



The ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes from Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Lao PDR are joined by students from the Ha Noi University of Natural Resources and Environment and other participants for the first day of the ABH Forum.

ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes share conservation stories in Viet Nam

To encourage collective efforts of the youth, media, government, and private sectors to conserve biodiversity, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), with support from the European Union (EU) and Biodiversity Conservation Agency (BCA), Viet Nam Environment Administration (VEA) under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam, conducted the first leg of the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Regional Forum at the Ha Noi University of Natural Resources and Environment (HUNRE) from 26 to 27 March 2018.

The first leg of the forum series puts the spotlight on the Biodiversity Heroes of Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam, who shared their acts in combatting biodiversity loss in their respective countries.

“As we honor the heroes for their extraordinary efforts, we must remember that everyone, no matter who they are, has a role to contribute—and we are determined to play our part by raising awareness and encouraging others

to take concrete actions in conserving biodiversity,” said H.E. Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN in his video message.

The ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes (ABH) are the faces of biodiversity conservation in the region who take action for biodiversity in their own spheres of influence. They were recognized during the Golden Anniversary of ASEAN on 8 August 2017 in Manila, Philippines. The ABH 2017 are the following: (1) Eyad Samhan of Brunei Darussalam; (2) Sophea Chhin of Cambodia; (3) Alex Waisimon of Indonesia; (4) Nitsavanh Louangkhot Pravongviengkham of Lao PDR; (5) Prof. Zakri Abdul Hamid of Malaysia; (6) Dr. Maung Maung Kyi of Myanmar; (7) Dr. Angel C. Alcala of the Philippines; (8) Prof. Leo Tan Wee Hin of Singapore; (9) Dr. Nonn Panitvong of Thailand; and (10) Prof. Dang Huy Huynh of Viet Nam.

To further spread the conservation stories of the Heroes, the second leg of the Forum Series will feature the

continued on page 2...

**What's
Inside?**



ASEAN, India, SCBD,
join hands in achieving
biodiversity
conservation targets
page 3



ACB and CBD provide
guidance on the
establishment of
Clearing-House Mechanism
in Asia
page 6

ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes...continued from page 1



The second day of the forum are field visits to the Viet Nam Academy of Sciences (VAST) where Prof. Dang Huy Huynh, Biodiversity Hero of Viet Nam, practiced his profession as a scientist and at the Cuc Phuong National Park where he was assigned in 1961 and had a deeper appreciation to biodiversity.

Biodiversity Heroes of Cambodia, Indonesia, and the Philippines; and the last leg will feature Heroes of Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, and Singapore.

Inspiring for change

Lao PDR's Biodiversity Hero, Mr. Nitsavanh, and his company Union Development Agricole Import-Export Public Company (UDA Farm), started their involvement in conservation by replanting trees in 2000 in the Nam Suang area adjacent to his farm. After this, he popularized the use of environment-friendly agricultural production methods in pig farms, cattle ranch, and vegetation across a 2,000-hectare land near the Nam Suang River in Phon-Hong District, Vientiane Province in Lao PDR. Mr. Nitsavanh believes that while businesses can have direct or indirect impact on biodiversity, they also have relevant biodiversity-related knowledge, expertise, and resources needed to conserve biological resources. The business sector is an integral part of the solution to biodiversity loss.

"I started my dream just like each one of you. I have no money, no skills at that time; but the strong desire is very important," said Dr. Kyi, Biodiversity Hero of Myanmar as part of his message to the youth attendees. "If you have strong desire for conservation, skills will follow and funding will also come. Because of our team's desire, we now have so many projects, so many partners, and so many millions dedicated to biodiversity come to our region," he added. Dr. Kyi is a medical doctor by profession but his ultimate

dream is to have his own botanical garden—a dream that he pursued despite oppositions from some of his relatives and his community. His botanical garden soon became a conservation forest. He founded Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association (RCA), a community-based organization that seeks to conserve the environment and biodiversity in and around his region.

Dr. Panitvong, the Biodiversity Hero of Thailand, is a businessman who is popularizing taxonomy and helping it become more accessible to the general public. "Our group, Siamensis.org, are mostly researchers and taxonomists. I believe that the real biodiversity heroes are those who take care of our wildlife in the field. And those heroes are you, the park officers and rangers," said Dr. Panitvong to the Cuc Phuong National Park officers and staff.

"I am 90 years old. I am doing my best to connect two generations—the young and the old, not just in the ASEAN region but also in the world" said Prof. Huynh, Biodiversity Hero of Viet Nam. "In times that you feel like your biodiversity conservation efforts are not enough, just put in mind that if this old man can do it,

then definitely, you can," shared Prof. Huynh as he encouraged the young participants to do their part in conserving biodiversity. Prof. Huynh is a senior scientist and one of Viet Nam's leading experts on biodiversity, natural resources, and the environment.

The search for modern-day biodiversity heroes

The inaugural search for the ABH in 2017 was supported by the ASEAN Secretariat; the Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs; the European Union through the BCAMP project; and HARI Foundation, Inc. (HFI), the corporate social responsibility arm of Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI).

The 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 ACB serves as the Secretariat of the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes.

The ABH Regional Forum Series aims to promote the conservation activities and stories of the Biodiversity Heroes to serve as inspiration for other individuals to emulate and do actions for biodiversity conservation. This initiative is being supported by the EU under the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) Project.



From left to right: Mr. Pham Anh Cuong, Director of Biodiversity Conservation Agency, Vietnam Environment Administration, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE); Dr. Nonn Panitvong, Thailand's Biodiversity Hero; Dr. Maung Maung Kyi, Myanmar's Biodiversity Hero; Prof. Dang Huy Huynh, Viet Nam's Biodiversity Hero; Mr. Nitsavanh Louangkhot Pravongviengkham, Biodiversity Hero of Lao PDR; Mr. Roberto V. Oliva, ACB Executive Director; and Associate Professor Dr. Pham Quy Nhan, Vice President of HUNRE.

ASEAN, India, SCBD, join hands in achieving biodiversity conservation targets



Representatives from the AMS, SCBD, BIOFIN, NIRAS, and ACB gathered in Makati City, Philippines for a workshop on achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sixth National Report.

Aiming to have an identified set of priorities and recommended actions aligned with achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets including the Sustainable Development Goals; and to have a common timeline for the preparation of the Sixth National Report (6NR), representatives from ASEAN Member States (AMS), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), NIRAS Technical Assistance Team, and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), gathered for a workshop in Makati City, Philippines from 12 to 15 March 2018.

Entitled “Regional Workshop on Prioritizing Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the ASEAN for Implementation in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and Preparation of the Sixth National Reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity,” the workshop was organized by ACB, in partnership with the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) of India. The event is one of the activities under the Aichi Target component of the ACB-NBA Cooperation in supporting the efforts of the AMS to achieve biodiversity conservation goals and targets at the national level.

One of the speakers was Mr. Lijie Cai, Programme Officer-National Reports of the SCBD. In his presentation on the Current Status of Aichi Targets—Adoption and Implementation, Mr. Cai reported that the level of ambition of the national targets stated in the Fifth National Reports of the parties to the CBD is not in line with the Aichi

Biodiversity Targets. He encouraged the AMS to begin working on the 6NR for the CBD and provide more information in order to support their analysis.

The Director of the Biodiversity Information Management Unit of the ACB, Dr. Sheila Vergara, presented the Aichi Biodiversity Target Traffic Lights—a visual presentation on ASEAN’s progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

A presentation on the Aichi Targets and NBSAP Implementation: Experiences from India, was delivered by Dr. T. Rabikumar, Secretary of NBA-India, who discussed the topic through a video. Dr. Rabikumar discussed about India’s 12 National Targets within their NBSAP, and the approaches applied by India to establish mechanisms in creating, monitoring, and implementing their NBSAP.



Mr. Lijie Cai from the SCBD during one of the group exercises

Before ending the first day of the event, a representative from each AMS presented on the status of the implementation of their respective countries’ updated NBSAPs. The presenters also enumerated the challenges encountered in the implementation of the plan, as well as their recommendations.

Group exercises on identifying gaps in updated NBSAPs and challenges in NBSAP implementation and on approaches for reviewing the implementation of NBSAPs and prioritization of actions for implementation until 2020 were the highlights of the succeeding days.

Ms. Clarissa Arida, Director of the Programme Development and Implementation (PDI) Unit of the ACB was also one of the resource speakers. Her presentation, Aichi Targets 11 and 12: ACB’s Role as a Regional Implementation Hub, covered points such as the steps taken by a number of AMS to improve site management by updating and revising management plans.

The workshop participants visited the University of the Philippines Los Baños-Energy Development Corporation BINHI Biodiversity Park, the Makiling Botanic Gardens, and the headquarters of the ACB during the third day of the event.

Learning from marine protected areas of Batangas



Officials from environment ministries from the AMS explored chosen marine protected areas as part of the Experiential Learning Programme.

To observe and learn from the experiences of key stakeholders in protected area management, 10 officials from the environment ministries of Cambodia, Indonesia, and Myanmar visited selected marine protected areas (MPAs) in Batangas province that are within the Verde Island Passage Marine Corridor and the Taal Volcano Protected Landscape from 5 to 9 February 2018. The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), with support from the KfW (German Development Bank) through the Small Grants Programme, spearheaded the experiential learning activity.

The Experiential Learning Programme (ELP) participants also had fruitful discussions with the officers and members of the Bantay Dagat (sea patrol) and fisherfolk organizations of the Municipalities of Mataas na Kahoy, Mabini, Tingloy, and Calatagan in Batangas province where they learned the key elements of a successful community-based management of protected areas, as well as the challenges and issues. The participants visited the Taal Lake Conservation Center, the Twin Rocks Marine Sanctuary in Mabini, Batalang Bato Marine Sanctuary in Tingloy, and Ang Pulo Mangrove Conservation in Calatagan.

“This Experiential Learning Programme is designed for us to learn from the local communities — how they value biodiversity and how they are utilizing these natural resources in their daily lives. Let us get our shoes

dirty and visit the communities. The real biodiversity champions are out there in the field,” said Mr. Roberto Oliva, ACB Executive Director.

Through a direct observation and interaction with key stakeholders, the experiential learning activity provided knowledge and learning on: legal frameworks and governance systems as well as technical processes applied in protected area (PA) establishment and management; sustainable management of PAs through multi-stakeholder engagement and how the income from such sources are managed; utilization of income from payment for ecosystem services and other financing mechanisms; the most successful and applicable PA monitoring mechanism; and lessons and experiences in addressing issues on PA and in improving its management effectiveness.

“During the 18th Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME) in May 2017 in Manila, Philippines, Cambodia expressed their need for a capacity building support for the establishment of their MPAs, which will be implemented by the newly established Department of Marine and Coastal Zone Conservation,” said ACB Programme Development and Implementation Unit Director, Ms. Clarissa Arida. “This ELP is the Centre’s response to Cambodia’s request for a study visit in marine PAs,” she added.

“We thank ACB for organizing this study tour. Our learnings from this activity will help us a lot to effectively manage our country’s own marine PAs,” said Mr. Than Chantha, Director of the Department of Marine and Coastal Zone Conservation of the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia. He added that Cambodia has begun to enhance its marine environment conservation following the establishment of their first large-scale Marine Fisheries Management Area in 2016, a 405-square-kilometer protected area around the islands of Koh Rong and Koh Rong Sanloem.

“I’ve learned that community participation is important in park management. Strict enforcement and implementation of environmental policies and laws of both local and national governments are also vital to the sustainability of the park,” shared Mr. Aung San of Myanmar.

continued on page 5...



The local fishermen of Taal use long bamboo perches called “bantyaw” as their “sniper towers” where they catch freshwater fish using improvised airguns with spears connected to fishing lines.

DENR Region III leads movement for One Dollar for ASEAN Biodiversity in Central Luzon, Philippines

To reaffirm their stand as co-champions in ASEAN Biodiversity Conservation, officials from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Central Luzon, Philippines pledged their support to the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity's (ACB's) One Dollar for ASEAN Biodiversity during the DENR Regional Management Conference on 25 January 2018.

Held in Subic Bay in Olongapo City, Zambales, the Conference invited representatives from ACB to present before the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officers (PENRO) and Community Environment and Natural Resources Officers (CENRO) from Central Luzon offices the One Dollar for ASEAN Biodiversity, a resource mobilization activity wherein individuals and organizations alike are invited to show their support to conserving the rich biodiversity of the ASEAN by contributing to the ASEAN Biodiversity Fund.



Regional Director Francisco Milla Jr. expressed his gratitude to ACB for allowing them to be the first DENR regional office to contribute to the ASEAN Biodiversity Fund.

Moreover, Environment Management Bureau (EMB) Regional Director Lormelyn Claudio mentioned the importance of biodiversity

conservation in the country, and the enormous opportunities for ACB's resource mobilization activities to cater to private sectors. She further proposed that private sectors should anchor their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to the values and initiatives of ACB towards biodiversity conservation.

Learning from...continued from page 4

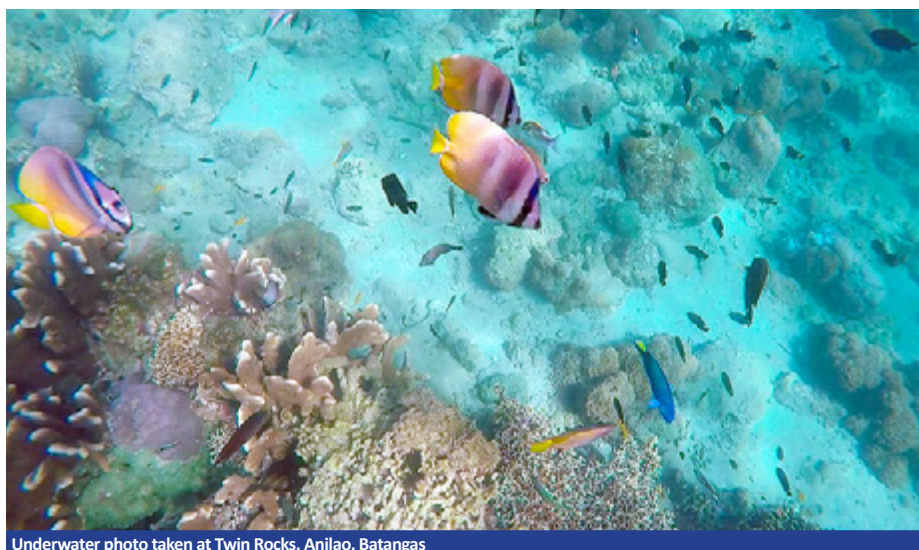
Covering 1.35 million hectares, the Verde Island Passage Marine Corridor (VIPMC) is known as one of the world's most productive ecosystems, earning its reputation as the "center of marine biodiversity in the world." With about 1,736 overlapping marine species in a 10 by 10 kilometer area, the VIPMC is known to have the largest concentration of recorded marine life.

The Taal Volcano Protected Landscape (TVPL) is identified as one of the Key Biodiversity Areas in the Philippines. The TVPL sustains Taal Lake, the country's third largest lake, and the Taal Volcano, the world's smallest active volcano. The TVPL has a comprehensive 10-year (2010-2020) Management Plan emphasizing the need for community participation in protected area management.

The ELP of the ACB was conceptualized in 2010 as a programmatic response to the capacity building needs of

senior and mid-level staff of protected areas in the ASEAN region. The learning approaches in ELP include showcasing of different conservation practices that establish effectiveness of protected areas through field visits or study tours, and interaction with key stakeholders in selected

protected areas. The ELP is a useful platform that enables the ASEAN Member States to learn from and share experiences with counterparts in ASEAN on various issues related to biodiversity conservation and management.



Underwater photo taken at Twin Rocks, Anilao, Batangas

ACB and CBD provide guidance on the establishment of Clearing-House Mechanism in Asia



Workshop participants from several Asian countries gathered in Bangkok, Thailand, to take part in capacity-building activities towards setting up national Clearing-House Mechanisms.

With the aim of assisting countries to establish and effectively manage National Clearing-House Mechanisms, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity's Biodiversity Information Management Unit (ACB-BIM) conducted the Regional Workshop for Asian Countries on the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) from 29 January to 2 February 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Representatives from eight ASEAN Members States (AMS) and participants from Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cook Islands, Maldives, Mongolia, and Nepal convened at the United Nations Conference Centre of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). Here, officials from the CBD conducted capacity-building activities to develop the faculty of countries from Asia who are interested in setting up a national CHM, or develop the existing ones.

The 5-day workshop started by the CBD providing an overview of the CHM, highlighting the need for countries to understand its purpose and strategic content. It was also emphasized that the CHM started out as a platform for sharing information, and developed into a web of information sources through which biodiversity information is exchanged, and is now intended to support national planning and reporting, specifically National Biodiversity Strategies and Action

Plan (NBSAP) and National Reports (NR).

Mr. Alexandre Rafalovitch, Website Officer from the CBD, introduced Bioland, an online tool that provides support to CBD member-countries who do not have national CHM websites or still in the process of website establishment. In the presentation, it was emphasized that Bioland support has numerous advantages, among which are free hosting and efficiency of translations. As an exercise, each participant was assigned a Bioland test site to be able to experience the functionality of the tool, and design mock CHM websites for their respective countries. The participants presented the features of the mock CHM websites they have created, as well as their feedback on

their experience in using the Bioland tool.

On the other hand, ACB presented its programs, as well as its role in biodiversity management in the region. The Centre also highlighted the availability of the ASEAN CHM, and how it supports the AMS.

The ASEAN CHM was established to support the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, through effective information services and other appropriate means in order to promote and facilitate scientific and technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and information exchange, and to establish a fully operational network of Parties and partners.



Test sites were assigned to each participant for them to practice creating a Clearing-House Mechanism site for their countries.



Officers of the National Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (BIOTEC) and members of the Office of National Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEPP) - Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand met with representatives from the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity on 22 January 2018 at the BIOTEC Headquarters, to discuss details of the proposed Establishment of the ASEAN Microbial Database Project. The proposed database, which will follow the Darwin Core format and linked to the ASEAN Clearing-House Mechanism, will have contents from the members



of the ASEAN Network of Microbial Utilization (AnMICRO). AnMICRO is a network of institutions from six ASEAN Member States, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam, who work on microbes.

The project, which will be implemented for two years, is the first time that the two ASEAN bodies, ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (ASEAN-COST) and the ASEAN Working Group on Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (AWGNCB) have collaborated.



Mr. Elpidio Peria, Programme Coordinator from the Programme Development and Implementation Unit of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) presents on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Capacity-Building Experiences in Southeast Asia during the Third Meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee on Capacity-Building to the Nagoya Protocol, conducted from 20 to 22 March 2018 in Montreal, Canada.

One of the topics included in Mr. Peria's presentation was on the challenges faced in implementing ABS capacity-building



activities in the region, such as the difficulty of centralizing such activities due to the diffused nature of the subject.

Apart from ACB, other represented institutions in the Meeting were the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the United Nations Development Programme, and the International Development Law Organization, among others.

ACBeats

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EU supports the ASEAN for the fourth staging of Zooming in on Biodiversity

To promote appreciation to the biodiversity richness of the ASEAN region through the art of photography, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), with support from the European Union (EU), calls on all photography and nature enthusiasts to join this year's staging of the Zooming in on Biodiversity, an ASEAN-wide photo competition.

In commemoration of the 2018 International Day for Biological Diversity with the theme, "Celebrating 25 Years of Action for Biodiversity," and of the 2018 International Year of the Reef, the Centre is in search for powerful photographs depicting the following biodiversity areas: Coastal and Marine biodiversity; Agrobiodiversity; Wildlife Species; Urban Biodiversity; and Wetlands and Peatlands.

This year's contest, which is a major initiative under the EU's Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP)

Project, has the overall theme "Capturing the richness of biological resources in the ASEAN region".

The initial leg of the contest, held in 2009 and with the theme "Biodiversity and Me," generated close to 1,000 entries from youth, amateur, and professional photographers from the 10 ASEAN Member States. The impressive selection of photographs captured not only various plant and animal species, but also photographs featuring the relationship of biodiversity with gut issues such as climate change, food security, livelihood, and health. These powerful images have helped boost the promotion of the value of biodiversity among various audiences.

"Biodiversity and Climate Change" was the chosen theme for the second staging of the event. The contest helped draw public attention to the challenge of climate change, and to the need for both global and local action to address this issue, and to

protect our own future, as well as that of generations to come.

The third staging in 2015 had the theme "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development" to communicate ways on how to achieve the balance between development and biodiversity conservation.

The contest is in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity's Aichi Target 1, which states that: *By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.*

Cash prizes and opportunities for their photos to get published in major ACB publications and exhibits await the winners. Registration to the contest is free of charge and is open to all citizens of the ASEAN. For those who wish to join, visit <http://aseanbiodiversity.org/zoomingin/> for details, and how to submit entries.





ZOOMING IN BIODIVERSITY

An ASEAN-wide Photo Contest

Capturing the richness of biological resources in the ASEAN region

www.aseanbiodiversity.org/zoomingin

Deadline: 30 September 2018