



Statement

by

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on

the Second Environment Ministers' Meeting (EMM)

of the Greater Mekong Subregion

Tuesday, 29 January 2008

Vientiane, The Lao People's Democratic Republic

H.E. Mme. Khempheng Pholsena,

Excellencies,

Honourable Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly, I would like to thank our hosts for their organizational efforts and warm hospitality during this event that works to bring the members of the GMS closer to a common voice on shared environmental issues.

We are all becoming well aware of the close linkage between climate change, global warming and its impact upon our people's quality-of-life, their livelihoods, and their very safety.

The latest evidence from the IPCC suggests that global warming is growing at an even faster rate and raise concern among us than previously suspected. Part of the global challenge that we must face is finding the means, by which all of our nations can contribute, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The key solution should be compatible with our aspirations for growth and the recognition of different levels of economic development.

Since we share many commonalities in this region from bio-systems to culture, we must strive to continually enhance our commitment to working together and

support each other to achieve a common vision and set of objectives to address the challenges that global warming and climate change are confronting us.

The most pressing focus for intervention must be in the area of taking concerted action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is why any collective policy responses to climate change that we formulate need to be well designed. The appreciative of the complexities and interdependencies between the environment and the economy, within not only our national context but also a regional scale, should be taken into account.

Responding to climate change is likely to test our existing mechanisms for regional cooperation in ways that have rarely been applied. In an effort to use past experience, Thailand is offering guidelines to comply with climate initiatives to help reduce greenhouse gas emission in our country. The initiatives are our work in the area of deployment of clean coal technologies and reducing GHG from other activities of concern.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I also would like to inform this gathering participations of the Second Environment Ministers' Meeting of the GMS that, the Royal Thai government has already approved the National Policy and strategy on climate change and

established the “Thailand Greenhouse Gases Management Organization- TGO” in order to cope with global issues. As part of our growing outreach to our neighbours and other developing countries, Thailand by TGO offers to establish a training centre to support the work on addressing climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We must build our knowledge and understanding of the adaptation challenges at regional and country levels.

Further, Thailand has opted to comply with the recent Bali road map for sustainable forest management to help reduce forest destruction and move forward on achieving workable solutions. Through these measures and more, the Royal Thai Government will actively participate in global efforts to lock in lower carbon emissions for the future. In conjunction with this we are also working to enhance the diversity of our rich and valuable bio-resources. It is in these critical areas of reducing deforestation and mitigating loss of common bio-resources that we in the GMS can work to find joint and mutually workable solutions.

Moreover, the GMS has contributed to the successful launch of the CEP Biodiversity Corridors Initiative. The achievements of the CEP-BCI implementation since its inception early this year have also strengthened our cooperation for sustainable management of natural resources. By 2010, the GMS countries are willing to establish biodiversity conservation landscapes and corridors for maintaining the quality of ecosystem with a view to ensure

sustainable use of shared natural resources, provision of natural resource goods, services and improving the livelihood of people. Lesson-learned from the CEP BCI implementation will help strengthen the institutional and human capacity for managing biodiversity and enhancing the other environmental cooperation in this region in the long run.

Thailand would like to reiterate our proposal on the establishment of the Research and Training Center on nature conservation in GMS region in order to become a “Knowledge Hub” of the region to develop and facilitate the dissemination of information and techniques for management of protected area and biodiversity conservation.

Thailand has realized the importance of large forest areas as habitats for species and natural ecosystems for livelihood well-being. Recently, the issue of biodiversity conservation and implementation of the forest connectivity in the Western Corridors in Thailand has been acknowledged by the Cabinet.

Thailand expects that successful linking of the two large forest complexes in Thailand in the Tenasserim range will create the largest terrestrial forest habitats and protected area in Southeast Asia. From our experience, it has been shown that sustainable management of these forest complexes need cooperation, participation and action of all stakeholders/ partners including government

sectors, non-government organizations, private sectors, local communities, as well as universities and children schools.

As the year 2003-2013 is the Decade for Natural Resources and Environment Rehabilitation in Thailand, the Thai Government has given the mandate to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to promote sustainable development with the participation of all stakeholders including local communities. This will integrate all knowledge and experience from relevant peoples including local wisdom and spirit of human relationship for conservation of nature and biodiversity.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Regarding other environmental issues, haze pollution and forest fire which have adverse impacts on GMS member countries are our common concerns. I would like to urge GMS members to develop relevant measures to help mitigate haze and forest fire problems. Integrated water management, environmental protection, avian flu and other communicable diseases are also issues that we, in the GMS should be further help strengthen.

With our common goals to improve the environmental performance and to protect our natural resources, Thailand hopes to work closely together with other GMS countries in order to make the GMS region to a “Region of hope” as well as to elevate the qualities of human life for the generations to come.

Thank you.
