



## PRESS RELEASE

# Asia-Europe Environment Forum Launches Its Second Phase

5 June, Singapore – On the occasion of the World Environment Day, the organisers of the Asia-Europe Environment Forum are pleased to announce the launch of its second phase of dialogue between Asia and Europe, that has brought together 500 researchers, academics, activists, as well as government officials and members of the business sector since 2003.

In this new phase, the Forum will continue to play the role of **interface between civil society of Asia and Europe**, including the business sector as well as a **bridge between governments and civil society** of the two regions. The focuses for this second phase will be

- chemicals and hazardous substances
- the post-2012 climate change regime
- biodiversity
- urbanisation
- sustainable consumption and production

The first phase of the Forum as was largely **acknowledged as highly successful in its ability to create a sustainable network of experts, activists, researchers, officials, members of the private sector** (particularly in renewable energy) and promote opportunities for networking among them.

The Forum was also **recognised for its singular contribution to the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)**—a dialogue and co-operation process bringing together all the member governments of the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, China, South Korea and Japan—occupying an important space in relations between the two regions. Sustainable development is one of the four themes of the ASEM VI Summit in Helsinki, Finland on the 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September later this year.

The Asia-Europe Environment Forum has organised three roundtables on government-business-NGO partnerships for sustainable development, climate change and energy security, respectively, as well as an open exchange on the gaps in trade, biotechnology and environment regimes for international negotiating teams. The Forum's first phase culminated in the largest multi-stakeholder conference between the two regions in November, 2005 in Indonesia, which has resulted in the "Jakarta 12: Asia-Europe Agendas for Sustainable Development".

The first phase was initiated by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), and co-organised with the Institute for Global Environment Strategies of Japan, Hanns Seidel Foundation of Germany (Jakarta office) and the United Nations Environment Programme. The Swedish Environmental Secretariat in Asia of the Swedish International Development Agency has come on board a co-organiser in the Forum's new phase. A steering committee involving key European and Asian environmental organisations plays the leading role for formulating the strategic orientations of the forum.

For more details, please visit <http://www.env.asef.org>

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