

**The Seventeenth Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change**  
**“Good Governance for Climate & Development**  
**Co-benefits Innovation and Integrated Adaptation to Climate Change”**

Chairperson’s Summary

1. The Seventeenth Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 31 July-3 August 2007. The Seminar was jointly organized by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan (MOEJ), the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment/Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (MNRE/ONEP), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and the Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center, Japan (OECC). Since its commencement in 1991, the Seminar has become well recognized as a major regional effort to address climate change and acted as a progressive vehicle for information exchange and mutual understanding among the countries through providing a useful framework for international cooperation in this field. The Seventeenth Seminar discussed “*Good Governance for Climate & Development -Co-benefits Innovation and Integrated Adaptation to Climate Change-*”. The Chairperson’s Summary reflects major outcomes of the discussion and serves as a useful reference for policy makers in climate change and development areas.

**I. Attendance**

2. The Seminar was attended by eighty-five (85) experts from twenty (20) countries, and representatives of several UN and other organizations. A number of resource persons from local governments, research institutes, universities and private companies also attended the Seminar.

**II. Conduct of the Seminar**

3. The Seminar was officially opened by Ms. Prasertsuk Chammornmarn, Director, MNRE/ONEP. In her welcome address, she highlighted that the Seminar played a crucial role in contributing to the promotion of regional efforts to address climate change concerns, and expressed her expectation that the Seventeenth Seminar would strengthen the partnership between the countries in various ways. Mr. Kotaro Kawamata, Deputy Director, Office of International Strategies, Climate Change Division, MOEJ delivered an opening address.

Referring to the theme of the Seventeenth Seminar, he stressed the importance of collaborative efforts between the climate change and development communities, and encouraged participants to discuss “Good Governance for Climate & Development” in view of elaborating practical solutions to address these concerns in a harmonized way.

4. The Seminar was chaired by Dr. Gregory Picker, Director, Global Forest and Climate, AGO. Mr. Masa Ichimura, Chief, Environmental Section, Environment and Sustainable Development Division, UNESCAP, Mr. Taka Hiraishi, Senior Consultant, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), and Ms. Aree Wattana Tummakird, Director, Measure Analysis Section, MNRE/ONEP, Thailand, chaired respective sessions of the Seminar.

#### **IV. Substantive Sessions**

##### **Keynote Speech: Momentum for the Seventeenth Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change**

5. Dr. Yukihiro Nojiri, Center for Global Environment Research, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan (NIES) delivered a Keynote Speech on the Fourth Assessment of Report of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. His keynote speech highlighted the most recent updates of scientific researches on climate change, reinforced the need for urgent action on climate, and underpinned the importance of effective policies and actions should be taken by policy makers in a holistic way.

##### **Session I: Climate Change: Ongoing Efforts in Asia-Pacific Countries**

6. The Seminar highlighted that countries’ national development goals are fundamentally important in the planning and implementation of action to deliver economic and social development. Many participants stressed that while acting to deliver national development goals, there are numerous areas directly and indirectly relevant to efforts to address climate change. The process and approach to delivering national development goals offers many opportunities to both mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and support increased adaptation to climate change.

7. It was noted that significant positive steps have been taken by some developing countries to integrate mitigation and adaptation concerns into their processes of national development

planning or sectoral policies (such as energy policy) through both implicit and explicit means. It was further noted that there had been some success in addressing local and global concerns as part of a consistent approach, and recognised that a holistic approach could usefully be pursued by different levels of government. The Seminar acknowledged that – despite good intentions - there remain challenges to integrating mitigation and adaptation actions into national development schemes, and suggested that this hurdle may be able to be passed by encouraging wide national and local coordination, as well as incorporating international advice and assistance as pertinent.

8. The Seminar showcased several useful activities to create an enabling environment to more effectively address climate change and development by national and local governments, and the private sector in the energy and forestry sector. The Seminar also recognized that policies and programs to address problems in areas such as air/water pollution, building, transport, waste, and forestry offered the opportunity to support further development while taking action to improve both local issues and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

9. The Seminar reaffirmed that potential opportunities to drive economic and social development forward are offered by addressing issues that are relevant to climate change mitigation and adaptation. In this connection, it was noted that revisiting conventional development activities from climate change perspectives may be useful in order to maximize potential benefits. At the same time, some participants noted that the current institutions (such as CDM) have limitation to a certain extent, and ideas for improving these were expressed.

## **Session II: Co-benefits Approach**

10. Since the Seminar started discussing co-benefits approach to climate change in its Fourteenth Session in Sydney, Australia, 2004, an increasing number of initiatives are launched and deployed in the Asia-Pacific region to promote co-benefits of efforts to address climate change. Participants felt strongly the need for further strengthening and sophisticating co-benefits approach.

11. The Seminar at this session elaborated on two types of co-benefits; (i) *developmental benefits* that may be realized through climate change mitigation efforts, and (ii) *climate change benefits* that may be realized through development efforts. In practical terms, consideration of

climatic benefits might accrue to development that is cost-efficient and resilient to climate change, while consideration of development benefits might promote awareness and appreciation of the needs of climate actions.

12. In the context of the Asia-Pacific, the Seminar reiterated the usefulness of referring to, in particular, developmental benefits which may be gained from climate change mitigation efforts. At the same time, participants appreciated many national and local development activities in developing countries can significantly contribute to climate mitigation, which have not hitherto been accounted for nor rewarded financially.

13. The Seminar examined the current practices and further possibility of realizing co-benefits through existing schemes such as clean development mechanism (CDM), and official development assistance (ODA), as well as development planning of developing countries. Many participants pointed out that in order to maximize such co-benefits, it is necessary to support policy makers and practitioners by developing tools and methodologies to quantitatively or qualitatively evaluate co-benefits.

14. As an attempt to deepen understanding of how co-benefits could be delivered through practical efforts, short workshops were held. Participants appreciated the usefulness of such activities to understand a process of realizing co-benefits in a practical manner. Participants also discussed the potential applicability in using similar workshops in the future to support capacity building and awareness raising, as well as the possibility of expanding the workshops' coverage to include both additional sectors scopes (including, air/water pollution, building, transport, waste, forestry) and the use of additional sophisticated methods.

### **Session III: Integrated Adaptation Concerns into Development Efforts**

15. The Seminar considered existing tools and methods that are useful in integrating adaptation concerns into development planning and activities. While some of them are not necessarily designed for adaptation to climate change originally, some participants pointed out a possibility of effectively applying them to climate change policy.

16. In addressing adaptation concerns in development planning process, participants stressed the importance to build upon conventional development planning processes in order to

ensure practical and wide-scale integration, rather than creating a new process. In this regard, participants noted that continuum from conventional development to development integrating adaptation concerns, and international actions which might materialize such continuum could be a useful conceptual framework. Also, some participants stressed that it is important to mainstream adaptation concerns into development processes, in order to ensure their sustainability by minimising the risks posed by climate change.

17. The Seminar noted a positive development undertaken by some development assistance agencies to review their past and ongoing activities in view of integration, and to have elaborated useful tools to be applied for assessing climate sensitivity, and screening out mal-adaptation. The development of such tools and methodologies are expected to help development practitioners to make effective actions and accelerate the integration process at operational level.

18. In assessing climate sensitivity, scientific data plays a crucial role in making proper decisions. However, in many cases, such data are insufficient locally, and significant efforts are needed to ensure local and national governments to have the information they need. Additionally, participants stressed the need to improve the capacities of governments to make high quality vulnerability assessments (including climate model downscaling and projection of climate extremes) and adaptation planning, but participants also noted that such capacity building might require completely different resources or forums compared to regular awareness building type training courses. Also participants generally agreed that in policy making, coordinating different administrative bodies and collaboration between them are important. As a feasible start of such coordination, participants suggested that communication between them can and should be strengthened.

19. In order to maintain sustainability of achievement gained from international cooperation to address adaptation concerns, it was highlighted that even before very scientific vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning become possible, the resilience of societies should be strengthened by enhancing existing knowledge and practices to cope with climatic extreme events. In this regard, capacity building efforts may play an important role to increase the resilience and adaptive capacity.

## **Final Session: Good Governance on Climate & Development**

20. After exploring several related issues in intensive and extensive ways, it was agreed that a good governance on climate and development is a process that includes both an effective decision-making component and a transparent implementation activities in order to maximize climate and development outcomes. In the context of the Asia-Pacific region, it is especially important to consider co-benefits when developing policies/programs for climate and/or development outcomes. At the same time, it is also important to mainstream adaptation considerations into relevant decision-making processes at various levels.

21. Participants recognized that new opportunities are offered by promoting collaborative efforts by the climate and development communities, whereby addressing their common challenges in the region in an integrated way. In order to facilitate major stakeholders to take concrete steps in a feasible manner, an idea to establish a platform to promote co-benefits approach and integrated adaptation was expressed. Such a platform may involve an information pool of good practices, methodologies, policy tools, and web-based information exchange and education vehicles.

22. Also, in view of producing value-added materials as an outcome of the Seventeenth Seminar, it was proposed that the Secretariat would publish a “resource book” on co-benefits and integrated adaptation to climate change in Asia and the Pacific, which may help policy makers maximize benefits of efforts addressing both climate change and development.

### **Chairperson of the 17<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change**

**in Bangkok, Thailand, on 3 August, 2007**

**Dr. Gregory Picker**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory Picker', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.