Natural Resources Office (PG–ENRO) which is secretariat to the council, said that her office also provided the media with regular press releases, fact sheets, video documentaries and copies of the *Enro Bulletin*, the provincial environment office's publication.

A member of the Batangas media also sits in the Council, thus directly making the media involved in the ICM program.

“It is interesting to note that the mediemen themselves have become strong advocates of and active partners in the ICM program. They themselves produce their own materials or spiels for print or

broadcast to encourage the people to participate in the activities and help in protecting the coastal and marine environment,” Estigoy said.

Other Coastal and Marine Environment Initiatives in the Media

Other coastal and marine protection initiatives in many parts of the country, not only in Bataan and Batangas, were made known to people in other parts of the country through the media.

News and other types of information in local and national newspapers and in radio and TV broadcasts discussed the coastal cleanups along Manila Bay with the world–famous Manila Bay sunset as a backdrop — which further highlighted the need to preserve its natural beauty.

There were also stories on mangrove reforestation along the coastal area of Obando in Bulacan Province; the cleanup of Pasig River; the preservation of the natural heritage sites, such as those in Palawan and Tubbataha Reef; the preservation of protected areas of the Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary and Siargao Island; the creation of fish and turtle sanctuaries in some parts of the country; and many others.

Print and broadcast materials also presented the private companies in their new role: as partners in



An example of a public-private partnership scheme to help make environmental projects viable is the San Fernando Solid Waste Mangement Project. Pro-Environment Consortium chairman and president Jose Luis Yulo Jr. and San Fernando City Mayor Rey Aquino sign the memorandum of agreement for the project.

environment protection together with other sectors. This was aptly shown in news items about the participation of the Petron Foundation in coastal management in Bataan, through the Bataan Coastal Care Foundation, Inc.; of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation in Batangas Bay coastal and marine protection; and of the Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. in the rehabilitation of Meycauayan River through Healthy Environmental Actions for Life-Meycauayan (HEAL-Meycauayan), and many other projects.

Furthermore, the new scheme in making environment projects viable — the public-private partnership or PPP scheme — wherein private agencies become direct partners of government agencies also merited media space. The latest of which was the partnership of the Pro-Environment Consortium and San Fernando City in Pampanga, Philippines with the signing of a memorandum of agreement for the San Fernando Solid Waste Management Project.

At the same time, there were also news and feature stories about environment conferences, the signing of laws and agreements, or special days, such as Earth Day, Coastal Cleanup Day, Environment Day and Ocean Month.

The articles aptly balance the negative environment stories – fish kills, oil spills, damaged coral reefs, decreasing number of fishes,

The Bataan and Batangas experiences showed that the media, with its capacity to reach a great number of people, plays an important role in helping raise the people's awareness, and in this case, about the issues concerning the coastal and marine resources, which is the very life of the people and communities around them.

mangrove deforestation, coastal pollution or whale killing — that are magnified and have become the staple of tabloids, or sometimes even land in broadsheet front pages and radio and TV top stories.

The latter kind of news items, although they need to be exposed by the media to alert the people about the environmental problems and move the people concerned into solving the problem, most of the time the news are reactive, not proactive, adversarial, not developmental. Almost always they were written by “parachute journalists,” those who go to the site only to gather information — mostly superficial — about the incidents, or by reporters who have only little knowledge or information about the whole environmental problem.

Learning from the Media Experiences in Bataan and Batangas

The successful partnership between the local media in Bataan and Batangas and the ICM project implementers could be used as models on the effective media work for sustainable coastal and marine environment.

Two factors could be cited from these experiences:

- that the mediemen have first-hand exposure on the problems and the environment interventions, and
- the ICM project implementers' conscious efforts in involving the media in information dissemination.

The Forum revealed an information gap between the local stakeholders and policymakers and the scientists regarding coastal and marine environmental issues. It was agreed that media practitioners can play the role of “laymanizing” the technical aspects of ICM and presenting them in a form most stakeholders would understand.

The media’s direct exposure in the projects, being residents of the areas, provided them a wide array of materials to write or report about. At the same time, this exposure also gave them the opportunity to not only have the ringside seats in the boxing game, so to speak, but the privilege to “swim” among the fishes, which give them a clearer and deeper understanding of the environmental situation and the solutions being implemented. As a result, the contents of their reports were more “correct,” substantive, if not more comprehensive.

Furthermore, the mediemen, being residents in the areas, are also direct stakeholders, thus, this makes them conscious of and committed in protecting their environment.

On the ICM project implementer’s side, their conscious

efforts in reaching out to the media played a key role in their partnership. Invitations to the media to attend the environmental activities and the provision of materials or news sources have encouraged the mediemen to report about the initiatives and, as a result, become active players in the environment protection and management themselves.

Also, involving the media in policy making and planning in the ICM committees made them more informed and committed.

This is not to say that media practitioners who are not from the area should not write about the environmental issues. What this point would like to stress is that, given ample exposure and materials, newsmen — even those who are not from the locality — could write or

report factually and intelligently about the issues confronting ICM. This means that if study tours or camps in ICM sites, or forums or briefings are organized, or regular information materials are distributed to mediemen, they can gain better understanding of ICM and be able to write good articles.

PEMSEA’s National Conference on Media

The important role of the media in helping raise the people’s consciousness on coastal and marine issues was shown in PEMSEA’s holding of the National Conference on Media as Key Partners in Environmental Sustainability in Manila on October 23, 2002. The holding of the conference also showed that PEMSEA recognizes the role of the media in its endeavors.

These were highlighted in the conference’s aims, which were to enhance partnerships with the media and other communication practitioners working for environmental sustainability, and to identify ways and mechanisms of strengthening media coverage of environmental issues in the Philippines.

Dr. Chua Thia-Eng, Regional Programme Director of PEMSEA, stressed the role of media when he said: “In the context of environment, sustainable development implies a planned and strategic use of the

communication process and media products to support effective policymaking, public participation and project implementation geared towards environmental sustainability.”

He said the media could serve as “environmental watchdogs” and as “communicators for development.”

Media in the Putrajaya Conference

Recognition of the media’s important role in coastal and marine protection and management was again manifested during the East Asian Seas Congress 2003 in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from December 8 to 12, 2003.

The Congress devoted one session to the topic “Stakeholder Partnerships and the Role of the Media,” where Asian mediamen, stakeholders and environment experts shared their experiences and concerns. Specifically, the mediamen discussed how they help in promoting coastal and marine protection and the problems they encounter in doing so.

Participants presented papers discussing the following topics:

- The Private Sector in Sustainable Coastal Development for Bataan, Philippines
- Building Effective Partnerships in Environmental Communications towards Coastal and Ocean Governance

- The Partnership between the Central Government and Local Governments in Replicating Integrated Coastal Management Efforts in Indonesia
- Mobilizing Youths For Environmental Projects through the Media: The Singapore Experience
- Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Green Community in China
- Raising Awareness on Coastal and Marine Concerns through the Media
- Managing the Marine Resources in the Visayan Sea, Philippines: How to Balance Diverging Interests of the Small-Scale and Industrial Fishing Sector
- Media are Key Partners in Promoting and Implementing Partnerships in Sustainable Development

Mediemen Commit to Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia

Conscious of their role in helping protect the coastal and marine environment, media practitioners in Asia adopted on December 11, 2003, the Putrajaya Statement of Media Commitment on the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA).

The adoption of the statement was the culmination of the Media Forum on Partnerships in Environmental Communication, a side event of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003.

Twenty-four journalists, broadcasters and communicators, representatives of international

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The Batangas Bay Region Environmental Protection Council holds bay tours for the media to make them see personally and familiarize them with the situation in the area.

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Introduction

It would be an understatement to say that media's powerful influence has been exploited in promoting various environmental issues. The environmental theme has popped up in all forms of media—from the mainstream to the non-traditional, a seemingly trendy fixation nowadays perhaps pushed by its severe necessity. Environmental television programs, community radio broadcasts, public service announcements, and print materials have pervaded almost every aspect of our lives. Truly, we are a society not sparse in environmental information.

Adding the Socio-Cultural Dimension in Environmental Communication



Environmental communication is a means to an end, and should involve social institutions such as the family, schools, churches and governments.

The proliferation of “environmental media” throughout recent years mirrors the increasing importance placed on the field of communication, especially in addressing critical matters on a massive scale. Needless to say, this has inadvertently put much of the onus on the process of communication itself. This partly explains why the art of communication has been stretched and twisted in unrecognizable forms in an attempt to somehow extract its full benefits. For instance, the Aggressive Propaganda Approach that was once exclusive to consumer brand marketing has now stealthily

found its way into the environmental arena. And without a doubt, all these emerging “green advertising” make for award-winning campaigns. And why wouldn't they, what with their glossy appeal, catchy taglines, and striking visuals?

Unfortunately, this media-centric, source-oriented, linear form of communication has inundated society with so much information to the point of drowning the very receivers of such information. In our obsession to create brilliant environmental communication campaigns, have we even bothered to find out if anyone is listening?

Try to imagine a simple fisher holding a colorful brochure, half the contents of which he does not understand. Picture him attempting to decipher its meaning while struggling to feed his starving children.

The fundamental question is: Where do we draw the line between an effective environmental communication campaign and a mere waste of money?

The Socio-Cultural Dimension

The exact root cause of environmental problems has long been in debate. Perhaps the most definitive argument we can obtain from past experiences is that environmental problems are brought about by a multitude of other interconnected socio-cultural problems — each one caused by another and vice versa in a seemingly inexorable cycle with no end and no beginning. We cannot simply isolate one problem and turn a blind eye on another. This brings to light the need to look at environmental problems holistically and see the big picture, which basically challenges us to crack the “chicken and the egg” conundrum and trace the threads that lead to environmental problems, such as poverty, corruption, and the lack of education to name a few.

Orchestrating an environmental communication campaign without

Given the socio-cultural context of environmental problems, one of the most effective ways to properly address them is through communication — a basic function of culture itself. If properly utilized, communication can serve as a primary vehicle for sustainable development.

considering the socio-cultural underpinnings of a particular problem would therefore be a futile attempt. The folly of omitting this crucial factor in development programs in general can be likened to mounting a unilateral assault on the target audience — a bombardment of unsolicited information or an invasion of space. This can very well explain why so many development programs fail and why others thrive.

The Challenge of Communication

Given the socio-cultural context of environmental problems, one of the most effective ways to properly address them is through communication — a basic function of culture itself. If properly utilized, communication can serve as a primary vehicle for sustainable development. This largely entails knowing the target audience and understanding where they are coming from, within their socio-cultural context. An extensive research base would be most helpful in this area.

Going back to the simple fisher example, it would be preposterous to design an environmental communication model geared towards him without taking into account his educational level, financial status, and field of interests. It would be like talking to a brick wall. Ultimately, the challenge lies on how to not come out looking like an outsider introducing a totally foreign idea.

Listening to the Audience

Adding the socio-cultural dimension in environmental communication requires tapping the collective psyche of the target audience — and being at the center of their lives — as unobtrusively as possible. In Asia, for instance, the natural world is often associated with spiritual beliefs and religious rituals. Asian’s attitudes on the environment have been molded from one generation to another, creating a rather sacred aura around it. In Bali,

Environmental communication is not an end in itself but only a means to an end. It is a purposive process that does not stop at simply informing the public but persists until tangible actions are taken.

Indonesia, for example, local people adhere to a philosophy they call *Tri Hita Karana*. It is a philosophy that espouses a balance between spiritual, economic and environmental growth. It would thus be wise to work around such principles in the development of environmental communication strategies to avoid trampling on age-old customs and traditions.

In order for a new environmental idea or practice to be embraced by a certain developing community, communication plans should smoothly coalesce with the local inhabitants' stream of consciousness. A veritable method is through indigenous communication. Most developing communities in Asia are abundant in indigenous knowledge which is passed on as local heritage in the form of folk music, literature, puppetry, dance, theater, and oral myths and legends. Infusing environmental messages via indigenous communication is key to achieving acceptance by the target audience because of its capacity to break down seemingly lofty concepts into more digestible realities.

For more modern societies, popular culture is one of the best ways to get people's attention. With the entry of MTV (Music Television), special events, movies, contemporary music, the World Wide Web, and electronic media (cellular phones, personal digital assistants, digital cameras, etc.), today's generation has found a certain level of comfort in massive doses of stimuli. This trend poses both as an opportunity and a threat to environmental communication as it widens communication avenues and at the same time presents more competitors for people's attention. It calls for more discriminating communication tactics to prevent the misinterpretation of messages.

An environmental communication plan that incorporates the socio-cultural dimension should therefore be multi-level and multi-sectoral. It should involve social institutions such as the family, schools, churches, governments, and the private sector, using them as partners in advocating environmental messages. This way, messages become more credible and acceptable.

Involving the Public through Participatory Mechanisms

Environmental communication is not an end in itself but only a means to an end. It is a purposive process that does not stop at simply informing the public but persists until tangible actions are taken. This view revolutionizes the one-sided quality of traditional media into an interactive and dynamic relationship among all those involved in the development process. In this scenario, the source of information may not necessarily come from media alone but from the audiences themselves, creating a participatory atmosphere, which is what the socio-cultural dimension in environmental communication is all about.

Mobilizing the public to take specific actions for the environment can be carried out through the Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) approach. This approach utilizes information to educate a specific audience using a variety of media (TV, radio, print, interpersonal). Science plays a pivotal role in this approach as it provides the core messages and data to be disseminated to the public. IEC is not so much about lecturing the public as it is about empowering them with ample knowledge for them to make their own decisions. It operates under the premise that people can only make intelligent choices if they are adequately informed.



Get the latest news and information on marine and coastal environmental management in the East Asian Seas region online @ www.pemsea.org

The countries in the region included are: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, RO Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Functional information is discussed in the section on the various programme components of PEMSEA:

- integrated coastal management;
- managing subregional sea areas and pollution hotspots;
- capacity building;
- environmental management and investments;
- scientific research;
- integrated information management systems;
- civil society;
- coastal and marine policy; and
- regional mechanism.

Now with more links, the PEMSEA website presents a wider array of references and databases particularly regarding the practice of two environmental management approaches — integrated coastal management, and risk assessment and risk management.

Also, lists of relevant and timely publications and trainings are featured. Plus a lot more.

Another approach is called Social Marketing.

This is actually an offshoot of advertising but instead of marketing a product, it markets ideas and practices. By using creative communication campaigns, this approach primarily aims to promote behavioral change by directly appealing to people's intellects and emotions to eventually spur them into action (social mobilization).

One of the more peripheral approaches is called Development Support Communication (DSC). DSC units serve the communication needs of development programs, providing support to other project components in disseminating technical information in the form of leaflets, brochures, videos, books, and instructional materials. DSC units help development programs touch base with the public and share technical information (made more palatable for general consumption) for appropriate action.

Media for the People and by the People

Through these environmental communication approaches, media is able to fulfill its catalytic role and more importantly, encourage a sense of ownership among communities towards their environmental problems. Stretching this idea even further, this socially dynamic form of communication opens the gates for capacity-building efforts that can lead to actual solutions.

In the end, it can be said that the nature of environmental communication is transformative. It begins with environmental literacy that leads to the formation of environmental ethics, and then to environmental advocacy. But this can only happen if the socio-cultural dimension is added into the equation. Anything less than this is, sad to say, nothing but lip service. ■

Introduction

The East Asia Seas region is the most populous region in the world. It is home to almost 1.8 billion people, 60 percent of whom are concentrated in coastal areas. In the past decade, East Asia has witnessed a considerable economic growth.

Furthermore, globalization of the economy and changes in consumption patterns have had an impact on regional economic growth and also contributed to transboundary environmental concerns, thus emphasizing the interdependence between countries of the region for their economic growth, health of the ecosystem and people. To tackle transboundary environmental concerns, interdependence between countries is inevitable. One of the apparent and important venues for interdependence lies in the field of information and communication whose vital tool is different types of media.

Role of Electronic Media in Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia — Visualizing the Goals

The media is now the all-pervasive phenomenon not only for dissemination of information and ideas, but also in shaping the economic, sociopolitical and developmental outcomes globally, regionally and country-specifically. Of all the media types, electronic media, constituted by television and Internet, proves to be the notably effective one, thanks to its advantage of applying information technology. With its all-in-all and all-to-all communication, electronic media plays an important role in development process in every corner in the world, the Asia-Pacific region included.

- **Sensitizing** all groups of people persuasively via comprehensively presented stories, profiles, and portraits to create public awareness and understanding of coastal and marine environmental management issues and processes.

Ever since 1831 when Joseph Henry and Michael Faraday worked with electromagnetism, which made possible the beginning of the electronic communication era, television has powerfully paved the way to conveying information.

Seeing Is Believing

A colorful moving picture not only can speak thousands of words but also ensure news originality. Normally, what people see imprints in their mind longer and clearer than what they only read or hear. Scenes of children wading in a flooded area, the destruction of mangroves, or the sights featuring coral gardens with numerous colors and subtle movements of water creatures can give more impression than a plain written or spoken expression. The images give a full and detailed description of a thing or process, thus, to some extent, touching hearts easier than the non-image-based messages. The persuasive way of informing increases the possibility of getting a good perception about environmental issues.

Larger than Life

The second point in sensitizing the ability of electronic media, and television in particular, is the conduction of live programs which make the audience feel involved in the events, inspiring their participation in the course of sustaining, preserving,

protecting, developing, implementing and communicating. Moreover, characterized by modern technology, cable and satellite TV, along with home video recorder and other equipment, give viewers more control over their communication environment and, thus, potentially empowers them.

A Wider Audience

The third advantage of sensitizing by television, compared to other types of media, is its higher information accessibility to those who are illiterate, especially indigenous people and marginalized groups in coastal areas, which encourage their participation and ownership of local environment management programs. It is admitted that even for vernacular publications, print media only reaches a minuscule portion of the population, making poor penetration in the Asia-Pacific region.

Meanwhile, the electronic genre has its weight worth in gold with its reach of a much larger population. The media is uniquely endowed with the faculties of ponderousness, critical scrutiny and diversity of views and opinions, and thereby has a longer-lasting imprint on the public mind. Since it made its appearance later than the other types of media, electronic media became the journalistic tool uniquely combining word, sound and picture. The combination of cable television and satellite technologies would make

Sharing coast and sea-related information and lessons among countries and institutions is considered a way to build capacity and learn from the experiences of others. Furthermore, exchanging information means developing new partnerships, new opportunities and new knowledge that can create changes.

possible the creation of a truly excellent system of communication.

- **Promoting** information exchange processes.

The electronic media itself is not a product of a single inventor, instead, many people working together, contributed to the evolution of television and the Internet, with a product connecting people all over the region through satellite and the World Wide Web. Sharing coast and sea-related information and lessons among countries and institutions is considered a way to build capacity and learn from the experiences of others. Furthermore, exchanging information means developing new partnerships, new opportunities and new knowledge that can create changes. The information exchange also creates alternative options, leading to better solutions and a holistic approach as well.

More importantly, to share information is to reach a diversified

unity, or put in other words, turning disparate views into a shared vision. The achievement of a shared vision creates a sub-regional mechanism built to combat transboundary environment threats to regional seas, as well as constructs a master plan for the wise use of the seas' treasures.

- **Providing** the space for debate, discussion and dialogues between communities, experts, leaders, state organizations and NGOs.

The significance of the mass media in initiating and setting the agenda for discourse and debate cannot be undermined. By opening



Internet accessibility. Electronic media is unique in combining word, sound and picture.

More importantly, to share information is to reach a diversified unity, or put in other words, turning disparate views into a shared vision. The achievement of a shared vision creates a sub-regional mechanism built to combat transboundary environment threats to regional seas, as well as constructs a master plan for the wise use of the seas' treasures.

[online] conferences, forums in websites and TV programs, electronic media has become the platform, the facilitator of expressing ideas, opinions, innovations, and practices of all related bodies. Regional and international conferences conducted over television and the Internet are significant methods for shaping policy, formulating cooperative agreements, generating investments, as well as creating training programs, marching integrate management and development, and capacity building. The on-air and on-net [online] conferences also strengthen and extend intergovernmental cooperation in environmental management of regional seas.

- **Disseminating** information regarding all aspects of sea-related issues in the speediest pace while ensuring balance and fairness of information.

The unquestioned widespread effects of electronic media contribute

much in making scientific information available and accessible. This is important to prevent inadequate information from being used to make management decisions, which might lead to environmental management failures. There is a discernible lack of credible scientific opinion and data and a severe lack of institutes that carry out monitoring of environment indicators.

As United States Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover commented on the first long distance use of TV on April 9, 1927, "Human genius has now destroyed the impediment of distance in a new respect, and in a manner hitherto unknown."

It is the media's breaking of limitations when reaching a wider audience that requires a right way of informing. Any distortion or abuse of sound and image effects can simplify or exaggerate rather than

accurately give information. Thus over-sensitizing the issues becomes a danger. In the long run, this creates more harm than good, as viewers are desensitized to the importance of saving a forest or a wetland that is actually on the brink of destruction.

- **Initiating** an e-network in the region

E-commerce and e-government are already geared up but an e-network in the environmental field has not yet gotten appropriate attention. Electronic media, especially the Internet, is a fundamental factor for an electronic environmental network to build a broad coalition for media activism across the Asia-Pacific countries in the regional context.

A regional e-network is essential because: (1.) The network, from its various sources of information that belongs to each country in the region, provides a good database system for environmental management; (2.) The regional linkage between television stations and web sites enhances regional cooperation in integrated implementation of international instruments, enjoining communities in environmental activities; and (3.) An e-network of environmental information with its in-time [real time], seconds up-to-date characteristic is so meaningful in the fast-moving and changing world.

With the e-network, a prompt and proper action and solution can be achieved, contributing to successful

navigation, economic activities, and prevention of ocean-related disturbance.

- **Communicating** with different sectors and establishing communication among them is another role of electronic media in realizing a sustainable development strategy for East Asian seas.

Through its information activities, electronic media acts as mediator between scientists and the public, scientists and policy planners, the public and policy planners at different levels. It can serve as the vehicle for a knowledge base, which helps capacity and awareness building. Together with other types of media, electronic genre builds a bulwark of opinion from the

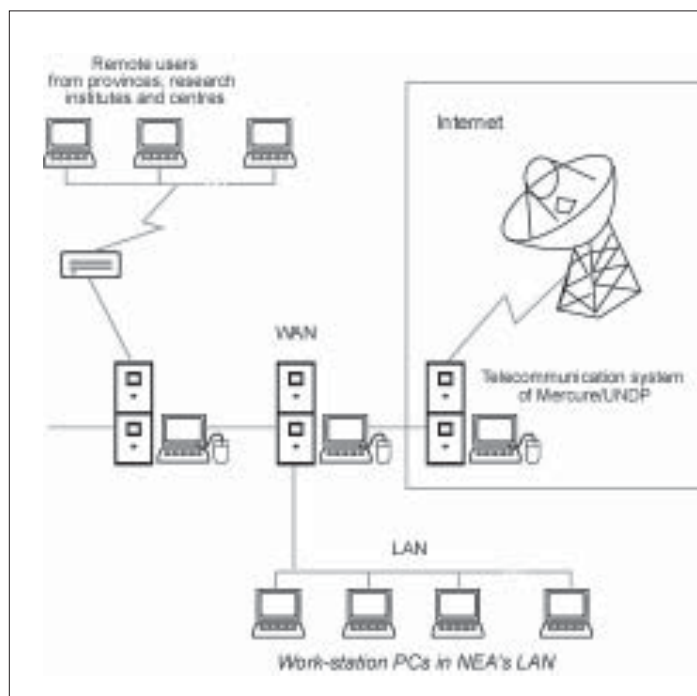
grassroots to the national political level for the latter to have appropriate policies and undertakings on the overarching agenda of sustainable development. What is more, media, not only transfers knowledge, creates policy propaganda, conveys feedback from grassroots, but also develops linkages between stakeholders and

communities in regional nations with a view to enhancing environmental awareness and protection.

With the above roles of electronic media in sustainable development of East Asian seas, there are similarities as well as divergences compared to the other types of media.

Based on these, we could make a media strategy or mechanism which co-ordinates the regional media as a whole, facilitating our execution for our common ultimate objectives. When we link with models, such as the Asia-Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists with its active and effective role in building a good environment management, a media mechanism for environmental management of East Asian seas will be within our reach. The Asia-Pacific electronic media can be the front-runner in propagating and implementing sustainable development, along with other actors — politically, combatively, and autonomously — as a part of the coalition of the countries in the region. ■

Through its information activities, electronic media acts as mediator between scientists and the public, scientists and policy planners, the public and policy planners at different levels. It can serve as the vehicle for a knowledge base, which helps capacity and awareness building.



The diagram above illustrates the Vietnam Environmental Network.

Zarah Jane Almeida
Radio Producer

Mlup Baitong
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Introduction

Tum Or village is one of the many villages in the Sandan District, Tumrieng Commune in the Kompong Thom Province affected by the aggressive forest clearance for rubber plantations in Cambodia. A rubber plantation company has offered three hectares of land to the families affected by the forest and crop field clearance. However, the land offered is infertile for growing crops and the company does not provide any legal documentation or land title, which makes the villagers suspicious of the company's motives.

In the northwest part of the country, villagers living in the floating villages along Tonle Sap Lake are becoming more frustrated because of declining fish stocks, rising fishery conflicts and lack of resolution. A small-time fisherman in Path Sanday District in Pursat Province said that some of the villagers are taking the matter into their hands, sometimes causing violent confrontations among the villagers, local authorities and commercial fishing lot-owners.

The *Mlup Baitong* Experience: Raising Environmental Awareness and Advocacy through Media in Cambodia

In Cambodia today, environmental issues are of increasing importance. Natural resources are at the base of the country's wealth, and these include the dense forests of the northeast and southwest, gem stones, fertile valleys and abundant fisheries from the great Tonle Sap Lake and Mekong River. These resources are under severe pressure and may face imminent destruction. While the people have used most of the resources sustainably for centuries, population growth, migration, and various economic pressures are forcing people to lose control of the resources on which they have depended.

Over the past six years, *Mlup Baitong* (Green Shade), a local environment NGO in Cambodia, has been working to strengthen the communities' rights to manage natural resources sustainably and to advocate for environment conservation and equitable development, through different

projects that offer alternative environment-friendly sources of income.

To complement its work, *Mlup Baitong* has set-up an Environment Radio Program by building environmental issue awareness among the wider population in Cambodia and advocating for communities' rights to natural resources. The viewpoints of the villagers are the integral part of the program broadcasts, which work to bridge the communication gap between rural villagers and government decision-makers and influence adoption of more appropriate policies. Considering the high illiteracy rate in Cambodia, *Mlup Baitong's* Environment Radio Program introduced the environmental issues as simple and as straightforward as possible. The program also explores how the people cope with change or injustice in the environment.

"It is good that we can listen on the radio about what is happening around our country," a villager from

Tumrieng Commune relates. “We learn about our environment and our rights.”

Sitting on a bamboo bed and hunched around a small transistor radio, he and his family listen to the familiar sound of Mlup Baitong’s radio jingle... *“Kamvite somleng neak phum sdei ampie pakrithan...”* (Voices from the Villages on Environment)...

Environment Situation in Cambodia

Cambodia, or Kampuchea, as it is called in the Khmer language, covers 68,898 sq m (181,035 sq km). The country has an estimated population of 12 million, where rural households account for nearly 90 percent of the country’s poor. Cambodia is home to Angkor Wat, considered one of the Wonders of the Modern World and the source of great cultural and national pride among the Cambodians.¹

Cambodia has rich and diverse natural resources. Despite over two decades of internal war and conflicts, the country still possesses vast natural resources worthy of conservation. Containing some of the last remaining patches of lowland tropical rainforests in Southeast Asia, Cambodia is refuge to a huge diversity of plants and animals of regional and global significance. Its dense forests house

The viewpoints of the villagers are the integral part of the program broadcasts, which work to bridge the communication gap between rural villagers and government decision-makers and influence adoption of more appropriate policies.

a diverse forest cover and constitute valuable resources of timber and non-timber forest products (rattan, bamboo, rubber, palm oil, fruit crops, medicinal plants), gems and fertile valleys. Timber is Cambodia’s most valuable resource, with potentially about 500,000 cubic meters maximum annual sustainable yield.²

Cambodia was the first country in Southeast Asia to establish a national park in 1925, when the

10,800 hectares forest around the Angkor Wat complex was declared a protected area. Today, owing to King Norodom Sihanouk’s Royal Decree in 1993, some 18.33 percent of the country’s total land area, or 3.3 million hectares, are designated protected areas. These include ten wildlife sanctuaries, seven national parks, three protected landscapes and three multiple-use areas. The country is also blessed with one of the most productive freshwater



Mlup Baitong

Field interviews are an integral part of program broadcasts, enabling stakeholders to voice their concerns on issues directly affecting them.



Mlup Baitong

A staff of Mlup Baitong sets up a microphone in preparation for the day's program.

fisheries in the world. Its main geographical features, the Mekong River and the Tonle Sap Lake, together with the flood plains, flooded forests and wetlands, house about 1,200 species of fish³.

A unique hydrological pattern exists between the Mekong River and Tonle Sap Lake. During the rainy season, the Mekong River backs up and flows into the Tonle Sap Lake, causing the lake to swell up to four times its original size. This seasonal movement of huge volumes of water triggers the breeding, feeding and migration of multitudes of fish and aquatic resources. As such, it supports one of the most productive fisheries in the world, with annual fish catch of 300,000 to 400,000 tons³, and directly provides livelihood and a protein source to millions of Cambodians. However, decades of civil conflicts have eroded basic knowledge of the environment. This plus the growing economic pressures brought about by the return of political stability, mean the country is witnessing major changes in terms of both economic and development resource use.

Land, water, fish and forest are at the core of the lives of the Cambodians. In Cambodia, access and rights to natural resources are the basis of a secure livelihood and guarantee a quality of life for rural communities. Yet, as in many developing nations, economic pressure is changing the way natural resources are viewed and used.

Today, Cambodia faces serious environmental threats. Since the 1990s, the increasing population, the trend towards a market-based economy, and a host of other socioeconomic factors have opened up the country's resources for exploitation. Precious natural resources are rapidly being degraded and destroyed.

Even with the sustainable use of most resources, economic pressures are forcing many people to lose control of the resources they depend on. Land distribution is becoming increasingly inequitable, and land disputes, which are sometimes violent, for access to both forests and fishing areas, are increasing.

Forests continue to disappear at an alarming rate despite a logging moratorium, fisheries have severely diminished, destructive mining practices continue, and toxic wastes and pollution increase, while laws and its enforcement are clearly weak and inadequate.

Privatization of fishing and forest resources create more pressure on local communities and remaining natural resources. As the population growth rate increases by 2.5 percent annually³, impoverished communities struggle to survive on diminishing resources. The development of dams in the Mekong River and its tributaries has a negative impact, not only in nearby communities due to the flooding of large tracts of land, but will also affect the Great Tonle Sap Lake and Mekong River System in Cambodia, which is the basis of food security for 90 percent of the population. The state laws are weak and inadequate for protecting the rights and ensuring access to land and natural resources for most Cambodians.

While natural resource issues are taking on more and more importance in Cambodia, local people, especially those in the countryside whose lives depend on their environment, have very little awareness of these issues and their rights to natural resources. More often than not, the people who are most dependent on their environment are the ones who have the least participation in policy and decision-making.

As Cambodia enters a new phase of peace in the new millennium, it is more important than ever to raise environmental issues and encourage Cambodians to seek sustainable and equitable development.

Media and Advocacy in Cambodia

The influence of the NGO sector and the international community has promoted the growth of civil society and has created a relatively large degree of press freedom in Cambodia. There is a fair amount of media coverage for environmental issues, but most of it is in the print media, and is only accessible to the literate, urban population. Among the wider population, general knowledge on environmental issues is limited, and therefore, remains insignificant in the minds of Cambodians.

Advocacy is a new concept in Cambodia. A few years ago there was no term in the Khmer language to describe the concept of advocacy. In Cambodia's NGO history, development agencies began with emergency and relief activities and eventually made the transition to a sustainable development focus. Human rights organizations were some of the first organizations identified with advocacy activities because they began to conduct human rights education activities, monitored and reported violations, and defended clients in the early 1990s. It was not until the late 1990s that the majority of local development organizations began to understand the meaning and importance of advocacy for long-term sustainable development.⁴

Because of its perceived economic value, Cambodia's rich and

Building environmental awareness is an important foundation of Mlup Baitong's work and an essential step to long-term environment protection. Mlup Baitong has set up an Environment Radio and Advocacy Program based on the belief that media programs can help increase knowledge of issues and inspire people to action.

diverse natural resources have proved to be sources of conflicts between individuals and groups competing for resource access. Many advocacy activities have been reactive to conflicts arising from the local level, as is the case with forestry, fisheries and land issues. Other campaigns have been proactive, addressing broader issues that affect the general population and do not arise from widespread conflict, such as women's and children's rights campaigns.

The growth of NGOs and the open environment in which the government allows them to operate are distinct advantages for advocates in Cambodia.⁴

Mlup Baitong's Role

Advocacy strategists in Cambodia identified media as one effective tool to raise public awareness of environment issues and to pressure decision-makers. Civil society organizations and NGOs are using a



Mlup Baitong

This particular radio show offers open discussion on forestry concerns. Mlup Baitong's Environment Radio Program introduces environmental issues as straightforward as possible.

Mlup Baitong produces programs about the rights of communities and urges them to be involved in advocacy activities, to negotiate for themselves and build more empowered local communities.

variety of media strategies. A few NGOs, like Mlup Baitong, produce radio programs. Others use common strategies, like the distribution of press releases and radio and television spots, as ways to get the message to the public.

Other techniques utilized by NGOs that involves the media include establishing relations and the invitation of print and broadcast journalists at events and conferences, etc. Others who have ample budgets employ more sophisticated strategies such as training reporters on sector-related issues, taking them on field trips to learn and witness environmental issues, producing live concerts with popular local singers, actors and actresses, and setting-up of Internet websites.

There is a growing number of non-traditional media professionals in Cambodia today, and they come from NGOs like Mlup Baitong. Building environmental awareness is an important foundation of Mlup Baitong's work and an essential step to long-term environment protection. Mlup Baitong has set up an Environment Radio and Advocacy Program based on the belief that media programs can help increase knowledge of issues and inspire people to action.

The Environment Radio Program is the first of its kind in Cambodia. Depending on the topic, the 15-minute program also incorporates several elements, such as short drama, interviews or "man-on-the street interviews," etc. Short dramas explore how local people cope with change or injustice in the environment, and listeners tend to identify easily with the characters. The program is broadcast twice a week, free of charge for Mlup Baitong, over 102 FM, which is run by the NGO Women's Media Center (WMC). WMC reaches 75 percent of Cambodia's population, covering 10 provinces and a municipality.

The program is also broadcasted on one commercial radio station, which reaches 80 percent of the population.

After the national broadcast, the program is re-edited and distributed to 18 pagodas that are beneficiaries of Mlup Baitong in the provinces of Kompong Speu and Kompong Thom. Along with the cassette tapes are discussion points to allow monks and villagers to discuss. The radio program complements Mlup Baitong's Buddhism and Environment Program by building the monks'

awareness of environmental issues. In Cambodia, pagodas or *wats*, are the physical and spiritual centers of most rural villages, and the Buddhist philosophy supports the conservation of the environment and the idea of living in harmony with nature. Monks, regarded as spiritual counselors, help spread environmental awareness and conservation ideas in the community. For greater access, the program materials are also uploaded to Mlup Baitong's website.

In conjunction with the information dissemination component of the radio program, Mlup Baitong embarked on advocacy work using the media, focusing on land and forest resource issues. Mlup Baitong collaborates with other NGOs to raise awareness on these issues by providing information on land rights to rural communities. Mlup Baitong produces programs about the rights of communities and urges them to be involved in advocacy activities, to negotiate for themselves and build more empowered local communities. One example of a community initiating an advocacy activity took place in June last year when villagers in Chambok Commune, Kompong Speu Province celebrated Environment Day with a parade, quiz show, speeches, tree planting, comedy show and dancing. This village-based initiative attracted national media attention and highlighted the villagers' efforts in advocating for rights to community forestry and the sustainable use of resources.

The ever-advancing information technology allowed Mlup Baitong to get

feedback from people and share their knowledge and opinions via email, SMS (text messages) and a free-dial number service (toll-free number) provided by a telecommunications company. Aside from these, Mlup Baitong relies on mails and the telephone for audience participation. Since most of the rural people cannot read nor write, Mlup Baitong usually receives calls from the toll-free number. More literate people send SMS or emails.

In 2003, Mlup Baitong started a one-hour, once-a-month live talk show where invited resource speakers interact with the presenters and listeners through the toll-free number provided by a telephone company. With barely a year of broadcast, the live talk show already has a loyal following. Through the monthly episodes (with topics ranging from land and forestry, wildlife and fishery, the use of non-violence in resolving natural resources conflicts) the program has enabled listeners to make sense of the issues affecting them. Through this program, the issues are brought to a wider audience. People with similar problems in various parts of the country were inspired to express their opinions on environmental issues affecting their lives through the toll-free number, and at the same time through the program, which both aim to build their confidence to stand up for their environmental rights. While the 15-minute radio program increases understanding of the environment, the live talk show takes



Mlup Baitong

A female talent does a voice-over recording.

on a more active step by bringing together the major players — from government to NGOs, private companies and local people — in one program to scrutinize the issue and come up with a conclusion that can be drawn from the issues. Some government and NGO staff commend this move affirming that the program, as an advocacy tool, stimulates public discussion between the government and civil society. But others predict a short life for the program, just like many other programs produced by other NGOs before, because of the Government's sensitivity to public debates.

Supported and working alongside with the NGO Forum Environment Working Group, Star Kampuchea Network, Community Forestry Network in Cambodia and other NGOs, Mlup Baitong staff go to the provinces in search of the people's voices and opinions that make-up the program, for story inputs and references and to ensure that the information is precise and relevant. Mlup Baitong also visits the offices of relevant government ministries to get their side of the story. Mlup Baitong's radio program stays clear of any political party issues.

Mlup Baitong also conducts an in-house survey twice a year to determine

the level of program and environment awareness. Respondents were asked about what they liked and learned most from the radio program. Most of the respondents liked the program, which they say is very informative and presented in an interesting way. Listeners also say that the radio program can help educate them about various environment issues in Cambodia and what their Government is doing. Further, it will help them adopt a more positive and caring attitude towards the environment. Still, Mlup Baitong needs to do a more thorough evaluation of the program's impact and effectiveness to strategize and re-format the program according to the needs of the listeners.

Next year, Mlup Baitong is aiming to expand the broadcast to provincial stations in the countryside to bring the program closer to the majority of the rural population. ■

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Putrajaya Declaration of for the Sustainable Seas of East Asia

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA — “An epoch-making event.” This is how Hon. Hayao Hora, Vice-Minister for Transport and International Affairs of Japan described the adoption of the Putrajaya Declaration of Regional Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia during the Ministerial Forum on the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia, held on 12 December 2003. The Declaration’s adoption now paves the way for a strategic regional approach in developing and managing coastal and marine resources in the region.

Top-level policy makers from 12 East Asian countries participated in the Ministerial Forum and discussed the state of the region’s environment and natural resources, the sustainable development of coasts and oceans, and agreed on a common framework of actions for the East Asian Seas known as the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA) -- adopted with the signing of the Putrajaya Declaration.

The Ministerial Forum was part of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003, held on 8-12 December in Putrajaya, Malaysia. The Congress was co-organized by PEMSEA and Department of Environment Malaysia.

Through the Declaration, the twelve countries — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, P.R. China, D.P.R. Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, R.O. Korea, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam — adopted the SDS-SEA, and firmly pledged to commit to regional cooperation and collaboration.

A document initiated and prepared by PEMSEA, in consultation with 12 participating Governments and other stakeholders of the Seas of East Asia, the SDS-SEA provides a common platform for regional cooperation and a framework for policy and programme development and implementation, at the national and local level. The SDS-SEA also provides flexibility in that it will be implemented on a voluntary basis, where deemed appropriate by each of the twelve countries in the region. The Declaration and the SDS-SEA are significant in that they represent the first regional response to the plan of implementation adopted by the World Summit for Sustainable Development in East Asia.



of Regional Cooperation Development of the East Asia



The SDS-SEA is a package of applicable principles, action programs, approaches and instruments for achieving sustainable development for the Seas of East Asia. It represents implementation approaches for the integrated management and sustainable use of the environment and resources by:

- Creating regional partnerships among government agencies, non-government organizations, private sector and other stakeholders;
- Enabling concerned organizations operating in the region at all levels to promote synergistic and cumulative impacts of their efforts and expertise for the benefits of the countries involved and other stakeholders;
- Providing the countries and other stakeholders with a set of guidelines, references and examples for assisting in their development of strategies, policies and implementation plans in order to address specific national, local and sectoral needs;
- Offering a set of operational approaches and measures for sustainable coastal and marine development that have been proven suitable and effective in the region;
- Facilitating the sharing and transfer of experiences, knowledge, technology and techniques, as well as mutual assistance among countries; and
- Facilitating the flow of support and assistance from interested financing institutions and donor agencies, and the creation of self-sustaining financing mechanisms and investment opportunities for sustainable coastal and marine development.

The SDS-SEA is a product of a long and comprehensive consultation and approval process that has stimulated debates and built up general consensus and partnerships among various policy makers, natural resource and environment managers, the academe, private sector, civil society, international agencies, intergovernmental financial institutions and all those who care for the coastal and marine environment and believe in sustainable development.

Putrajaya Declaration of Regional Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia

We, Ministers from 12 coastal States of the East Asian region, have gathered this day in Putrajaya to discuss policies and actions for achieving sustainable development of the Seas of East Asia.

The vast resources in our coastal waters and oceans are a priceless and unique feature of our region. Collectively, we are the caretakers of what is recognized as the world center for marine biodiversity. These natural assets are our food supply, a source of employment and livelihood, a medium for transportation, and a living web that links and influences social, cultural and economic behavior in our everyday lives. Our coastal and marine resources are more than natural commodities. They are part of our history, and a safeguard to economic prosperity and peaceful and harmonious co-existence for present and future generations.

Unfortunately, the quality of this natural heritage continues to be eroded, as indicated by the ongoing degradation and destruction of habitats, diminishing fisheries, pollution of coastal waters, red tide occurrences, invasive alien species, and general loss of biodiversity. Progress across the region in overcoming these common environmental problems has been slow relative to economic growth and development, despite the significant individual and collaborative efforts of national governments, international agencies, regional institutions and donor organizations. These problems will remain, unless national capabilities to meet sustainable development requirements can be significantly enhanced.

Over the past 20 years, the governments and other stakeholders have made considerable efforts to address social, economic and environmental concerns within their national jurisdictions. There is a need to step up cooperative efforts amongst the countries of the region to tackle transboundary environmental and resource concerns.

Although multilateral environmental agreements have attempted to address these problems, there is a marked disparity among countries of the region in their capacity to respond to the challenges to sustainable development and to implement the relevant international conventions. The single-sector or single-issue approach, which is not uncommon in international instruments, has also failed to consider the interconnectivity among economic sectors, ecosystems, social development and sustainable use of marine and coastal resources. As a consequence, the overall benefits to be derived from multilateral environmental agreements have not been fully captured in national development policies and implementation programmes.

The World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg in August 2002, called all nations' attention to the challenges and inter-linkages between sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Participating countries adopted forward-looking Implementation Plans with specific commitments for water and sanitation, efficient use of energy, human health protection, agriculture, biodiversity and ecosystem management. Achieving WSSD development targets underscores the need to adopt a new paradigm of regional cooperation for addressing transboundary issues of common concerns — integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of the problem into a comprehensive development framework. The new paradigm framework shall be developed through stakeholder partnership arrangements and appropriate policy directions for regional cooperation in promoting sustainable coastal and marine development, including the uses of living and non-living resources, maritime transport, tourism and others. While the role of national policies and development strategies is of paramount importance to facilitate sustainable development, it is recognized that domestic economies are now interwoven with regional and global economic systems. Therefore national policies and programmes of actions for sustainable coastal and marine uses should, where deemed appropriate by the individual East Asian countries, with due regard for national policy objectives, development goals, national and local circumstances, capabilities and available resources, be aligned to the global efforts as embodied in the relevant international conventions and agreements.

The emergence of the East Asia economic realignment offers new opportunities for cooperation among countries of the region, geared to achieving prosperity and a better future through individual efforts combined with vigorous multilateral action. In a common pursuit of national economic growth and regional competitiveness, our countries face a critical challenge to enhance the efficacy, coherence and consistency of national development policies and strategies for sustainable use of natural resources. In addition, we need to create, step by step, an enabling domestic environment that encourages partnerships, investment, capacity building, and information and knowledge sharing among our governments, as well as across levels of government and sectors of society.

From this perspective, we embarked jointly on the formulation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA).

The SDS-SEA addresses, amongst others, key concerns of our coasts and oceans, providing a platform for cooperation at the regional, subregional, national and local levels, and for intergovernmental, interagency and intersectoral collaboration on:

- WSSD targets for sustainable development;
- Implementation of integrated ocean and coastal management approaches; and
- Action programs aimed at solving problems and deficiencies in ocean and coastal governance.

At the same time, the SDS-SEA facilitates synergistic actions to:

- Enhance maritime safety and protection of the marine environment from pollution and environmental damage caused by ships, including the introduction of invasive alien

species, and oil and chemical pollution preparedness and response, through capacity-building, application of the Voluntary International Maritime Organization (IMO) Member States' Audit Scheme, and the implementation of IMO conventions and other agreements, such as the Tokyo Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Port State Control;

- Protect the coastal and marine environment from land-based sources of pollution through the implementation of the Global Programme of Action (GPA) and the Montreal Declaration, with special emphasis on municipal wastewater, the physical alteration and destruction of habitats and nutrients through efforts at all levels;
- Significantly reduce the loss of marine biodiversity and maintain the productivity and biodiversity of coastal and marine ecosystems, species and genetic resources through the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Jakarta Mandate and other existing international conventions and programs of action; and
- Ensure that fish stocks are maintained or restored to levels that can sustainably support present and future generations through the application of the integrated coastal management (ICM) approach, ecosystem management, marine protected area designation and implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and other Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Law of the Sea instruments including measures against unsustainable fisheries practices.

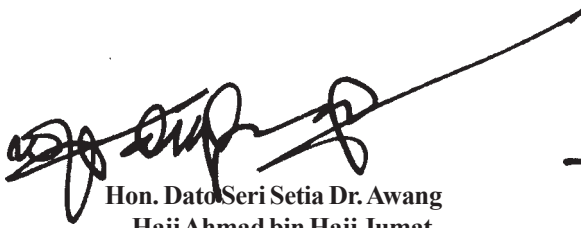
The SDS-SEA provides a strategic approach to developing and managing marine and coastal resources in a sustainable manner, with utmost consideration to the different uses, perceptions of value, and priorities that national governments and other stakeholders place on

such resources. By employing integrated approaches to more effectively implement international conventions, the SDS-SEA aims to harness resources and strengthen synergies and linkages in capacity building and to mobilize all stakeholders – including government agencies, international organizations, donors, financial institutions, the private sector, non-government organizations (NGOs), scientists, academe, communities and other members of civil society — to discharge their social responsibilities and actively contribute to sustainable development programmes. At the local level, the SDS-SEA provides directions and approaches for the authorities and stakeholders to act on and resolve local environmental and natural resource issues that have national, regional and global significance, to identify and promote opportunities for environmental investments, and to facilitate sustainable financing options.

We recognize the benefits of working together, and firmly commit ourselves to regional cooperation and collaboration. To this end, we agree to adopt the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia as a common platform for regional cooperation, and as a framework for policy and programme development and implementation, at the national and local level, on a voluntary basis, where deemed appropriate by each concerned individual state within the East Asian region, without imposing legal obligations or prohibitions.

We thank Malaysia for her hospitality and tremendous efforts in making our Forum a success.

Adopted at the East Asian Seas Congress 2003, Putrajaya, 12 December 2003, in the English language.



**Hon. Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang
Haji Ahmad bin Haji Jumat**
Minister of Development
Brunei Darussalam



Hon. Dato 'Seri Law Hieng Ding
Minister of Science, Technology
and the Environment
Malaysia



H.E. Dr. Mok Mareth
Minister for the Environment
Cambodia



Hon. Elisea G. Gozun
Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources
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Hon. Wang Shuguang
Administrator
State Oceanic Administration
The People's Republic of China



Hon. Chang, Seung-Woo
Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
Republic of Korea



Hon. Chae Tu Yong
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Hon. Dr. Pham Khoi Nguyen
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Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
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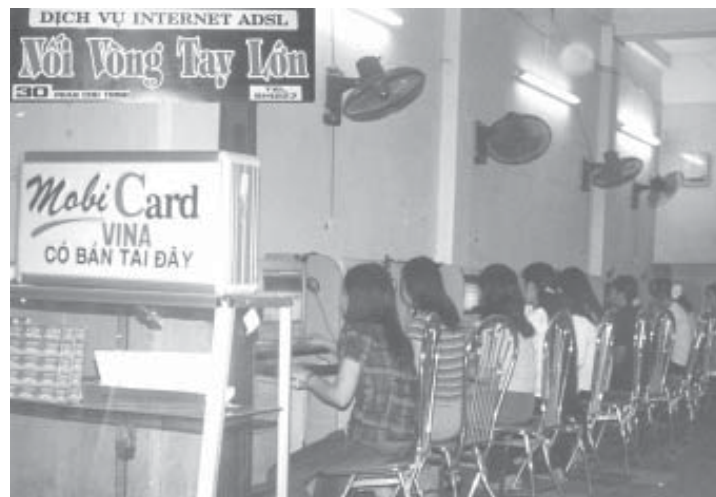
Introduction

Young people are considered all over the world as “the hope of the nation,” “tomorrow’s people,” and “the new generation.” Most countries, developed and developing alike, look upon their young people as their most precious resource.

Asia, for centuries, has been highly regarded all over the world not only for its rich and diverse cultures, but also for its enormous natural resources and vast marine heritage. About 30 percent of the world’s coral reefs, one-third of the world’s mangroves as well as many other important critical habitats are found in the region. The region comprises the world’s richest biodiversity.

In recent years, international conservation groups, due to a mixture of concerns and challenges that endanger Asia’s natural heritage, have raised various concerns.

Connecting Young Environmentalists: Riding the Waves of Information Technology into a Sustainable Environment



At around 7pm one Friday in Vietnam, teenagers gather inside an Internet café in the UNESCO Cultural Heritage-enlisted ancient town of Hoi An.

In this critical time, could Asia’s most precious resource take an active role in ensuring the sustainability of its legacy for more generations to come?

Profile of Today’s Youth: Tech-Savvy Generation

The sight of teenagers toting mobile phones, sitting in front of a personal computer (PC), playing

computer games, or surfing cyberspace, has become very common these days.

An America Online, Inc (AOL) survey in 2002 revealed that the Internet is the primary communication tool for teenagers in the United States. The younger age group use the Internet for e-mail and instant messaging, while older teens go online to listen and download music and search for travel information.

In United Kingdom, according to BBC Online Network, children know more about the Internet than they do about books. This was based on a study conducted by NOP Research Group in behalf of MSN.co.uk. Other interesting findings were:

- Six out of ten children in UK know that a homepage is the front page of a website, whereas only nine percent could explain what a preface to a book is.
- Nearly 60 percent of kids in the UK could identify a hard drive as part of a computer, but only 30 percent knew that a hardback is a type of book.
- Seventy percent of the children knew that WWW stands for World Wide Web, but less than 25 percent knew that RSVP means to reply to an invitation.

Similarly in Asia, recent studies initiated by various groups showed that its young people seem to have adapted astonishingly well to the global trend of young people's increasing interest in advance technology and communication gadgets.

In Hong Kong, the Internet has trounced television to become the most accessed medium among teenage boys, based on a research from NFO WorldGroup in 2002. The survey of 500 teenage boys revealed that they use 34 percent of their free time surfing the Internet.

In another research conducted in Bangkok, Thailand entitled "Study of Youth in the Asia-Pacific Region, New

Similarly in Asia, recent studies initiated by various groups showed that its young people seem to have adapted astonishingly well to the global trend of young people's increasing interest in advance technology and communication gadgets.

Generasians 2000" commissioned by Cartoon Network and sponsored by Optimum Media Direct, owning a mobile phone and PC, and surfing the Internet are some of the most important goals for young people in Bangkok. Thai teens rated "using a computer" as the most popular craze of their generation. The survey results are significantly 10 times greater than the results of a similar survey in 1998. This group of young people claimed to have used the Internet mainly for chat and information surfing.

Like peers in other Asian countries, Filipino children from three main cities — Davao, Cebu and Metro Manila — have also been found to be very savvy with various forms of technology. Filipino children are becoming increasingly familiar with mobile phones.

The survey titled "New Generations Philippines 2004," commissioned by the Cartoon Network, revealed that the Filipino youth is not only tech-savvy, but kids as young as seven years have well-established perspectives on things.

A larger percentage of young people accessing advance mobile and Internet technology in Asia may be counted among some of the highest Internet users in the world – Republic of Korea, Japan and China.

The profile of the Asian youth has changed dramatically over the last decade. The youth of Asia now have greater access to the information boom and are definitely globally integrated.

Connecting Young People for a Cause

With more young people accessing cyberspace almost every day, it is inevitable to say that the Internet has created a big wave that makes it fast becoming a part of the youth's lifestyle all over the world. The Internet influences the way the youth see life.

Because of this, many organizations have invested time and effort, and others have recently started

How teenage boys in Hong Kong spend their free time



Surfing the Internet is fast rising as one of the most popular activities for the youth in Asia based on a survey conducted by NFO WorldGroup to 500 teenage boys in Hong Kong in 2002.

With more young people accessing cyberspace almost every day, it is inevitable to say that the Internet has created a big wave that makes it fast becoming a part of the youth's lifestyle all over the world. The Internet influences the way the youth see life.

to venture in online projects aimed at tapping the potential of the youth and encouraging their active participation in undertakings that are globally significant.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), an arm of the United Nations that works for children's rights, their survival, development and protection, guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, promotes its advocacy through its website (www.unicef.org). UNICEF's website consists of different sections designed specifically for its major market—development professionals, job seekers, journalists, suppliers, teachers and students, and the youth. Its youth section, "Voices of Youth," highlights prevailing issues and concerns affecting the youth sector around the globe and involves them in addressing these through information empowerment and active participation in countless ways.

Global environmental organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have developed special websites for the youth. The UNEP website (www.unep.org/children_youth/index.htm) features information materials that can make young visitors become more aware of the state of the

environment and encourage them to work for its preservation and conservation.

Regional programmes alike recognize the vital role of the youth in protecting the environment. The GEF/UNDP/IMO Partnerships for Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) is keen on its commitment to develop and connect young environmentalists in the East Asian Seas with the PEMSEA website's section for young environmentalists called YE Hub (<http://way.to/yehub>). YE Hub highlights basic environmental principles and good practices for the environment, as well as facts and figures on the rich marine heritage of the East Asian Seas. It also includes an interactive interface designed to foster dynamic communication among young environmentalists in the region.

Here are some visit-worthy websites for the youth, among many others present online, that will educate not only the young but adult visitors as well.

www.nationalgeographic.com/kids

An online supplement to the *National Geographic Kids* magazine, it contains very informative tidbits,

interesting stories and interactive games about the Earth presented in a colorful and very dynamic manner that both kids and adults would find very educational and entertaining.

www.aseanyouth.org

Youth@ASEAN contains information on each ASEAN member country such as country profiles, a familiarization on its people and culture, youth focal point in every country and other youth-related information.

www.globalresponse.org/kidsactions.php

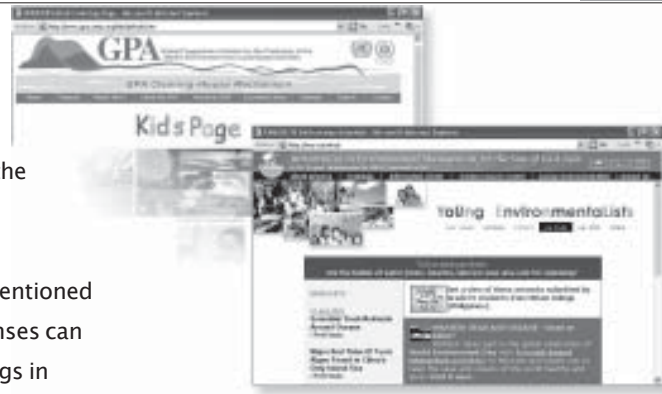
Global Response Kids

Global Response is a non-profit organization in the United States that works on the promotion campaigns requested by local grassroots groups from 93 countries who feel that an international campaign is necessary to get the attention of decision-makers. Global Response Kids was created due to a significant number of letters coming from teens and children who learn about environmental issues and are motivated to take action. Global Response encourages young people to voice out their concerns for the environment.

www.ausmepa.org.au

Australia: 'The Ocean Continent'

The Australian Marine Environment Protection Association (AUSMEPA) is a non-profit organization that aims to inspire students of all ages to engage in education and actions that will raise the awareness for our marine environment. AUSMEPA aims to work together with other marine education and maritime groups to protect the precious Australian marine environment.



Conclusion

Youth websites with various objectives get positive response from young people all over the world, a positive indication that the information superhighway has become a good channel in these modern times for connecting young people for a cause.

The big challenge for development organizations lies in making youth websites reach its market. Equal effort should be poured to both website planning and development, and promotion and community establishment. It may be necessary to involve schools, youth leaders and youth organizations, and to build tie-ups with related organizations that have programmes for the youth sector. It may take more time and effort at this point as the youth's focus at the moment is so diverse. But there are indicators of future success as several young people

have already started to heed the environment's plea online.

Among the websites mentioned in this article, youth's responses can be seen through their postings in discussion boards, ticks on poll surveys and contributions of literary and art works. Several artworks posted in YE Hub's Colors were contributed by primary students of Miriam College in the Philippines. Messages from young people expressing interests in participating at environmental projects can only be seen through PEMSEA website's Guestbook (<http://pemsea.org>). Exchanges of viewpoints among young people in different regions on various global issues are made through the Voices of Youth: Speak Out webpage.

Global Response, in its report on Victories for the Environment, noted the contribution of nine-year-old Amy Ryan as one of the reasons for its success. Amy Ryan said: *"I enjoy writing letters to protect the environment because it makes me feel good inside. I know that I cannot make all the difference in the world by myself, but one person can definitely help change things for the better."*

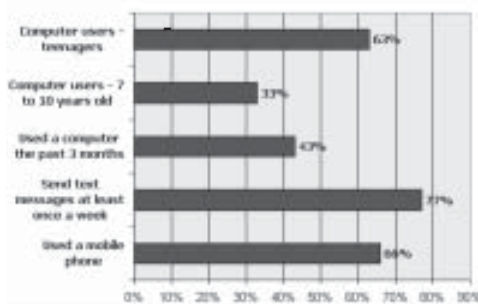
Amidst all the changes technological advancement has brought the new generation, children's optimistic outlook in life has not changed much, as shown in the surveys conducted by UNICEF for children in Asia and the Pacific. Children of today believe that their life will be much better in the future.

Youth websites such as those from UNEP-GPA and PEMSEA offer information on the state of the environment and encourage young environmentalists.

Yes, it is possible. Young people, not only in Asia, but all over the world, may still be our best hope for the future. At the moment it may only take a fusion of positive youthfulness, connectivity using modern technology and a foundation of experiences and steady direction.

We are connected in this enormous world by one vast sea, in the same light that our young people are globally connected now by information technology. And we can all be connected, by our single hope for sustainability and existence to the future. ■

Tech Savvy Profile of the Filipino Youth



The Filipino youth starts becoming tech-savvy at ages as early as seven years based on the results of the survey "New Generations Philippines 2004" commissioned by the Cartoon Network.

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Elizabeth C. Roxas
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Introduction

Partnership has been identified as a complementing mechanism of building a more solid foundation and a stronger force of action in achieving sustainable development, particularly the important linkages between economic and social development and the very passionate issue of environmental protection and conservation of natural resources. Though government bears the primary responsibility of making sure that a higher political commitment is in place, we cannot discount the fact that the civil society groups as well as the business sector play a very critical and crucial role. As partners, the three pillars of sustainable development (government, the private sector and civil society) working together will ensure greater level of implementation at the local, national and regional levels as agreed upon in various international instruments.

Sustainable Development and the Multiplicity of Media

Surprisingly though, media as one major stakeholder and partner is present in all the three pillars. We have a *government media* whose main responsibility is to disseminate information about the good projects and activities undertaken by the government. Then we have the *commercial or the mainstream media* supported by business advertisers and sponsors as well as owners. And lastly, we have an *alternative media*, which is more people-based or community-based but lacks the resources to reach and be more accessible to a larger number of people.

Having said so, we know already how these three forms or kinds of media operate.

Given that scenario, however, still we know that media in all its forms and sizes, kinds and representations, classifications — reach a multiple and varied kind of audience, hence, its Multiplicity.

More than a decade after the very historical 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where governments agreed that the

protection of the environment and social and economic development are fundamental to sustainable development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002, assessed and recognized the failure to meet such expectations and agreements as environmental degradation continued, poverty seriously deepened, and globalization accelerated in an overwhelming rate leaving behind the great majority of the people of the world to partake a share of its benefits.

WSSD however, was able to produce a Plan of Implementation designed to turn goals and promises, as well as the commitments of Agenda 21, into concrete and tangible actions, where time-bound targets and goals were put into place, new issues into a sharper focus, needs of small island developing states and Africa specifically addressed and voluntary partnership initiatives complemented internationally-agreed commitments. More importantly, WSSD also declared and supported the community-based approach to sustainable development. With the presence of more than 22,000 people including about 4,000

members of the media, WSSD may somehow bring about the needed change to make things happen — a kind of development that will take into consideration the economic, social and environmental considerations and dimensions.

Multi-stakeholder Participation

Media, being a very potent partner and agent of change to translate the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation into real action where people can relate and identify themselves, is a key to make things really happen. As this is a general call to action, the roles of all stakeholders should be explicitly and implicitly identified and explained so there would be no misrepresentation and misinterpretation of information and that the real meaning, objectives, causes, effects and impacts of sustainable development will be a matter of importance for all.



The multiplicity of the media enables it to communicate and disseminate information in a more laymanized and passionate manner.

Media, being a very potent partner and agent of change to translate the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation into real action where people can relate and identify themselves, is a key to make things really happen.

Media has to properly address the very reason that where we are at this point in time, is contributory to what people have done... to their various activities as individuals, as part of the family, as part of the community, as part of the workforce, and as part of the citizenry as a whole. We need a very strong multi-stakeholder participation and cooperation. What farmers do to our land, what fishers do to the seas, the oceans and the shorelines, what the indigenous peoples do to our

mountains and forests, what the urban and rural people do to our environment, what the businesses do to our ecosystems, what the government, women, children, all of us do to all of our resources is all that we get at present.

If there is a widespread pollution on air, water and land... if there is natural resource degradation.. if there is water crisis... if there is siltation... overfishing... and a rapid biodiversity loss... etc... what do we do?

Challenging as it is, we would not want this time to repeat the story of the past decade. We are counting a lot on the multiplicity of media to be able to reach and cover what its signals and technology and resources could reach. We are also counting a lot on media to be able to communicate and disseminate information to a more basic, if not more appealing, more passionate and more laymanized manner. These are the ways to get the

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Introduction

Anybody can relax while walking along a beach or a fishing village. Until recently, many fishing boats were moored to a harbor and, in the morning, busy voices were heard at the markets of Japan's fishing villages. Time has passed and harbors have been wonderfully improved by public works, but, on the other hand, the number of fishing boats and fishers is decreasing swiftly. Fishers have become old and their children, who live in big cities, do not want to return to their birthplaces.

Japan is a country consisting of four major islands: Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. Japan also has over 7,000 small islands. The seas have nurtured both Japan's industry and culture. People are familiar with the sea and have derived satisfaction from it. With rapid industrialization, coastal areas were converted into industrial sites.

Sustainable Fisheries and the Role of the Print Media in Japan



M. Yoshida

A fish market at a fishing community reveals the many kinds of fish caught from the Seto Inland Sea.

However, due to the rapid industrial development, pollution and reclamation have damaged the coastal environment. The loss of healthy seas is a great loss not only for the fishing industry, but the nation as well. Fisheries in Japan, probably an “endangered industry,” are indispensable to the sustainable development of the seas. How can Japanese fishers and fishing communities regain vigor and escape from their hardships? Appropriate management of fishing resources must be useful for

development while keeping the sea healthy at the same time. It is time for the media to stress the importance of multiple functions of fisheries and fishing communities.

Individually, journalists must obtain both domestic and international foresight. Like seas without boundaries, information about seas must be shared. Today, we are facing serious problems such as pollution, over-fishing, reclamation, and many others. The media has no time to waste.

Multiple Functions of Fisheries

Three years ago, the Fishery Fundamental Law was enacted in Japan. Article 32 of the Law mandates:

“The Government shall take necessary measures for increasing public understanding of and interest in the roles played by the fishery industries and fishing communities in the life of the nationals and for the stability of the national economy. The Government shall also take necessary measures for the multiple functions of the fishery industries and fishing communities, other than the function of supplying fishery products, to be appropriately and fully performed into the future.” (Tentative translation by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan).

Article 32 declared for the first time, the multiple functions of fishery and fishing communities. Government has to deepen people’s understanding about the role of fisheries and must enforce its multiple functions.

Fishers are important people because they are the “guardians of the sea” and they must be sustainable. They know much about the sea and its environment and manage the sea to make sure its resources are harvested in a sustainable manner.

Individually, journalists must obtain both domestic and international foresight. Like seas without boundaries, information about seas must be shared. Today, we are facing serious problems such as pollution, over-fishing, reclamation, and many others. The media has no time to waste.

Fishery also has a watchdog function in the coast, which includes rescue operations, border surveillance, and protection against natural disasters.

In addition, fishing communities offer a place for oceanic recreation and education. Traditional meals of fishing communities reflect geographic conditions. The culture of fishing villages, such as festivals and folk tales are important. Fishing villages are also an important source of local employment.

Damaged Marine Environment

The Japanese people enjoy eating fish daily. Annual consumption of fish is 38.7 kg per capita, and 20 percent of the people’s protein intake comes from marine products. The annual fishing catch was 6,130,000 tons in 2001. The

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), about 4,500,000 km² is 12 times as large as the country and is placed 6th in the world.

However, due to the rapid industrial development, pollution and reclamation have advanced, beautiful natural seashores have been converted into industrial sites covered with concrete banks. Red tide and “blue tide” outbreak have increased.

Forty percent of tidal flats, the cradle for creatures such as fishes, crabs, birds and many others, have disappeared. Now only 50,000 hectares remain. Destruction of the sea brings not only damage to fishery but depletion of biodiversity. The menace of environmental destruction is lasting now. Many construction projects such as airports and nuclear power plants are being planned, and land reclamation is being done all over the country.

Environmental problems are so complex that the journalist needs insights on the relationships between human activities and the ecosystem. Having the interdisciplinary insights create a huge difference from the traditional way of covering news.

Decline of the Fishing Industry

Japan had given priority to industrial development and had sacrificed fishery. People expected damage caused by industrialization at any stage, but they preferred industrial success. The problem is that today's situation is much worse than people's expectations. Now the precious environment that remains will be lost unless changes are made in current policies on coastal and marine management.

Japanese fishery is in decline because of poor fish catch, the strengthening of international regulations, and low fish prices at the market due to the increase of imported marine products. The amount of fish catch has decreased to about half of what it was 20 years ago. Fishers number 252,000, half of what it was 30 years ago. This number will further decline since 34 percent of all current fishers are above 65 years old.

Japan is importing the largest quantity of marine products in the world. It has increased rapidly in inverse proportion to the decline of the domestic fishing industry. Imports amounted to 3,824,000 tons in 2001, a figure that has doubled in size 15 years prior. The self-sufficient rate of fish for food is only 53 percent.

The younger fishers do not hold positive outlooks for the future; they dislike the hard work and low income. Both the decreasing number of fishers and the lessening fish catch fall into a vicious cycle. The decrease in number of fishers weakens the fishing industry and this in turn can have a negative effect on the marine ecosystem as its stewards decrease in number.

The media can provide information of the sea to many readers by introducing the fisher's life and work. Historically the Japanese have a close relationship with the sea. We can learn the idea

that the sea and human beings can coexist from history.

People's Concern and the Media

The sea ecosystem is not independent but includes mountains and rivers whose waters flow into the sea with nutrients. In the past, many fishers planted trees in the mountains in an attempt to restore the ecosystem.

More information about the sea will catch readers' interests and a comprehensive understanding about the sea will prompt them to take actions toward pro-environmental development.

The position of the consumer is just as influential. Two years ago, a Japanese song with the lyrics, "If you eat fish, you will be clever and healthy" became a great hit. This is a reflection of the people's familiarity with fish and fishery. If information about the sea crisis is reported to the public properly, consumers may have a much more positive view about the sea. People want safe fish. As we have many controversial cases such false product labeling or chemical use in aquaculture, consumer's organizations have to play their role of investigating and providing proper information to consumers. Journalists and consumers are on the same boat.

Journalists have to walk in the field and approach local stakeholders like NGOs, small resident groups and fishers who worry about the conservation of the marine environment. Even casual conversations can produce on-the-ground information, or at least, an idea of local realities. I make it a rule to meet people from organizations and citizen groups and insist for environmental restoration such as protecting the horseshoe crab and the Indian porpoise, and the small whale living in the Seto Inland Sea. Through this method, I have encountered many interesting themes for my writing.

Environmental problems are so complex that the journalist needs insights on the relationships between human activities and the ecosystem. Having the interdisciplinary insights create a huge difference from the traditional way of covering news. Last September, I was in a small village near Khabarovsk, Russia, to cover a minority people there and I learned that many rivers run into the Japan Sea, enriching the sea by nutrition contained in the water. The issue of deforestation of mountains in Russia holds direct relevance to issues of the Japanese fishing industry, and in turn, to the fish being cooked at home.

When it comes to international issues, whaling is an issue I have to write about. There are pros and cons, and the Japanese government insists

that whaling is necessary for keeping the seas sustainable. As far as I know, ordinary citizens seldom show interest about this problem. They are fed up that arguments are a matter of “YES” or “NO” and that it sometimes becomes emotional. The media have to provide more scientific and neutral information to discuss and judge the issue correctly.

As we are in the era of Information Technology, journalists writing in the print media have to reinforce skills and enrich knowledge about electronic gears to give satisfaction to the readers. There are many databases and archives where journalists can collect information. The Internet is an excellent tool to build up human and organizational relationship worldwide.

The Japanese Forum of Environmental Journalists (JFEJ), of which I am a member, holds meetings every two months to learn about the latest environmental issues. The JFEJ has a website, which is linked to my website. For an independent journalist like me, having a website is very useful.

In addition to Internet, we also have to develop a human and organizational network on a face-to-face basis, such as the Media Forum on Partnerships in Environmental Communication, an event which was



M. Yoshida

Fishers collect short-necked clams at an artificial seashore. The amount of catch is decreasing.

part of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003 held in Putrajaya, Malaysia last December. The forum was a good opportunity to think and discuss with other Asian journalists.

A Long Distant Past

The seas of the world are connected and have no borders. Likewise, it is very natural for environmental journalists in the world to share information and the ardent passion for sustainable development.

I would like to mention my favorite song for schoolchildren titled “I’m a child of the sea.” This song is very popular in Japan and the words mention the happy memories of growing up in a fishing village, where you can enjoy swimming and listening to the sound of the waves.

Nowadays, scenes like those are difficult to find and people take it just as part of the “past.” The media can rekindle the passion for restoring nature in the readers’ hearts and can make fishers confident of their positions as guardians of the sea. ■



Journalists, broadcasters and communicators and representatives of international organizations attended the Media Forum on Partnerships in Environmental Communication, a side event of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003.

Raising Public Awareness on Coastal and Marine Concerns through the Media
continued from page 9

organizations and PEMSEA officers attended the Forum, coorganized by the Asia Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (APFEJ) and PEMSEA.

The Forum revealed an information gap between the local stakeholders and policymakers and the scientists regarding coastal and marine environmental issues. It was agreed that media practitioners can play the role of “laymanizing” the technical aspects of ICM and presenting them in a form most stakeholders would understand.

Among the forum’s recommendations were:

- For media practitioners to participate in PEMSEA ICM study tours and that a manual on ICM be developed for journalists;
- For media practitioners to visit their respective national PEMSEA

ICM demonstration sites and work with the site’s technical staff to gain a better understanding of ICM;

- PEMSEA’s Website be further enhanced to provide information to media practitioners and that an e-group on ICM for journalists be created to enable journalists with ready and convenient access to information, as well as serve as a venue for knowledge sharing between journalists from all PEMSEA participating countries; and
- The development of a media strategy that can be implemented over a time frame. The media strategy can also serve to monitor the accomplishments of the media in terms of supporting the objectives of the SDS–SEA.



Ms. Elizabeth Roxas, Executive Director of the Environmental Broadcast Circle, welcomes the participants to the Media Forum.



Ms. Sylvia Inciong of the United Nations Informaton Center (Philippines) speaks on the objectives of the Media Forum.

The Putrajaya statement called for the media to:

- Enhance environmental awareness and dissemination of scientific, as well as traditional knowledge and practices to mobilize stakeholders towards appropriate decisions and choices that would improve ocean governance in East Asia;
- Organize programs, projects, activities and events to deepen understanding and strengthen support for the implementation of the SDS–SEA; and
- Contribute, through APFEJ, in helping achieve measurable goals and outcomes that will serve as indicators of sustainable development and management of coastal and ocean resources. ■

What is Sustainable Development?

“...meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs...”

This is how the World Commission on Environment and Sustainable Development (WCED) defines sustainable development in its report “Our Common Future” published in 1987.

Sustainable Development and the Multiplicity of Media
continued from page 37

interest of the people... to get them involved because they have stakes, and to push them into action because there is still time. Attaining this level of awareness and concern is a sure indication of participation. Otherwise, this is again just a story of the few and chosen.

The Media for Advocacy

Media also acts as multiple watchdogs. We can closely monitor and report adherence to implementation of agreements, laws, rules and regulations and the likes. Media can provide a medium of exchange among the lawmakers and the law breakers and the general public. The power of media is such that it can influence behavior and attitude change. It can also provide a

capacity-building mechanism for sustainable development. If the public is bombarded with sustainable development information in print and broadcast media, and in other forms of media like computers, cell phones, billboards, stickers, jingles, etc., there would really be no other way to go but towards sustainable development.

Media also act as communicators for sustainable development. It is an effective medium for advocacy. Giving people hope and sharing positive initiatives through success stories and good practices can win their hearts in support of sustainable development.

Showcasing practitioners and champions of sustainable development is also an effective approach to getting support and

action from the people and the general public. Meaning that sustainable development is doable and it is not just a dream. This may encourage and promote volunteerism, too. Media can very well do this as media is everywhere.

Designing the kind of programs or topics and issues to be highlighted or used by the media together with the people is a very constructive approach to reach the hearts and minds of the people and generate feedback through actions of support.

Opening the lines of communication and providing a free flow of information so that the different audiences and the general public can have access to the media is empowering.

The capacity to reach as many audiences and provide the said audiences to reach the media in return is a very good example of people's participation, cooperation and collaboration. Hearing their sides and arguments, listening to their stories, and emphasizing the importance of sustainable development in their daily lives will definitely move them to real action. Incorporating all of these with the positive initiatives of businesses and government may somehow prove that partnership works.

If this happens, the multiplicity of media is a major way of attaining the true essence of sustainable development. ■

NEWS

Media Practitioners Commit to the Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA — Media practitioners in the Asian region adopted the Putrajaya Statement of Media Commitment on Sustainable Development of the Seas of East Asia, on 11 December 2003, opening new opportunities for the media to enhance awareness, disseminate scientific and traditional knowledge and practices, and take the lead in organizing initiatives to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA).

The adoption of the Putrajaya Statement was a culmination of the Media Forum on Partnerships in Environmental Communication, a side event of the East Asian Seas Congress 2003. Twenty-four journalists, broadcasters and communicators, representatives of international organizations, and PEMSEA officers attended the Forum which provided a venue for exploring how media can do its part in the implementation of the SDS-SEA. The Media Forum was co-organized by the Asia Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists (APFEJ) and PEMSEA.

The Forum revealed an information gap between the local stakeholders and policymakers and the scientists regarding coastal and marine environmental issues. It was agreed that media practitioners can play the role of “laymanizing” the technical aspects of integrated coastal management (ICM) and presenting them in a form most stakeholders would understand. This cannot happen effectively unless media capacity is enhanced. To this end, it was recommended that media practitioners participate in PEMSEA ICM study tours and that a manual on ICM be

developed for journalists. It was also recommended that media practitioners visit their respective national PEMSEA ICM demonstration sites and work with the site’s technical staff to gain a better understanding of ICM.

The Forum also recommended that PEMSEA’s Website be further enhanced to provide information to media practitioners and that an e-group on ICM for journalists be created. This would enable journalists with ready and convenient access to information as well as serve as a venue for knowledge sharing between journalists from all PEMSEA participating countries.

Another recommendation that came out of the Media Forum was the development of a media strategy that could be implemented over a timeframe. A media strategy can also serve to monitor the accomplishments of the media in terms of supporting the objectives of the SDS-SEA.

The Putrajaya Statement called for the media to:

- Enhance environmental awareness and dissemination of scientific as well as traditional knowledge and practices to mobilize stakeholders towards appropriate decisions and choices that would improve ocean governance in East Asia;
- Organize programs, projects, activities and events to deepen understanding and strengthen support for the implementation of the SDS-SEA; and
- Contribute, through APFEJ, in helping achieve measurable goals and outcomes that will serve as indicators of sustainable development and management of coastal and ocean resources. ■

New PEMSEA Environmental Videos Ready for Broadcast

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES – PEMSEA has produced two environmental videos that are ready for TV broadcast: *The EAS Congress 2003: Regional Partnerships in Action*, a video that highlighted the recently concluded East Asian Seas Congress held in Putrajaya, Malaysia; and *Melasti: A Festival of Hope*, a video on integrated coastal management (ICM) and cultural practices in Bali, Indonesia.

Initial arrangement is being forged with television networks interested in airing the videos.

PEMSEA has produced a number of video documentaries on environmental management practices that were aired on Philippine TV. This includes *Monsoon Tale*, a video that focused on the ICM experiences in the Philippines (Batangas, Bataan and Manila Bay) and in Xiamen, China. PEMSEA has also produced audio-visual and informational videos about the programme, to provide a background on its activities and objectives, and the *Sibuyan Eco-Youth Camp*, a video that featured the eco-youth camp held in Sibuyan Island, Romblon, Philippines.

Besides TV broadcast, these environmental videos are also used for other purposes such as in-training programs as part of modules and school projects. A number of requests for video copies are received through the PEMSEA website (<http://www.pemsea.org>).

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NEWS

Batangas ICM Goes Online with Web Development Training

BATANGAS CITY, PHILIPPINES — The Batangas Provincial Government is now able to share its knowledge on integrated coastal management (ICM) online with the initial uploading of the Batangas Coastalink website last 27 May 2004. The website was a direct output of the Training Workshop on Web Development, which was held from 24-27 May 2004, and organized by PEMSEA and the Provincial Government – Environment and Natural Resources Office (PG-ENRO).

The workshop trained eleven PG-ENRO staff on the basics of the Internet, World Wide Web, and the existing/emerging tools and techniques used in web development; the practical knowledge and skills on web production using specific software and tools; and the strategies in website promotion and web community establishment. The participants were able to work step-by-step towards the creation of the Batangas Coastalink website as most of the exercises used actual information on Batangas Bay.

The training workshop was the first of a series of on-site training programs being organized by PEMSEA to assist its demonstration sites in establishing their own presence on the Internet, providing each demonstration site with a new means of sharing their lessons and experiences in environmental management to a much wider online audience.

The creation of ICM websites, referred to as Coastalinks, is also aimed at strengthening regional networking and parallel knowledge sharing on the East Asian Seas. The Coastalink websites will be launched simultaneously on 18 September 2004 in time for the celebration of the World Cleanup Day. ■

New Pemsea Environmental Videos Ready for Broadcast
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PEMSEA is active in the production of environmental videos and has been collaborating with media partners and contacts to achieve its goal of promoting environmental and coastal management. This goal is also established to ensure that lessons learned from its programme sites are disseminated to its stakeholders in East Asia and beyond. ■

Experts Meet in Chengdu for SDS-SEA Implementation

CHENGDU, PR CHINA — Major lines and fields of action for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA) were decided on by international experts during the Preparatory Meeting for the Working Group on the Implementation of the SDS-SEA held from 29 March to 1 April 2004.

The meeting brainstormed on the SDS-SEA implementation, including targets, approaches, modalities and funding implications, taking into account the specific national and local conditions. The meeting also produced a conceptual framework for the implementation of the SDS-SEA. The Chengdu Meeting is considered a milestone in that it marks the concrete steps leading to on-the-ground implementation of the SDS-SEA, which was adopted by PEMSEA-participating countries last December 2003 in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

The lines of action proposed include mainstreaming of coasts and oceans into national policy, the scaling up of integrated coastal management programs, enhancing the use of the region's intellectual capital, and capacity building. Scientific and technical support, knowledge management and financing mechanisms were identified as critical fields of action. The draft conceptual framework will be refined and presented during the Working Group Meeting to be held in August 2004.

The participants in the preparatory meeting were experts with extensive knowledge and experiences in the field of ocean-related policy and program development, both at the national and international levels, many of whom were involved in the development of the SDS-SEA. The meeting was organized by the PEMSEA Regional Programme Office and was hosted by the State Oceanic Administration of the People's Republic of China.

The SDS-SEA is considered necessary and timely in addressing cross-sectoral concerns, as it employs an integrated approach, mirroring the interconnectivity of the sea. It is a platform for addressing the sustainable ocean development issues in the region and serves as an umbrella for the efforts of other regional programs, agencies and other stakeholders. ■

2004

PEMSEA's training initiatives provide unique learning experiences through:

- Involvement of multisectoral stakeholders in coastal and marine environmental protection and management
- Field studies integrated into training courses, complementing theory with actual practice
- Site-specific application of acquired new skills ensuring enhanced capability and confidence
- Concrete plans for follow-on actions, encouraging participants to make a difference

Effective environmental management requires trained and skilled people...

21 – 23 July	ICM Study Tour (Xiamen, PR China)
23 – 26 August	Working Group on the Implementation of the SDS-SEA (Manila, Philippines)
September/October	Investors Roundtable (Xiamen, PR China)
25 – 29 October	Tenth PEMSEA Programme Steering Committee Meeting (Xiamen, PR China)
22 November – 10 December	ICM Training Course (Xiamen, PR China and Manila, Philippines)
29 November – 4 December	Training Workshop on IEIA (Hong Kong)

Note: The above schedules are subject to change.

ALUMNI NETWORK

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The Alumni Network offers:

- ✓ New and up-to-date information on PEMSEA activities
- ✓ Information on opportunities for professional upgrading and degree programs available on fields relevant to coastal and marine environmental management
- ✓ A chance to be a member of the PEMSEA roster of trainers

Information on PEMSEA - related training activities within the region
To join, visit the PEMSEA website and complete the registration form.

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Integrated Environmental Impact Assessment

29 November - 4 December 2004 • City University of Hong Kong

Featured Training Course for This Issue

The course aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of participants in the conduct, methodology, multidisciplinary approach and benefits of integrated environmental impact assessment (IEIA) and promote the integration of IEIA in the development planning schemes in their respective countries.

Topics covered

- Environmental Consequences of Development Projects
- History and Evolution of IEIA
- Nature and Objectives of IEIA
- EIA in Developed and Developing Countries: Current Practices and Socioeconomic Factors
- Sustainable Development, Carrying Capacity and Precautionary Principles, Integrated Coastal Management
- IEIA Process

Who Should Participate?

Participants are expected to have at least a bachelor's degree and three years experience in coastal management and environmental impact assessment.



For further information, please contact:

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building capacity

FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE IN EAST ASIA

Fish may occupy the highest share in the global agricultural commodity trade (22%), but for people in developing countries, fish is a diet staple and major source of nutrition. Global demand for fish is rising, while the East Asia Region is facing a future fish supply shortage that contributes to higher fish prices.

At least 20 million fishers and their families in the region rely on fishing, fish farming and fish processing and selling for subsistence livelihood strategies. With the increasing population, more people will become dependent on a resource that is victim to degraded habitats and biodiversity loss even as aquaculture techniques and technology improve.

Efforts towards zoning aquaculture within the context of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) to prevent marginalization, preventing the degradation of coastal habitats, providing options for aquaculture over large areas while ensuring coastal water quality, and rehabilitating degraded habitats should be strengthened. The sustainable use of coastal areas allocated for aquaculture should be practiced to minimize the ecological footprint of fishery and aquaculture operations.



* Singapore has no data on fish protein

Sources:

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FISHERY PRODUCTION TOTALS IN MARINE AQUACULTURE (METRIC TONS)

COUNTRY	YEAR		% CHANGE
	1992-1996	1997 - 2001	
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	284	510	79.5
CAMBODIA	2,391	3,391	41.8
CHINA	25,046,065	42,607,261	70.1
DPR KOREA	327,078	319,644	-2.2
INDONESIA	713,921	727,066	1.8
JAPAN	3,682,465	3,586,123	-2.6
MALAYSIA	449,980	502,569	11.6
PHILIPPINES	597,823	388,276	-35.0
RO KOREA	1,734,837	1,529,760	-11.8
SINGAPORE	14,098	19,892	41.0
THAILAND	1,541,412	2,003,235	29.9
VIETNAM	277,526	435,394	56.8

FISHERY PRODUCTION TOTALS IN MARINE CAPTURE (METRIC TONS)

COUNTRY	YEAR		% CHANGE
	1992-1996	1997 - 2001	
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	19,913	16,618	-16.5
CAMBODIA	158,500	176,124	11.1
CHINA	48,407,190	72,873,280	50.5
DPR KOREA	2,592,567	967,312	-62.6
INDONESIA	14,736,681	18,491,022	25.4
JAPAN	33,045,599	25,751,276	-22.0
MALAYSIA	5,383,437	6,103,861	13.3
PHILIPPINES	8,222,915	8,623,950	4.8
RO KOREA	11,603,841	10,128,619	-12.7
SINGAPORE	49,779	32,185	-35.3
THAILAND	13,964,032	13,555,746	-2.9
VIETNAM	4,510,537	6,072,796	34.6

LEGEND :

Estimated Fish Protein as Percentage (%) of Total National Protein Supply (2000)



\$ 000 = Estimated National Trade Export Value of Fish and Fisheries Products for Year 2000 (US\$ million)