

Welcome to the GMS Environment Update, a compilation of recent environment news from the GMS Core Environment Program, the Asian Development Bank, WWF Greater Mekong Programme and the governments of the six GMS countries.

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GMS Environment Update - Issue 11

Core Environment Program

News: Cambodia Reviews its Draft National Environment Strategy

Cambodia's draft National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (NESAP) – the first such strategy for the country in over a decade - was reviewed this month at a consultation event in Phnom Penh.

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News: Eco-driving to Reduce GHG Emissions in the GMS

Truck drivers from over 100 freight companies in Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam have undergone eco-driving training as the Green Freight Initiative tests ways to lessen the environmental impacts of freight transport in the GMS.

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Video: Safeguarding Yunnan's Biodiversity

This new CEP film highlights the environmental challenges facing China's Yunnan Province and ongoing efforts to protect the unique biodiversity of Xishuangbanna prefecture.

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Event: 22nd Annual Meeting of the GMS Working Group on Environment

Core Environment Program progress and priorities, as well as a strategic framework for a third phase of the program were discussed at the WGE annual meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam, in late July. The proceedings, presentations and other meeting materials are now available online.

[Read more](#)

Asian Development Bank

News: ADB Sells \$1.3 Billion in Global Green Bonds to Spur Climate Financing

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has raised \$1.3 billion to help finance climate change mitigation and adaptation projects with the issue of dual-tranche 3-year and 10-year green bonds, following its inaugural green bond issue in 2015.

[Read more](#)

Publication: Greater Mekong Subregion Statistics on Growth, Infrastructure, and Trade

This ADB publication provides a snapshot of the GMS subregion's performance from 1992-2014, highlighting growth in output and merchandise trade, developments in ICT, and trends in subregional integration.

[Read more](#)

News: GMS Officials to Reinvent Trade, Climate Friendly Agriculture Products

At the 13th Annual Meeting of the Working Group on Agriculture (WGA AM-13) of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), agriculture officials discussed ways to improve food safety and trade, climate friendly agriculture and bioenergy and biomass management.

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News: ADB Supports Civil Society To Help Communities Tackle Climate Change

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Cambodia are receiving support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to help communities tackle climate change impacts and natural disasters, through a

Event: Training on Assessing Community Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change

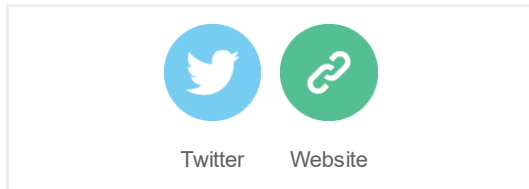
Held 17-20 August, this workshop was the first in a series of three that aim to build the capacity of government planners in the GMS to work with communities to integrate climate change adaptation into local level development planning.

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Event: Green Freight Day at BAQ Conference:

CEP and partners are hosting a Green Freight Day as part of the Better Air Quality Conference in Buson, South Korea on 29 August.

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civil society support scheme officially launched in July.

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OpEd: Green Infrastructure Minimizes Flood Risk - Stefan Rau

Recent storms in China affecting especially cities along the Yangtze River and even in the northern part of the country show current water engineering approaches are not offering enough protection from flooding disasters.

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Publication: Natural Capital and the Rule of Law - Proceedings of the ADB Second Asian Judges Symposium on Environment 2013

This publication captures the proceedings of the Second Asian Judges Symposium: "Natural Capital and the Rule of Law" held 3–5 December 2013 in Manila, the Philippines

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Video: New Road in Lao PDR Changes Everything

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has built a new road with help from ADB linking the tourist town of Luangprabang with the country's border with Thailand.

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ADB Case Study: In Viet Nam, Some Farmers Are No Longer at the Mercy of the Monsoons

In 60 years working the land, Phung Minh has been at the mercy of the rains. They have nourished his crops but they have also destroyed them.

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GMS Governments

Thailand

MNRE to Increase Forest Area by 96 Million Rai of Land in 20 years

Thailand plans to increase green and forest areas by 35 percent or by 26 million rai of land in the next 10 years and then by 96 million rai of land in the following decade.

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Reform Plan for National Parks to Focus on Conservation and Tourism

The Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation is preparing a national reform plan for national parks, emphasizing conservation, tourism, and public participation.

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Govt Explains 20-year Plan to Battle Wildlife Trafficking to NLA

The government has assured the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) that it has continued work to combat the illegal animal trade and has a 20 year plan to protect the nation's wildlife.

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Water Situation Improves in Chao Phraya River Basin

Director-General of the Royal Irrigation Department Suthep Noiphairote has confirmed the water situation of the Chao Phraya river basin has improved due to the rainy weather.

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Thailand-Laos Join Hands to Create Forests in Border Villages

Authorities in Thailand and Laos have joined hands to plant trees in villages along the Thailand-Laos border strengthening the relationship of the two countries and mutually restoring the natural fertility of the forest.

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MNRE Continues Construction of 8,000 Dykes

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) will immediately proceed with the construction of 8,900 public-government dykes, ordering a revision on 10 projects that were not constructed according to their design.

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MNRE Set to Turn Forest Trespassers to Protectors

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) is set to enhance the performance of forest protection networks nationwide, aiming to convert trespassers into becoming protectors of the forests.

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National Forums Planned for Reviewing Thailand's New Environmental Quality Management Plan

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment plans to hold 12 stakeholder forums to gather feedback on a new draft environmental quality management plan for the country.

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People's Republic of China

China to Step Up Support for Green Sector: Top Economic Planner

China's top economic planner has pledged more efforts to support the green sector after the country fulfilled its energy-saving targets and saw the environment improve in the first half of this year.

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MEP Launches National-scale Environmental Inspections for the Iron and Steel Industry

MEP is deploying national-scale environmental inspections for the iron and steel industry.

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China to Spend 430 Billion Yuan Fighting Water Pollution

China will spend 430 billion yuan (64.6 billion US dollars) on about 4,800 projects to improve the quality of its scarce water resources, the Ministry of Environmental Protection announced recently.

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The First Round of Central Environmental Protection Inspections Launched

The first round of central environmental protection inspections will focus on the eight provinces (autonomous regions) of Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Henan, Guangxi, Yunnan, and Ningxia.

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Apple Goes Green, Company Commits to Zero Environmental Waste in China

Apple has announced that all 14 of its final assembly sites in China are now compliant with UL (Underwriters Laboratories) zero waste standards.

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State Council Approves 'Opening-up' Pilot Zone in Southwest China

China's State Council has approved Pingxiang, a city of Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region on the border with Vietnam, to be a new opening-up pilot zone, a statement said on Friday.

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Nearly 400 Baby Crocodiles Seized in South China

Border police in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region said they have seized 399 baby Siamese crocodiles, a protected species in the country.

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New Amphibian Species Found in SW China

A new amphibian species of the genus *Leptolalax*, commonly known as the Asian litter frog, found in Tengchong, southwest China's Yunnan Province.

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Myanmar

Floods Kill Six, Affect More Than 420,000 People Nationwide

Nationwide flooding, which began in mid-July have so far killed six people, and affected more than 420,000 people in 98,000 households, according to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

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Efforts to Curb Illegal Logging in Bago Region Undermined

In just four months since the new NLD-led government came to office, legal action has been taken against over 300 individuals for illegal logging, and more than 1,800 tons of illegally logged timber has been confiscated, within Bago Region, says the local Department of Forestry.

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Reducing Poverty Through Agricultural Development

As a developing country with a population of 52 million, Myanmar needs an effective agricultural policy effective to drive economic development.

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Vice President Cautions Against Impact of Economic Growth on Environment

Vice President U Myint Swe has shed light on the impact of economic growth on environment in the undertaking of national development at a coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, calling for effective efforts toward environmental protection.

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President U Htin Kyaw Takes Part in National Environmental Greening Campaign

President U Htin Kyaw attended a tree-growing ceremony of National Environmental Greening Campaign organized by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in Nay Pyi Taw recently.

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Lao People's Democratic Republic

Grant Agreement Signed for MRC's Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Mr Tim Enderlin, Regional Director for the Mekong Region of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and Dr Pham Tuan Phan, CEO of the Mekong River Commission (MRC) Secretariat, signed an agreement for Switzerland's contribution of US\$7.4 million to the implementation of MRC's new Strategic Plan 2016–2020.

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Laos to Benefit from Voluntary Partnership Agreement with EU

Once Lao PDR signs a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union (EU), it will bring a number of benefits to the country, bettering its forest governance and management.

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Japan-funded Southern Region Power System Development Project launched

Ambassador of Japan to Laos Takeshi Hikiyama on Tuesday participated in the inauguration ceremony of the newly constructed bulk power system and substation in the southern region.

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Organic Farming Remains a Challenge in ASEAN

Agri-food production using clean and green agriculture methods remains a challenge for ASEAN member states as demand remains high.

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Oudomxay Hunts for Chemical Tanks

Authorities in Oudomxay have formed an *ad hoc* team to search for pesticide and herbicide tanks that were washed away by flood waters in Beng and Hun districts on Aug 13.

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Cambodia

Ministries Strengthen Climate Change Planning

Efforts to improve the integration of climate change considerations into investment programs and budget submissions of the ministries of water resources and meteorology, and public works and transport were presented at two workshops in Phnom Penh recently.

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Report: Promoting Private Sector Contributions to Climate Change Responses in Cambodia

The results of a study analyzing the climate-related investments of 65 companies in Cambodia were recently published.

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Report: Second Study on Understanding Public Perceptions of Climate Change in Cambodia: Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices

This Ministry of Environment report presents results from a study that identified and evaluated changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices of the public relating to climate change.

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MoAFF Promoting Trees Replanting in Former Concession Lands

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is promoting tree replanting in areas taken back from irregular economic land concessions.

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Mekong's Dolphins Facing Threats

Climate Change and hasty flow of the water in Mekong River are threatening lives of dolphins in Cambodia, according to local media.

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Cambodia Hosts 8th GMS Economic Corridors Forum

The 8th Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Corridors Forum (ECF-8) was held in Phnom Penh last week under the theme "Strengthening Connectivity and Enhancing Competitiveness in the GMS Economic Corridors."

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Cambodia Requests Japan to Share Experience on Bamboo Recycling

Since Japan has a lot of needs in the use of bamboo chopsticks, tablecloths and boxes while Cambodia is rich of bamboo, Cambodia requested Japan to dispatch specialists to Cambodia to share experience on bamboo recycling for local use and exports to Japan.

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Cambodia and Wildlife Conservation Society To Sign Follow-on Agreement to Disney Carbon Credit Sale

A project agreement that will oversee the use of the funds generated by Cambodia's carbon credit sale to the Disney Company will be signed by the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Wildlife Conservation Society on Aug. 11, in the afternoon, said a press release of the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh.

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Viet Nam

Monitoring System to Aid Forest Management

Data on forest and forest land will be collected by an electronic forest information system for decision making or statistical purposes and designing a strategy or plan for forest development.

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Linkages Between Climate Change and Human Migration in the Mekong Delta

Climate change has been posing a greater flooding threat to the Mekong Delta as a result of rising sea levels near low lying land at the mouth of the delta and increased rainfall.

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Water Sources Conservation and Development – A Solid Objective of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

In Vietnam, water resources are becoming scarcer and undermined in terms of both quality and quantity. This also explained why in 2016, exploitation of water sources was considered by the MONRE as one of the biggest challenges.

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International Cooperation to Enhance Land Management

Over the past few years, international cooperation in the field of land management has been playing important role helping State management agencies perfect land-related mechanism and policies.

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Transport Firms Urged to Fight Wildlife Trade

The transportation sector must work closely with law enforcement agencies to bolster the fight against wildlife crime and reduce demand for wildlife consumption, experts said at a recent workshop.

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Marine Biodiversity Conservation Needs Master Plan

Experts push for a master plan to better protect coastal ecosystems in Viet Nam.

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HCM City Explores High-tech Waste Treatment Plan

HCM City plans to reduce burying of solid wastes and improve waste treatment technologies by 2030, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment has said.

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Sea Environmental Quality Assessed for Four Provinces

Results of a sea environmental quality assessment involving four provinces from Ha Tinh to Thua Thien Hue were presented at a meeting this month.

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WWF Greater Mekong Programme

Thailand's Tiger Temple Raid Highlights Need to Close Tiger Farms in Asia

Following the serious crimes recently uncovered during a raid on Thailand's Tiger Temple, WWF is calling on governments across Asia to investigate all tiger breeding centres and close any operations proven to be involved in the illegal tiger trade, especially as tiger breeding centres in Asia have increased at an astounding rate over the last 15 years.

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In Myanmar, WWF Working with Partners to Create a New Kind of Global Development Roadmap

WWF scientists and policy experts are working to protect Myanmar's natural capital against an uncertain future where human livelihoods clash with conservation goals.

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Three-fold Increase in Eld's Deer Population in Savaankhet Province

The Eld's Deer population in Savannakhet Province in Laos has tripled since 2008 after the endangered species was only discovered in 2002.

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The Most Sustainable Speaker for Mobile Phones in the World

It doesn't need high-tech knowledge, batteries or cables, it seems almost unbreakable and it works fine for all mobile models. The eco-speaker is made of a piece of bamboo rod harvested by members of community bamboo groups in Cambodia.

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