



SUMMARY

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Consultative Forum on
Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development
(2-4 May, 2007 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)



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Twenty years ago ASEAN made a commit to build relations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as stated in the *Guidelines for ASEAN Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations* (5th Meeting of the 19th ASEAN Standing Committee, 16-18 June 1986, Manila). Two years ago the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) at the 16TH Meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) held in August 2005, Penang, agreed to support a consultative forum during which environmental NGOs from ASEAN Member Countries could explore mechanisms for more formal and regular interactions and consultation with ASEAN intergovernmental bodies to promote environmental protection and sustainable development. ASOEN envisioned a civil society forum to be held in mid-2006, but the forum was delayed due to inadequate funding.

Bringing together joint sponsorship by USAID and the Hans Seidel Foundation, the ASEAN-US Facility helped ASEAN realize its commitment to bring together representatives of civil society from all ten ASEAN Member Countries. The Global Environment Centre (GEC), a Malaysian non-governmental organization, assisted the ASEAN Secretariat and the Facility environmental specialist to organize and hold a consultative forum for civil society organizations (CSOs) operating in ASEAN. This first ever CSO forum on the environment was held in Kuala Lumpur from 2 to 4 May 2007.

Lawyers, foresters, teachers, researchers and others from civil society organizations from all ten ASEAN Member Countries (AMCs) participated in the Forum. The objectives of the Forum were to provide a platform to bring together representatives of CSOs in ASEAN to exchange ideas on key environmental issues facing the region, to share experiences and lessons learned, and to explore and develop mechanisms and modalities for more formal and regular interaction, collaboration and consultation among ASEAN national CSOs and between CSOs and the ASEAN environmental bodies on promoting environmental protection and sustainable development. The key challenge of the forum and its participants was to devise appropriate mechanisms for civil society interaction with ASEAN and its intergovernmental bodies to preserve and protect the environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

By the end of the forum participants had reached consensus on approaches to work with ASEAN for environmental protection and sustainable development. They identified four key issues and lead individuals/agencies to head task forces for each:

1. Climate change, led by Pelangi, Indonesia
2. Loss of biodiversity, led by Atty Rodolfo Quicho Jr, FPCI Philippines
3. Transboundary haze, led by Mr Chee Tong Yiew, GEC
4. Environmental education and awareness in the Mekong Region countries, led by Dr. Chaiyod Bunyagidj, Thailand Environment Institute (TEI)

The Forum exceeded expectations. The group agreed to immediately begin work to establish an official ASEAN civil society organization for environment and sustainable development. It formed an interim secretariat, temporarily dubbed the Southeast Asian Civil Society Environment Alliance (SEACSEA), to be chaired by the GEC. Interim focal points were designated for each of the ten member countries. The mandate for the interim secretariat is to work towards full ASEAN accreditation in approximately six months. Upon

accreditation to ASEAN it was agreed the name would be changed to the ASEAN Civil Society Environment Alliance (ACSEA).

Participants also identified next steps:

- National focal points will be appointed in each country and national consultations to brief local CSOs on the proposed alliance need to be held.
- Task forces will be established and will initiate collaborative activities
- An inventory will be gathered of environment and sustainable development CSOs and ongoing collaborative activities in the ASEAN region.
- Proceedings of the Forum, with revised country papers, will be prepared within a month.
- The first meeting of the Steering Committee for the alliance should be held in July or August 2007 to assess progress and plan for future activities.
- The Alliance should be established and launched by November 2007 as an official ASEAN affiliated organization.
- Funds need to be generated to support the work of the secretariat, the task forces and the country coordination.

The ASEAN-US Facility's environmental specialist will assist the interim CSO secretariat in its efforts to establish an official ASEAN organization. However, funding to support the initial follow up meeting must be identified. The environmental specialist will work with the interim CSO secretariat in pursuing funding.

Attached are the forum agenda and the Secretariat's summary report of the CSO Forum.

**ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs)
CONSULTATIVE FORUM ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

2 – 4 May 2007

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

2 May 2007 DAY 1
Venue: Function Room 1, Level 4

0800-0830		Registration
		FORUM OPENING
0830-0840		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Remarks by Global Environmental Centre, Malaysia : <i>Mr. Zainudin Ismail, Chairman of GEC</i>
0840-0850		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement by USAID-RDM : <i>Mr. John Pasch, Regional Environment Advisor</i>
0850-0900		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement by Hanns Seidel Foundation : <i>Mr. Christian Hegemer, Director HSF, Indonesia</i>
0900-0915		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Remarks by ASEAN Secretariat : <i>Dr. Raman Letchumanan, Head of Environment and Disaster Management Unit</i>
		<p><u>Session 1: Civil Society Organisations' Engagement in Regional Environmental Cooperation</u></p> <p>Session Chair: <i>Mr. Christian Hegemer</i></p>
0915-0930		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of ASEAN Environmental Cooperation and ASEAN's Engagement with Civil Society <i>(Dr. Raman Letchumanan, ASEAN Secretariat)</i>
0930-0945		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNEP's Experience in Engaging Civil Society for Environmental Cooperation <i>(Mr. Mahesh Pradhan, UNEP)</i>
0945-1000		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of Civil Society Organisation in working in ASEAN – example of Global Environment Centre <i>(Mr. Faizal Parish, GEC)</i>
1000-1030		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q & A
1030-1100		Photo Session & Coffee Break

3 May 2007

DAY 2

		Session 4: Discussion on Regional Collaboration / Cooperation among CSOs – Objectives and Mechanisms <i>Venue: Function Room 1</i>
0830-0900		Introduction by ASEAN Secretariat
0900-1030		Break-Out session to discuss Regional Collaboration / Cooperation among CSOs <i>Venue: Function Room 1 and 2</i>
1030-1045		Coffee Break
1045-1215		Continuation of discussion in break-out sessions <i>Venue: Function Room 1 and 2</i>
1215-1300		Summary presentations by breakout groups in plenary <i>Venue: Function Room 1</i>
1300-1400		Lunch : <i>ASEANA Coffee House, Level 1</i>
		Session 5: Plenary Discussion on Development of Mechanism for Collaboration / Cooperation among CSOs <i>Venue: Function Room 1</i>
1400-1545		Discussions on modus operandi of cooperation among CSOs
1545-1600		Coffee Break
1600-1800		Continuation of discussion on regional cooperation among CSOs

		<p>Session 2: CSO Presentation on National Level Activities and Engagement with Government / Private Sector</p> <p>Morning Session Chair: <i>Dr. Geh Min, President, Nature Society, Singapore</i></p>
1100-1115		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brunei Darussalam
1115-1130		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambodia
1130-1145		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indonesia
1145-1200		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lao PDR
1200-1215		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaysia
1215-1230		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myanmar
1230-1300		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q & A
1300-1400		Lunch Break : <i>ASEANA Coffee House, Level 1</i>
		<p>Afternoon Session Chair: <i>Dr. Chan Ngai Weng, President, Water Watch, Penang, Malaysia</i></p>
1400-1415		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippines
1415-1430		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore
1430-1445		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thailand
1445-1500		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viet Nam
1500-1530		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q & A
1530-1545		Coffee break
		<p>Session 3: Discussions on Potential Issues and Collaboration among CSOs in ASEAN Member Countries</p> <p>Session Co-Chairs: <i>Ms. Ma. Christine Reyes, Executive Director, Foundation for the Philippines Environment</i> <i>Dr. Joseph Weinstock, Regional Environment Advisor, USAID-RDM</i></p>
1545-1715		Brainstorming
1715-1730		Wrap-up
1900-2100		Welcome Dinner Reception <i>Venue: Function Room 2, Level 4</i>

4 May 2007

DAY 3

		Session 6: Discussion on Strategy for Collaboration / Cooperation between CSOs and ASEAN
0830-0900		Introduction on Regional Collaborative CSOs – ASEAN Strategy and Modalities <i>Venue: Function Room 1</i>
0900-1045		Break-out sessions for discussion of Strategy and Modalities <i>Venue: Function Room 1 and 2</i>
1045-1100		Coffee Break
1100-1145		Presentation of break-out groups of Strategies and Modalities in Plenary <i>Venue: Function Room 1</i>
1145-1300		Session 7: Plenary Discussion of Proposed Draft Strategy <i>Venue: Function Room 1</i>
1300-1400		Lunch : ASEANA Coffee House, Level 1