



Biodiversity Heroes. (L-R) Mr. Eyad Samhan, Brunei Darussalam; Mr. Sophea Chhin, Cambodia; Mr. Alex Waisimon, Indonesia; Mr. Nitsavanh Louangkhot Pravongviengkham, Lao PDR; Prof. Zakri Abdul Hamid, Malaysia; Dr. Maung Maung Kyi, Myanmar; Dr. Angel C. Alcalá, Philippines; Prof. Leo Tan Wee Hin, Singapore; Dr. Nonn Panitvong, Thailand; and Prof. Dang Huy Huynh, Viet Nam

Ten conservation advocates receive 2017 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Award

Ten biodiversity conservation advocates representing the grassroots, government, academic, and business sectors received the 2017 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Award at a ceremony held in Manila, Philippines on 7 August 2017. The inaugural award forms part of the celebration of ASEAN's Golden Anniversary.

The ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes is a program designed to recognize outstanding individuals from the ASEAN region who have contributed significantly to biodiversity conservation and advocacy efforts in their respective countries.

From an indigenous community leader who is protecting Papua's forest to a national scientist who is championing coastal resources management, the inaugural ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes honors inspirational and valiant individuals who have risen to the challenge of helping curb biodiversity loss. Each of the heroes, in their own different ways, have made significant impact on biodiversity conservation in their respective communities, countries, and the region.

"At the heart of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint 2025 is the commitment to lift the quality of life of its peoples through cooperative activities that are people oriented, people-centered, environmentally friendly, and geared towards the promotion of sustainable development. Today is a celebration – where we rejoice the achievement and recognition of these ten remarkable individuals. It is also a

celebration for the peoples of ASEAN. The Heroes will bring to the peoples of ASEAN a better understanding, awareness and appreciation of the diverse values of biodiversity and underpin the willingness of individuals to make real changes and actions that will bring about a more sustainable future for all of us," said H.E. Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.

ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) Executive Director Roberto V. Oliva said, "We are honoring 10 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes who have dedicated their lives for the cause of biodiversity conservation. Under great sacrifice to themselves and their families, they have shown tenacity, perseverance and focus to protect our web of life. Our heroes have shown us clearly what love for self, what love for children and grandchildren and what love for one's country is. It is embracing the cause of biodiversity conservation. ASEAN biodiversity which is the region's life support system is still rich because of you," he said. The ACB serves as awards secretariat.

Representing Secretary Roy Cimatu of the Philippines' Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Undersecretary Jonas Leones said the search for the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes holds a special significance for the Philippines and the entire ASEAN region. "Without biodiversity, there will be no life, for biodiversity is life in itself. Without biodiversity in its myriad forms and inter-interdependence, we

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will not survive and prosper. Biodiversity feeds us, sustains healthy living, maintains a healthy and productive environment, helps nations develop and grow economically, promotes human development and well-being, and provides recreational facilities. In short, biodiversity is with us and around us, every moment, and in every breath we take," he said.

The ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes is supported by the ASEAN Secretariat; the Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs; the European Union through the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) project; and HARI Foundation, Inc. (HFI), the corporate social responsibility arm of Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI).

Mr. Michael Bucki, EU Climate Change and Environment Counsellor to the ASEAN, expressed pride in supporting the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes through the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) project. "We need a global vision and a political will at the highest level to halt biodiversity loss and I have no doubt that the ASEAN – EU partnership can reinforce that vision towards a common objective and interest. We also need biodiversity champions who are making outstanding efforts, always acting beyond their personal interest and often taking personal risks. They make a significant difference in our day to day life and more importantly they lead by example in order that each and every one can contribute 'to make the planet great again'."

Each ASEAN Biodiversity Hero received a cash prize worth USD 5,000, a special Heroes medal and trophy.

Apart from receiving the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Award, the 10 heroes also received the Hyundai Icon for Biodiversity Award, a special prize from HARI Foundation, Inc. (HFI). "HFI opens a new leg in our journey of working and caring for Man and Planet as the Philippine automotive industry's champion for biodiversity. We have covered substantial ground in our advocacy for education in environmental stewardship, but we know we can still do more to heed Mother Nature's desperate call for help. Partnering with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity is an

important step towards expanding the scope and scale of our advocacy for social and environmental sustainability. I warmly congratulate this year's ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes. With you in the spotlight as models for everyone to emulate, we can do more in broadening the awareness about biodiversity and in creating actionable measures toward its conservation," Ms. Ma. Fe Perez-Agudo, president of HFI, said.

The ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes were selected by the ASEAN Member States. The nominating agencies considered the relevance of the nominees' contributions to biodiversity conservation, the impact of these contributions to biodiversity conservation efforts in their respective countries and the region, the replicability of their actions, and the recognition they received in communities where they belong.

The heroes from the 10 ASEAN Member States will be known as the faces of biodiversity conservation in the ASEAN region. They will be invited to speak in forums, workshops, press conferences, and other relevant events to share their experiences in conserving biodiversity with the aim of inspiring others to do the same.

The Centre will also launch the Second Edition of the ASEAN Biodiversity Outlook (ABO 2), which provides a midpoint assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the ASEAN region.

The inauguration marks another milestone for ACB, which traces its roots to 1999 with the creation of the European Commission-funded ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation (ARCBC). The ARCBC fostered strong collaboration among the AMS and between ASEAN and EC partner institutions, gradually gaining recognition in the regional and global biodiversity arena. Stakeholders agreed on the need for a permanent institution, as against a mere time-bound instrument. This promptly translated to the creation of ACB – a center that facilitates cooperation and coordination among the 10 AMS and regional international organizations on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and the fair sharing of benefits arising from the use of such natural treasures.

The 2017 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes

- 1. Mr. Eyad Samhan**
Former Field Supervisor, Tasek Merimbun, Brunei Darussalam
For significant contributions to research on fauna and flora in the country and in the region
- 2. Mr. Sophea Chhin**
Government Official, Department of Biodiversity, Cambodia
For sparking interest in wildlife research among Cambodians
- 3. Mr. Alex Waisimon**
Conservation worker, Indonesia
For protecting Papua's forests for future generations
- 4. Mr. Nitsavanh Louangkhot Pravongviengkham**
President, Union Development Agricole Import-Export Public Company (UDA Farm), Lao PDR
For promoting environment-friendly agricultural production and protecting migratory species
- 5. Prof. Zakri Abdul Hamid**
Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Malaysia
For making a lasting impact on analysis and assessment of global biodiversity and ecosystem services
- 6. Dr. Maung Maung Kyi**
Chairman, Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association, Myanmar
For effectively promoting community participation to conserve various habitats
- 7. Dr. Angel C. Alcala**
Professor Emeritus, Silliman University, National Scientist, Philippines
For championing coastal resource management and terrestrial biodiversity conservation
- 8. Prof. Leo Tan Wee Hin**
Professorial Fellow and Director (Special Projects), Faculty of Science, National University of Singapore
For championing biodiversity outreach and education
- 9. Dr. Nonn Panitvong**
Founder and Webmaster of Thailand Biodiversity Conservation Group, Director, NakornPhet Sugar Limited and other companies
For raising public awareness of biodiversity through taxonomy
- 10. Prof. Dang Huy Huynh**
Vice Chair, Viet Nam Association for Conservation of Nature and Environment
For fostering the exchange of knowledge and solutions to conserve Viet Nam's biodiversity

ASEAN strengthens efforts to mainstream biodiversity in agriculture

Key officials from the agriculture and environment sectors of the ASEAN sought common ground in addressing agrobiodiversity concerns in the first Regional Workshop on Agrobiodiversity in Chiang Mai, Thailand on 12–14 September 2017.

Jointly organized by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), and Maejo University, the workshop was made possible with financial assistance from the European Union through the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) Project and technical support from Nagoya University, International Center for Tropical Agriculture, World Agroforestry Center, and Bioversity International.

The participants were welcomed by Dr. Chamnian Yosraj, President, Maejo University; Atty. Roberto V. Oliva, Executive Director, ACB; and Mr. Xavier Canton-Lamousse, Project Manager, Operations Section, Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines.

Executive Director of ACB, Atty. Roberto V. Oliva underscored the importance of the workshop as agrobiodiversity is crucial in alleviating hunger and poverty. He stressed, “If we lose our agrobiodiversity, hunger will set in. We must seize the moment and forge a stronger commitment to strengthen ASEAN agrobiodiversity.”

In his keynote speech, Dr. Percy E. Sajise, Bioversity International Honorary Research Fellow and SEARCA Senior Fellow, discussed the importance and state of biodiversity in agriculture, needs of agrobiodiversity, ongoing conservation efforts, and recommendation for strengthening agrobiodiversity in the region. According to Dr. Sajise, “A food secure and healthy future for human

society will require not only that the world’s agrobiodiversity heritage is accessible to all but all will have an ability to use and benefit from it. A fair and transparent system for sharing both the resources and benefits arising from their use will move us closer to this goal.”

The 2-day workshop featured a keynote session with discussions on linking agrobiodiversity with food systems and nutrition; experiences on mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity from the Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) initiative, and other projects; sustainable agriculture and biodiversity in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and issues in agrobiodiversity and gender. Thematic sessions tackled governance, policies, and relevant legal instruments on agrobiodiversity; conservation and sustainable use; and gender and social contexts.

Dr. Wayne Nelles, Visiting Scholar of Chulalongkorn University and Technical Coordinator of the regional workshop, conducted a study that served as reference on the status of agrobiodiversity in ASEAN. It used information from a survey among ASEAN Member States (AMS) on capacities and resources, enabling environment and tools, needs, and recommendations in agrobiodiversity; national reports and plans; regional trends; and ASEAN policies and plans for agrobiodiversity.

In closing, Ms. Clarissa C. Arida, Director for Programme Development and Implementation of ACB, stressed that ACB will continue to work on agrobiodiversity with SEARCA and other partners, with particular focus on activities in line with the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and in accordance with the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. Dr. Gil C. Saguiguit, Jr., Director, SEARCA, stressed the need to highlight the important, but not yet widely



Dr. Chamnian Yosraj, President, Maejo University (left) gives token of appreciation to Atty. Roberto V. Oliva, Executive Director of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (right).

recognized, link between biodiversity and agriculture. He stated that “Since the beginning, we have recognized that biodiversity conservation at the heart of natural resource management, is key to achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (ISARD), which happens to be the thematic focus of SEARCA’s Tenth Five-Year Plan. Under this Plan, the Center adheres to the idea that a healthy environment and natural resource base is prerequisite to agricultural productivity and in turn to economic and overall development.”

The workshop serves as the first groundbreaking step towards the development of a regional action plan on agrobiodiversity mainstreaming, conservation, and sustainable use. In consultation with the participants and other agrobiodiversity experts, the identified action points will be fine-tuned and packaged into a strategic plan of action through the relevant ASEAN working groups and processes, before it is presented to two ASEAN sectoral bodies (ASEAN Socio-cultural Community and ASEAN Economic Community) for approval.



Representatives of various agriculture and environment sectors gathered together Maejo University in Chiang Mai, Thailand for the Regional Workshop on Agrobiodiversity on 12–14 September 2017. Source: Maejo University

Second ASEAN Mangrove Congress underscores sustainable management of mangroves in the course of climate change



Dr. Filiberto Pollisco Jr. of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (second from left) stands with the other speakers during the 2017 ASEAN Mangrove Congress *Source: ASEAN 2017 Official Website*

Representatives from various universities, agencies, and ministries from different countries gathered at the Conrad Hotel Manila, Philippines on 4 to 8 September 2017 for the Second ASEAN Mangrove Congress. Spearheaded by the Ecosystems Research and Development Bureau (ERDB) of the Philippines' Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the event aims to strengthen mangrove research and development in the ASEAN, and enhance interagency and intersectoral coordination.

With the theme "Sustainable Management of Mangroves in the Course of Climate Change", this year's Mangrove Congress was designed to

have the following outputs: (1) improved or strengthened strategies and policies to address current pressing issues and challenges on mangrove habitats; (2) enhanced partnership and cooperation between and among ASEAN Member States (AMS); (3) proposals, projects, and initiatives on the research and development for mangrove resources in line with research gaps; and (4) catalogue of gaps on mangrove research and development ecosystems and management.

During the opening program, DENR Secretary Hon. Roy Cimatu and ERDB Director Dr. Henry Adornado both emphasized that now is the time to act towards managing sustainable

mangroves. Dr. Filiberto Pollisco Jr., Programme Specialist from the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), was also present to deliver a message on behalf of the Centre. "In the face of climate change, there is no doubt that mangroves play an important role in its mitigation. I expect that this Congress will be able to share more information and cases to emulate." he said.

Representative for each of the nine AMS in attendance took turns in presenting the status of the mangroves of their respective countries, wherein statistics such as the total area covered by mangroves and the number of known species were presented.

The Congress also held four parallel breakout sessions, each having one of the following thematic areas: Mangrove, Ecology, Functions, and Fisheries; Mangrove Restoration and Rehabilitation; Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation; and Valuation & Socio-economic Studies.

During the final day of the Congress, the participants traveled to the Subic Bay Freeport Zone in Zambales, Philippines for the Ceremonial Mangrove Planting and Mangrove Eco-tour.

ASEAN and UNESCO hold conference on the protection of underwater cultural heritage

To intensify the protection of underwater heritage in Southeast Asia, the ASEAN and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) worked together to organize a conference that was held in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia on 19 and 20 September. Entitled the "ASEAN-UNESCO Conference on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage", the event was attended by representatives from ASEAN Member States (AMS) and professionals from various related fields.

With the main objectives to increase the knowledge on underwater cultural heritage of Southeast Asia; allow participants to share experiences on the challenges in the protection of underwater cultural heritage; promote understanding of the UNESCO 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage; and to raise awareness on the importance of developing measures for the protection of underwater heritage such as through the adoption of national-level legislation or strategies, the event provided the

venue for various presentations such as on the maritime history of Southeast Asia and overview by participating countries of their respective underwater natural heritage. Ms. Maylyn Pagatpatan, Programme Officer from the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) delivered a presentation on "How to benefit from the heritage of the oceans".

After the 2-day event, several recommendations were given by the participants. One of the recommendations is that national authorities should increase their capacities to protect and research on underwater cultural heritage, and encourage communities to be more involved, by way of reporting to the relevant bodies when underwater discoveries are made.



Programme Officer Ms. Maylyn Pagatpatan (first row, fourth from left) represents ACB during the ASEAN-UNESCO Conference in Indonesia *Source: The ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI)*

CAEC Forum 2017 features talk from ACB Representative

To underscore the Importance of Ecosystem Conservation for Sustainable Urban Development, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) delivered a presentation during this year's China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Forum (CAECF) on 13 to 15 September 2017 in Nanning, Guangxi, China.

Organized in 2011, the Forum is being held annually for China and the ASEAN to discuss issues on the environment, development, and cooperation, as well as to connect the community to regional cooperation in environment protection, among others. The theme for this year's Forum was "Workshop on Urban Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development".

The Division Director of CAEC Mr. Peng Bin served as the Chair for the Forum. Mr. Yang Xiaoling, Deputy Director General of the Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), China; Ms. Zhou Guomei, Deputy Director General of CAEC; Mr. Deng Chaobing, Chief Engineer, Department of Environmental Protection, Guangxi; and Ms. Mardiah Hayati, Senior Officer, Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat each delivered messages during the Opening Remarks, along with the Chair.

Mr. Andrew Evangelista, ACB Technical Officer, served as a speaker during one of the sessions on the first day of the forum. In the session, which carried the theme Urban Environmental Protection: Policy Exchange, he emphasized the services that natural ecosystems provide by sharing the numerous initiatives being implemented by ACB. Mr. Evangelista



ACB's Mr. Andrew Evangelista speaks in front of the attendees to this year's CAEC Forum.

showcased the ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHP) Programme as one of the Centre's flagship programs that promotes awareness of the rich biodiversity in the ASEAN region.

Starting the afternoon of the first day, three thematic sessions were available for the participants to attend: Urban Environmental Sustainable Development; Cooperation on Environmental Industry and Technology between China and ASEAN; and "Belt and Road" Environmental Technologies: Introduction & Match-making.



Mr. Andrew Evangelista and Ms. Patricia Marie Tanyag represented ACB during the 2017 CAECF

The Forum participants were brought to the 14th China-ASEAN Expo and the Exhibition of Environmental Industry and Technologies in the afternoon of the second day. Here, items such as food products, handicrafts, electronics, and building materials were placed on display to showcase products from the ASEAN region, as well as the host country.

Apart from the Forum, ACB participated in a ceremonial tree planting in one of the demonstration sites of the Guangdong-Guangxi Interprovincial Pilot Cooperation Zone (GGSZ). This is an area in Wuzhou being constructed to house over a thousand companies, and aims to promote industrial development, financial innovation, and tourism services. The ceremonial tree planting was done in the China-ASEAN Demonstration Base for Environmental Protection Technology and Industry Cooperation, which will provide technological exchange, research, and development, investment facilitation from China and ASEAN by inviting in environmentally-friendly corporations.

IPBES workshop identifies new visions for nature and nature's contributions to people for the 21st century

The Intergovernmental Science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) held a workshop entitled "New visions for nature and nature's contributions to people for the 21st century" from 4 to 8 September 2017 at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. Organized by the IPBES Scenario & Modelling Expert Group, the workshop had over 70 participants from international organizations, government agencies, private sector, indigenous and local communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the wider scientific community, all having diverse views on nature and its benefit to people.

The workshop, which was hosted in New Zealand by the University of Auckland and the National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research (NIWA), aimed

to determine the visions that exist on nature and nature's contributions to people, identify the future positive scenarios that can be built based on these multiple visions, and recognize the requirements to inform decision makers in order for them to address potential changes in biodiversity and ecosystem services (BES).

Seven thematic groups were identified, and the workshop participants were free to join which group they would like to work with for the entire workshop. The topics were: (1) Prosperity; (2) Food Production; (3) Urban-Rural Flows; (4) Water; (5) Culture; (6) Nature's Dynamics; and (7) Marine.

During the third day of the workshop, the participants were taken to Tiritiri

Matangi Island, an off-shore island restoration project which also serves as a wildlife sanctuary, and is one of New Zealand's most important and exciting conservation projects. This sanctuary showcases a successful ecosystem restoration project where rare native birds like the kōkako and the takahē can be found in restored habitats.

Director for Programme Development and Implementation (PDI) Unit of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) Ms. Clarissa Arida, was invited to be one of the participants in the workshop. Upon the completion of the workshop, Ms. Arida and Wendy Nelson of NIWA prepared a joint report to the IPBES Capacity Building Task Force.

Training of Trainers on Value Chain Development held to complement efforts on biodiversity conservation and livelihood development



Representatives from ACB and several ASEAN Member States listened during the Training of Trainers for Value Chain Development



The future trainers during an interview in Xang Khong Village

Aiming to build the capacity of the staff of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and of representatives from several ASEAN Member States (AMS), a Training of Trainers on Value Chain Development was conducted in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR on 3 to 7 July 2017.

The training, which was composed of a lecture covering several topics, workshops, and a field visit, intended to enhance the capacity of the Small Grants Programme (SGP) and the Biodiversity-based Products (BBP) project teams on the development of value chains as an

approach to develop livelihoods that complement or support biodiversity conservation in ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHPs). Apart from ensuring the participants are able to understand the basic concepts, functions and actors in a value chain, the training also guided the participants in conducting a value chain mapping and analysis and come up with value chain upgrading strategies.

One of the workshop exercises was that the participants were grouped based on their respective countries, and were tasked to choose a specific product that

they would develop a value chain for. This was then used for the succeeding modules of the training.

The participants visited Xang Khong Village on 5 July to conduct interviews, and to observe an actual value chain involving hand-made paper from mulberry tree. Here, they were able to interview the producers group in the Xang Khong Village, and the Deputy Head of the Department of Industry and Commerce (DoIC) in Luang Prabang.

ACB-BIM's Junior Research Associates join Training Workshop on Biodiversity Informatics on Big Data Era

Forty-five young scientists who are engaged in biodiversity conservation, data collection, management and analysis from several ASEAN Member States as well as from countries such as Japan, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka, and Uzbekistan convened at the Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IB-CAS) in Beijing, China from 4 to 14 September 2017 for a Training Workshop on Biodiversity Informatics in Big Data Era.

Funded by the Bureau of International Cooperation, CAS, Beijing Office, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Chinese National Committee for Man and the Biosphere (MAB), the Training Workshop focused on biodiversity data collection, management, sharing, and mining, and it offered the participants various training courses, practice exercises, and a field trip.

Experts who were invited to share their knowledge to the young participants provided their insights on data gathering techniques, as well as their own experiences. New monitoring technologies, such as infrared cameras,

satellite trackers, and various mobile applications, were also introduced. Towards the end of the 10-day event, the attendees were brought to the Dongling Mountain, also in Beijing, to allow them to practice plant survey and camera-trap survey techniques.

Among the participants who were selected to join the training workshop were Pauline Carmel Joy Eje, Junior Research Associate, and Carlos Aurelio

Callangan, Junior Research Associate. Both are from the Biodiversity Information Management Unit of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB). After the workshop, the young attendees were expected to become excellent managers on big data for their respective countries, and establish long-term development relationship of biodiversity conservation and biodiversity informatics with other Asian countries.



Young scientists from several AMS and other countries convened on 4 to 14 September 2017 in Beijing, China for a Training Workshop on Biodiversity Informatics in Big Data Era

Indonesia's Festival of Parks puts spotlight on ASEAN Heritage Parks



ACB's Ms. Mary Grace Aquino (second from left) served as one of the guest speakers during the talk show held during the Festival of National and Eco Tourism Parks



The exhibit, "ASEAN Island", during the Festival of National and Eco Tourism Parks

Officials and staff of over 30 national parks of Indonesia mingled with various stakeholders and the public on 10 to 13 August 2017 for the Festival of National and Eco Tourism Parks showcasing Indonesia's ASEAN Heritage Parks.

Held at the Blambangan Park in Banyuwangi City, the festival was organized by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MOEF) and Indonesia's International Cooperation Bureau as one of the commemorative activities of ASEAN's 50th Anniversary. The event aimed to encourage the ASEAN Member States (AMS) to provide and develop communication, education, and public awareness (CEPA) materials to increase understanding and appreciation of the ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHPs), as well as strengthen partnership with AMS in promoting AHPs across the region in contribution to the fulfillment of the AHP-Regional Action Plan 2016-2020 among others.

One of the highlights of the event was the ASEAN Island, an exhibit which featured the AHPs. Ms. Mary Grace Aquino, Programme Associate for the AHP Programme of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) served as one of the exhibitors.

Mr. Bambang Dahono Adji, Director of Biodiversity Conservation; Ms. Ratna Kusuma Sari, Deputy Director of Biodiversity Conservation, MOEF; and Ms. Sri Murniningtyas, Director of International Cooperation Bureau were among the officials who were present during the formal opening of the festival.

A talk show with the theme "ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and Contribution to Indonesia and the Global Community" was held during the second day. Hosted by the International Cooperation Bureau, the event also showcased video presentations of the various AHPs.

Search continues for youth biodiversity advocates in ASEAN

In celebration of 40 years of the partnership of the European Union (EU) and the ASEAN, the two bodies launched a video competition to allow the young citizens of the ASEAN to shine as biodiversity advocates: #MyNatureMyHero.

Aimed to raise awareness and support for nature conservation, the EU-ASEAN Youth Video Competition is open to young citizens of the ASEAN Member States (AMS), aged 18 to 30. It will target the network of existing and potential ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHP) to reduce biodiversity loss, and will be implemented in close coordination with the EU Delegation in Manila and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB).

The participants need to submit a one-minute video they have produced, along with a story they have written, that shows their appreciation to the people who contribute to the preservation and protection of nature. Entries will be screened by judges Nicholas Saputra, Mario Maurer, and Solenn Heussaff.

The winner will receive free tickets to visit one of the AHPs. Additionally, the winning entry will be voiced over by the judges.

For more information, visit the official website of the EU-ASEAN Youth Video Competition at mynaturemyhero.com. For regular updates on the competition, follow the EU Mission to ASEAN on social media: @EUinASEAN @EUAmbASEAN Hashtag: #MyNatureMyHero

ACBeats

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ASEAN declares two ASEAN Heritage Parks in Indonesia

Kepulauan Seribu National Park (KSNP) and Wakatobi National Park (WNP) of Indonesia joined the growing network of ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHPs). AHPs are protected areas of high conservation importance, preserving in total a complete spectrum of representative ecosystems of the ASEAN region.

On 12 September 2017, the environment ministers of the ASEAN Member States formally approved the nomination of the two parks as AHPs during the 14th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment held in Brunei Darussalam.

“I would like to congratulate Indonesia’s Ministry of Environment and Forestry, for the two newly approved ASEAN Heritage Parks, Wakatobi National Park and Kepulauan Seribu National Park. We are elated to have new marine protected areas as most of the AHPs are terrestrial,” said Atty. Roberto Oliva, Executive Director of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB).

Located in the Southeast Sulawesi Province and Kepulauan Seribu Utara Sub District respectively, the parks have diverse flora and fauna and rich cultural heritage.

Kepulauan Seribu National Park (KSNP)

Located approximately 45 kilometers from Indonesia’s capital Jakarta, the park is composed of 78 islands, and has unique vegetation and coastal ecosystem where numerous marine and terrestrial species of high conservation importance live. KSNP has four complete coastal ecosystems: coastal forests, mangroves, seagrass, and coral reefs.

A number of the islands that comprise this national park serve as the nesting area to the Hawksbill Sea Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and the Green Sea Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), which stretches from Peteloran Timur Island, Penjaliran Barat Island, and Penjaliran Timur Island.

Additionally, rehabilitation program in KSNP combats the decline of the three species of eagles that can be found in the park.



Kepulauan Seribu National Park

Source: Filiberto Pollisco Jr.

Wakatobi National Park (WNP)

WNP is located in the province of Southeast Sulawesi and within the Coral Triangle, and is known for having the highest diversity of corals and marine resources in the world.

Covering a total area of about 1.39 million hectares, WNP has the following essential resources: coral reefs, seagrass, mangrove forests, sea turtle habitat, waterfowl species habitat, marine mammal habitat, and some fish species having high economic value. It is also home to two endangered turtles – the Green Sea Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and the Hawksbill Sea Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*).

In 2012, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized WNP as part of the “World Network of Biosphere Reserves.”

The AHP Programme

The ACB serves as the secretariat of the AHP Programme. Protected areas benefit from being declared as an AHP through capacity-building activities for park managers and stakeholders in the form of various learning events, such as trainings and workshops.

AHPs also receive technical assistance from the AHP secretariat, through ACB in-house experts and network of partners. Being an AHP also increases the protected area’s visibility as a prime ecotourism destination and model for effective protected area management through the Communication, Education and Public Awareness program of ACB.

Participation of, and collaboration among AHP stakeholders in the implementation of research and development programs and projects are also maximized and strengthened when a protected area is declared as an AHP.

The AHP Programme also serves as a regional platform for information sharing among AHPs by way of AHP Committee Meetings and AHP Conferences. Parks declared as AHPs are first in line for available funding through ACB programs and projects.



Wakatobi National Park

Source: Directorate General of Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystem