



Asia Europe Environment Forum (ENVforum): Asia Europe Strategies for Earth Summit 2012

Venue: Indonesia (July 2011), Sweden (November 2011) and Thailand (February 2012)
Date: January 2011 – December 2012

BACKGROUND

The Asia Europe Environment Forum (ENVforum) has actively brought together stakeholders from Asia and Europe, since 2003, through facilitated dialogue and knowledge exchange, to explore different points of view and new perspectives with regard to environmental changes that seriously affect today's societies.

ASEF and the ENVforum have been recognised by the ASEM Environment Ministers (in Lecce in 2003 and Copenhagen in 2007). The ASEM 7 Chairman statement says: *“Leaders stressed the need to focus on development needs and environmental sustainability in the energy sector. They emphasised the need for Asia-Europe cooperation to ensure the availability of environmentally sound energy at a reasonable price to support economic growth and that the latest technology should be intended to increase energy efficiency. Leaders recognised the need to develop regional and sub-regional projects amongst ASEM partners to promote low-carbon economy. Leaders acknowledged the key message on sustainable energy from the 6th Asia-Europe Environment Forum” (Beijing, 2007).”*

After the ENVforum 2010 Conference “A Green Future: Asia and Europe Growing Sustainably” held in Munich, Germany from 1st till 3th September 2010, the role that the forum would play from 2011-2012 was redefined: It will be a channel for an Asia-Europe voice at the Earth Summit 2012 (Rio+20). Rio+20 offers an international platform for global leaders to come together to define a sustainable development pathway that secures a reasonable standard of living for the world's population. An equal challenge is to preserve our ecosystems and resources at a time when the planet's ecosystems are under severe pressure as a result of human activity.

The ENVforum has been invited by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to assist in the facilitation of dialogue at the bi-regional level. Responding to the perceived need for a platform that is able to consolidate different points of view and serve as an interface between Asia and Europe, the ENVforum aims to use its neutrality to facilitate the process of scenario building. The process will result in the development of strategies that will serve a resource tool for policy makers and will be presented at the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Rio+20 in 2012 will be a defining point in the international dialogue on environment and sustainable development, marked by tension around troubled climate negotiations.

The Rio+20 preparatory process is supported by a dedicated secretariat and housed in the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs based in New York. It will address two themes: green economy and institutional frameworks and arrangements for sustainable development. The ENVforum will be well placed to make a substantive contribution to the second theme, centered on a bi-regional approach.

In practical terms, the programme will:

- gather approximately 15-20 experts from different fields representing various institutions at 3 scenario building workshops over 18 months;
- allow the undertaking of research on environmental policies in ASEM countries in order to identify vulnerable areas;
- have a solution-oriented focus to contribute to the dialogue process on the way towards the Earth Summit Rio+20.

OBJECTIVE

Key objective: to produce an analysis of Institutional Framework for Sustainable Developments (IFSD) options for Rio+20.

More specifically, the programme aims to:

- 1) To promote an inter-regional (Asia Europe) dialogue on the International Environmental Governance (IEG) debate
- 2) To assess the various IFSD and IEG options discussed at the UN level
- 3) To facilitate analysis of options using a foresight /scenarios methodology

PARTICIPANTS

There will be 15-20 participants from key institutions in Asian and European ASEM member states and all the sectors. Priority will be given to participants that have a strong interest in the follow-up of the process and who have expressed interest in involving their organisations in future cooperation.

TARGET GROUPS

The scenarios will be disseminated to the relevant stakeholders:

- Policy makers
- Representatives of civil society organisations focused on the environment
- Youth organisations
- Business organisations

IMPLEMENTATION/ARRANGEMENTS

The implementation arrangements of this programme will be shared among selected ENVforum partners with the Steering Committee Members (i.e. HSF, IGES, SENSA, UNEP) actively involved in the process.

In order to ensure the successful implementation of the scenario building process the following activities will be implemented:

- Preparatory work that will include the research of the existing policy mechanisms
- First scenario planning workshop (in June 2011 in Indonesia)
- Second scenario planning workshop (in November 2011 in Sweden)
- Third scenario planning workshop (in February 2012 in Thailand)

THE ENVFORUM IN A BRIEF

The ENVforum was initiated in 2003 by the Asia-Europe Foundation and since then it has been actively contributing to the Asia Europe dialogue on environment related topics.

The series consists of roundtables, side events and workshops that gather together experts from Asia and Europe that work of various environmental topics. The list of events is available below:

1st Roundtable: “Finding the Path from Johannesburg”: Engaging Civil Society in the Implementation of World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Outcomes

29 - 30 September 2003 II Bangkok, Thailand

2nd Roundtable: “Reinforcing Asia-Europe Co-operation on Climate Change”

25 - 26 March, 2004 II Jeju, Republic of Korea

3rd Roundtable: “Technology Partnerships for Renewables: Key to Energy Security”

25 - 28 August, 2004 II Stockholm, Sweden

4th Roundtable: “Combine or Combust! Co-operating on Chemicals and Hazardous Substances Management”

31 November - 1 December 2006 II Brussels, Belgium

5th Roundtable: “Achieving Urban Sustainability: Integrated Urban Management”

28 - 30 November 2007 II Shenzhen, China

6th Roundtable: “The Energy Sustainability Challenge: Fuelling Co-operation between Asia and Europe”

18 - 19 September 2008 II Dublin, Ireland

Asia-Europe Environment Forum 7th Roundtable: “Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Asia and Europe”

27 - 30 June 2009 II Hayama, Japan

ENVforum Track II Series "REDD for Climate Change Mitigation and Biodiversity Conservation". Side-event at the ASEAN Conference on Biodiversity

22 October 2009 II Singapore

Asia-Europe Environment Forum: Institutional set-up of REDD and the involvement of the private sector. Track II series.

15 December 2009 II Copenhagen, Denmark

Outlook from Copenhagen—Next Steps for Asia and Europe. Track II series.

17 December 2009 II Brussels, Belgium

Asia-Europe Environment Forum (ENVForum): “A Green Future: Asia and Europe Growing Sustainably”

1 - 3 September 2010 II Munich, Germany

ASIA EUROPE ENVIRONMENT FORUM STEERING COMMITTEE

The ENVforum works closely with the key institutions from Asia and Europe that are represented in the Asia Europe Environment Forum Steering Committee. They are involved in all ENVforum activities. Please find below the directory of institutions involved:

ORGANISING MEMBERS

Ms. Sol Iglesias

Director of Intellectual Exchange and Coordinator of the ENVforum, Asia-Europe Foundation

Dr. Ulrich Klingshirn

Director, Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF-Indonesia)

Ms. Karin Isaksson

Acting Director, Swedish Environmental Secretariat for Asia

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Mr. Surendra Shrestha

Team Leader, Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, Secretariat for United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

Dr. David Stanners

Head of International Cooperation, European Environment Agency

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Nessim Ahmad

Director, Environment and Safeguards concurrently Practice Leader (Environment), Asian Development Bank

Ms. Ella Antonio

Director, Earth Council Asia

Ms. Marta Bonifert

Executive Director, Regional Environmental Center

Mr. Ismid Hadad

Chair of the Governing Board, KEHATI - the Indonesian Biodiversity Foundation

Dr. Raman Letchumanan

Head of Environment Unit, ASEAN Secretariat

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Director General, Research Centre for Sustainable Development, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

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ABOUT THE CO-ORGANISERS



The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Through ASEF, civil society concerns are included as a vital component of deliberations of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM¹).

ASEF was established in February 1997 by the participating governments of ASEM and has since implemented over 500 projects, engaging over 15,000 direct participants as well as reaching out to a much wider audience in Asia and Europe. For more information, please visit <http://asef.org>

Since 2003, ASEF has been running its Asia-Europe Environment Forum programme and implemented a number of activities, including an annual roundtable on different topics ranging from climate change, sustainable energy, and urbanisation to biodiversity, etc. For more information, please visit <http://env.asef.org>



The Swedish Environmental Secretariat (SENSA) is the arm of the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). It provides enhanced opportunities for a dialogue with regional partners with an environment focus, thereby strengthening Swedish co-operation in the area of environmental action. For more information, please visit <http://sida.se>



Based in Munich, Germany, the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF) is a German political foundation with 35 years of experience in civic education in Germany and international co-operation around the world. For more information, please visit <http://hss.de/english.html>



Established in 1998, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) is an independent, not-for-profit think tank, based in Japan. It goes beyond research to provide practical ways to protect the earth's environment and to realise greater sustainability and equity in the global community. While the outlook of IGES is global, the principal geographical scope of its activities is Asia and the Pacific region, an area which is experiencing rapid economic development and which will affect the global environment through its population growth, urban environmental problems and other environmental issues. For more information, please visit <http://iges.or.jp>



The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. For more information, please visit <http://www.unep.org>



ASEF's Contribution is made with the financial support of the European Commission

¹ ASEM now brings together 48 partners, namely Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam including the European Union and the ASEAN Secretariat. (www.aseminfoboard.org)