



**6th UNEP TUNZA South East Asian Youth Environment
Network (SEAYEN) Regional Meeting
Youth Statement to the UN High-Level Panel Meeting
held in Bali on Global Partnerships
(March 23 – 27, 2013)**

Southeast Asian Youth as Partners for the World We Want

As the UN High-Level Panel Meeting on Post-2015 Development meet in Bali, Indonesia with the focus on Partnership and Cooperation for Development, we the delegates of the 6th UNEP TUNZA SEAYEN Regional Meeting representing 10 different countries of the Southeast Asian region are united in calling upon governments and young people to work together in supporting a new development agenda. Both the Governments and young people have critical roles to play and the only way to achieve the world we desire is through partnership, co-operation, and collaboration.

**Section I: The Youth of South East Asia as the Region's
Important Resource**

A potent driver of change, the youth comprise almost 20 percent¹ of the region's total population. We are characterized by our motivations, ambitions and experiences and the capability to use the new media and innovative approaches to address society's most pressing problems.

We live in a region highly vulnerable to climate change, rapid degradation of natural resources and biodiversity loss, and increasing globalization and economic integration. In order to create long-lasting effective change, the youths have engaged and are willing to partner with governments and other institutions in addressing the different environmental challenges in the region.

We believe,

- 1. Governments should recognize the role the youth can play in addressing environmental issues and localizing national actions.** Young people must be encouraged to engage with their governments through programs and policies, which will reinforce their importance as a stakeholder in society.
- 2. Governments should consistently communicate with the youth.** Young people have a voice. Governments should create a platform and organize activities that allow young people to participate in government policies and programs, be heard at consultations of important environmental issues, and recommend solutions to problems. This platform should empower young people to meet each other, express their concerns, solutions and other thoughts on important environmental issues, and talk to their governments without the fear of being persecuted, ignored or misunderstood.

¹ ASEAN Foundation, n.d. Retrieved online from: http://www.aseanfoundation.org/index2.php?main=social_sub.php

- 3. Governments should place education for citizenship and capability-building a priority.** While young people have potential, they still require better quality training and skills development. Opportunities such as mentorships, trainings, scholarships, must be made more accessible to young people.
- 4. As young people, we are capable of organizing ourselves and conducting our own program.** Provision of funding and networking opportunities for us will be much appreciated and make us more effective to 'mark' a difference.

In turn, we,

- 1. Young people recognize that collaboration with our governments is important.** Thus, we commit to build and maintain communication with them to enhance the quality of programs that address environmental issues and expand the reach of these programs to more people and communities. We will make use of the platforms that are made available to create and strengthen ties among ourselves, other institutions and government agencies.
- 2. Young people will help to localize productive national actions and programs, seek to upscale our innovative solutions and relay this to our governments.** We will actively participate and encourage other stakeholders, and help promote our government's advocacies in addressing environmental issues.
- 3. Young people will utilize the opportunities that are created for us.** Our programs should be participatory and inclusive, replicable and sustainable. We aim to address challenges in green economy, trans-boundary problems, climate change, degradation of natural resources and other local environmental issues.
- 4. Young people will organize a SEAYEN day in support of World Environment Day.**

Together,

- 1. We should actively communicate with each other.** Communication between ourselves and our respective governments is important. The youth must participate actively in engagements with the government, in turn, the government must genuinely seek out the inputs of the youth regarding issues that concern them.
- 2. We should convene at least annually to discuss issues, what have been going on and what can be done together.** We will ensure that young people can engage with lawmakers and policymakers to lobby for the laws and policies that benefit our communities.

Section II: Preserving and Rehabilitating our Natural Ecosystems

Southeast Asian countries are rich in both renewable and non-renewable natural resources. However, all of the countries in our region face serious challenges in degradation of natural resources. The continuing development in our region must not compromise the health of our rich natural ecosystems.

We believe,

- 1. Governments should strengthen the enforcement of policies, regulations, As well as increase incentives to protect and rehabilitate natural resources.** Governments should establish Environmental Monitoring Systems and require Environmental Impact Assessment whenever necessary. We call on governments to establish payment for environmental services systems and Environmental Management System. We need a timber and marine certification system to protect our region's rapidly depleting forests and coastal areas.
- 2. Governments should encourage private companies and corporations to include environmental considerations in their Corporate Social Responsibility programs.**
- 3. Governments should strengthen institutions and build the capacity of organizations responsible for the protection of the natural resources.** Initiatives should empower local communities to lead the sustainable management of natural resources by means of Community Based Natural Resources Management.
- 4. Governments should support programs such as REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation), A/R (Afforestation and Reforestation Programs) CDM (Clean Development Mechanism), and SFM (Sustainable Forest Management Programs).** They should establish Protected Areas whenever necessary.
- 5. Governments should invest in more renewable energy and promote the use of, and investment in renewable energy.** Particularly in local communities in critical ecosystems, energy alternatives must be distributed and utilized. We recommend the establishment mechanisms that will reduce the dependence of local communities to natural forests.

In turn, we,

- 1. Young people will lead activities in rehabilitating natural ecosystems.** We will plant trees in degraded areas, marginal lands, and abandoned lands to reclaim the soil fertility.
- 2. Young people will initiate environmental education activities.** We call on young people to use every means possible, including social media, multi-media, to launch environmental awareness campaigns particularly ones that target fellow young people and local communities.

Together,

- 1. We should strengthen the study of environmental rehabilitation.** With the support of the government and educational institutions, we call on students to engage in research on the rehabilitation of natural resources. Scholarship programs must be provided for young people.

2. **We should empower rural and marginal youths and communities.** With the support of governments, youth should volunteer and initiate projects for the empowerment of rural and marginal youths and communities particularly those who are affected by environmental degradation.

Section III: Building a Green Economy

We strongly believe that green economy is the way to improve human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological challenges. We particularly highlight three pillars that can provide a strong foundation for the advancement of green economy: Ecotourism, Green Business, and Green Technology.

We believe,

1. **Governments should promote ecotourism as an ideal way to help local communities while preserving the region's rich biodiversity.** Governments should encourage the identification of ecotourism hotspots and support ecotourism activities in the area to provide livelihood in the community. Certification from accredited environmental agencies should be a priority to prevent "greenwashing."
2. **Governments should strengthen support and financing for green business.** We support the provision of financial incentives to encourage green business start-ups and the transition of existing companies into green businesses. Governments should encourage the generation of green jobs.
3. **Government should invest in the advancement of science and technology as tools for sustainable development.** They should increase investment in Research and Development for green technology. Governments should develop a platform for technology-sharing and transfer with technology-advanced countries through assistance within ASEAN+3 (China, Japan, South Korea) and other regions.
4. **Governments should work towards building an inter-regional transport system incorporating air and land travel that is efficient, convenient, and environmentally-friendly.**
5. **We encourage the transfer of technologies to enable governments to invest in clean fuels and energy.**

In turn, we,

1. **The youth will promote the development and sustainability of ecotourism sites in coordination with the local communities.** This can be done through outreach activities especially social media (through blogs, social networks), guided trips, and others.
2. **Young people will be green and entrepreneurial.** We encourage young people to start, seek to work for, and support the products and services of green businesses.
3. **The youth will engage in research and knowledge-sharing for a green economy.** Young academics will improve biodiversity resource databases of the region. The youth will join internship opportunities and organize and participate in regional conferences on green technology.

Together,

- 1. Government and youth should work together to identify and promote ecotourism sites.**
- 2. Government and the youth should form a platform for green technology innovation.** Young people with promising green technology and green entrepreneurship ventures must be given a platform to implement the projects.

Section IV: Co-operation Across National Boundaries

Trans-boundary issues such as shared water resources, illegal wildlife trade, air pollution, the movement of pests, diseases, and people present our region with many challenges. While cooperation in environmental management and knowledge-sharing is complicated, it is a necessity in the context of increasingly integrated Southeast Asia. Otherwise, conflicts may arise and will hinder the achievement of our shared goals.

We, believe that,

- 1. Governments should strengthen regional co-operation to address trans-boundary issues such as haze, water security, illegal wildlife trade and others.**
- 2. Governments should ensure the effective and efficient enforcement of laws.** Although, there are good laws being set, Strong law enforcement is critical and needed especially to trans-boundary issues such as illegal logging, illegal wild life trade, and human trafficking.

In turn, we,

- 1. Youth will also volunteer to work on addressing trans-boundary challenges.** An important example includes the initiatives that aid the conservation and rehabilitation of Mekong River and other trans-boundary water ecosystems. As youth, we believe that concerns for the environment must overcome political agendas.
- 2. Young people will also raise awareness to local community on how their actions may affect the environment and the quality of life of people from other nations.** We will provide information to communities on the dangers of trans-boundary challenges and how to overcome them on topics such as human trafficking, haze, and water pollution.

Together,

- 1. Governments and young people should combine efforts to overcome the scale of trans-boundary challenges.** Given their different strengths and weaknesses, we must synergize our efforts. For instance, governments must work on dialogue and cooperation, while youth can focus on raising awareness.
- 2. Governments and young people should overcome international political challenges that hinder collaboration.** Young people's optimism, idealism, and sincerity should inspire governments to cooperate beyond political agendas.

Section V: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of our time. The kind of world that our generation and the future generations to come will inherit is in the hands of present leaders, organizations, institutions, and citizens. The global community's actions today in meetings such as Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the High Level Panel meeting on post 2015 agenda will define whether the future generation will inherit a water, food, and energy crisis, or a sustainable future.

We believe,

- 1. Governments should ratify laws and regulations to combat climate change.** Governments should also initiate movements and programs that can respond to this issue. Governments should also follow up on the aforementioned actions to make sure that these are properly and effectively executed. Governments should involve the youth in policy-making process.
- 2. Governments should strengthen financing for climate change adaptation and mitigation.** Governments can help by leveraging on local or intergovernmental bodies such as ASEAN or UN.
- 3. Governments should improve climate change adaptation for countries that are vulnerable to disasters.** Governments should have proper disaster-risk studies and National Disaster Monitoring Systems. Governments should set both efficient precautionary and relief programs.

In turn, we,

- 1. Young people will initiate and volunteer for projects that combat climate change.** We will continue youth-led projects such as awareness campaigns on climate change and ozone-depleting substances, training programs, and research on global warming. We will be active partners in supporting these kinds of projects.
- 2. Young people will become role models for others.** We will inspire other people to take action, big or small, to mitigate climate change through our words and actions.

Together,

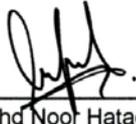
- 1. We can work together for information dissemination campaigns.** As a lot of people are still not aware about climate change and its negative effects on each of us, information campaigns can be very effective in enlightening people about the issue at hand.
- 2. We should have more frequent dialogues about climate change with each other.** As these dialogues are avenues by which we can hear what the government has to say. This is also a way by which the youth and the government can meet each other halfway.

As a major human resource for development, we, young people are key agents for change and driving force for sustainable development and technological innovation. If nurtured through partnership, our potentials will be unlocked to become important resources for the continuing development of not only the Southeast Asian region, but of the world.

This is our call to governments and youth. We must work in partnership to achieve the world we want – for our generation and the generations to come.

Signed by the youth delegates of the 6th UNEP TUNZA South East Asian Youth Environment Network (SEAYEN) Meeting on 27 March 2013

Brunei Darussalam



Ak Mohd Noor Hatadi Pg Ahmad



Wong Wei Kwang

Cambodia



Chea Puthea

Cambodia



Chantha Pisey



Sok Seyla



Tith Chandara

Indonesia



Enjang Asri



Achmad Solikhin



Rahmazudi

Laos PDR



Khanthalak Khounsombat



Somsaniith Chonephetsarath

Malaysia



Muhammad Hakim Bin Zainal

Malaysia



Muhammad Firdaus Bin Zaid

Myanmar



Aye Chan Maung



Phyu Phyu Han

Myanmar

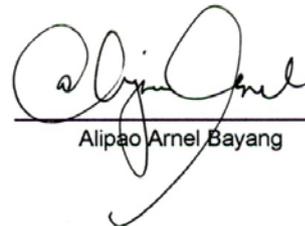


Maung Hlaing Win

Philippines



Gerald Perry Estavillo Marin



Alipao Arnel Bayang

Philippines


Cakrag Iris May Ellen Yarisantos


Mitsunashi Masaki Villagracia

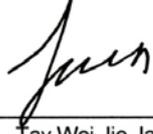

Josol Jairus Carmela Cajoles

Philippines

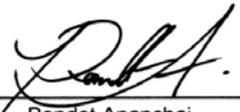

Samaniego Porce Ernest Pineda

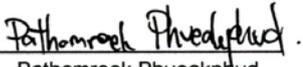
Singapore


Lee Jun Wei


Tay Wei Jie Jaron

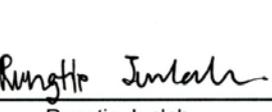
Thailand


Pondet Ananchai


Pathomroek Phueakphud


NATECHANOK
Natechanok Yutthasaksunthorn

Thailand


Rungtip Junlah

Vietnam


Nguyen Hoang Phuong Trang

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