



Joint Press Statement

10th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment,
10th November, 2006, Cebu, the Philippines

Ministers responsible for environment from the ten ASEAN Member Countries held their formal 10th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Cebu, the Philippines on 10th November, 2006. The Ministers reviewed regional cooperation on a number of environmental activities in particular those related activities in the Vientiane Action Programme 2006-2010. The Ministers welcomed the sustainable development approach of the VAP which stresses that ASEAN's social and environmental agenda is linked inextricably with the economic and security pillars of the ASEAN Community, and resolved to work towards an environmentally sustainable ASEAN Community.

The Ministers adopted the Cebu Resolution on Sustainable Development.

The Ministers launched the Third ASEAN State of the Environment Report 2006 which highlights the environmental conditions of the region, challenges faced and actions being taken to address them. The Ministers expressed the hope that the report would help all parties to better appreciate regional environmental issues and foster greater collaboration.

In the light of the recent haze episode in the region, the Ministers discussed at length the transboundary haze pollution issue. The First Meeting of the Sub-Regional Ministerial Steering Committee (MSC) on Transboundary Haze Pollution held on 9 November 2006 endorsed its Terms of Reference and Indonesia's Plan of Action in Dealing with Transboundary Haze Pollution. Indonesia will chair the MSC for the first two (2) years. The MSC also agreed with Indonesia's proposal that Member Countries of the MSC may, through the Central Government of Indonesia, wish to adopt one or more fire-prone districts/regencies for enhancing capacity to deal with land and forest fires.

The MSC also recognised the urgency and importance of following up on the Regional Workshop in Jakarta on 2 November, 2006 by organising a high-level international conference in December 2006 in Indonesia to generate support and partnership for the implementation of the PoA.

The Ministers expressed their full support and commitment to the effective operations of the recently established ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, hosted by the Philippines. The Ministers also agreed to expedite the signing of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on access to, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of, biological and genetic resources, and to promote further listing of ASEAN Heritage Parks, in order to sustainably manage the rich biological resources of the region.

The Ministers agreed to institute an ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Cities Award to recognize exemplary national efforts in Member Countries and to promote further efforts towards environmental sustainability in ASEAN cities.

The Ministers also recognized the importance of strengthening national efforts and regional cooperation for effective environmental law enforcement, to address issues such as illegal trade in wildlife. As for illegal logging, there is a need for effective enforcement of forestry law and other related laws, where appropriate.

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