



Science Council of Asia

Foundation for Sustainable Development to
A Prosperous, Harmonious and Greener Asia



2010-2011



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Message from the President

With the purposes of expanding collaborative academic researches and academic corporations in the Asian region, the Science Council of Asia (SCA) was established in the year of 2000 as a sequence of Asian Conference on Scientific Cooperation and hosted its first conference in Bangkok, Thailand in 2001. Since then SCA have made a practice for its member countries to host on a rotational basis annually discussing common scientific issues for its member countries including population problems, medical care, food, water, energy, and scientific education in their respective countries.

Mongolia joined SCA as its 11th member in 2004 and has been actively participating in its activities and cooperating with the member countries. Now SCA has become a major scientific community including 19 scientific organizations from 11 member countries in the Asian region.

This year Mongolia is hosting 11th Science Council of Asia Conference under the theme of “Combating Land Degradation” from 4 to 6 July 2011. The Conference includes General Assembly, Management board meeting and several SCA Joint Project Workshops.

Three day discussions that we will focus on “Combating Land Degradation” are timely and far reaching. We are hopeful that addressing these problems by SCA would greatly help combine efforts to alleviate problems related with climate change not only in Mongolia but also in the Asia Pacific region.

Belong to extremely fragile and arid region of the world and hence, the country has been suffering from drought and desertification for its history. Research suggests that due to the worldwide warming and climate change, during the last 60 years, the annual mean air temperature has increased by 1.56 degrees, and the drought covering 25 per cent of the land has been recurring in every 2 to 3 years and covering 50 per cent of the land – in every 4 to 5 years. Compared with 1960 the days with dust-storm in desert and plain areas have increased three to five times. The increase in desertification due to climate change can be seen from melting of glaciers, drying out of lakes and rivers, decrease in grazing crop, salinization of soil and water, land erosion, loss of soil fertility, increase in sand movement and increase in frequency of natural calamities. With the increase in livestock heads since 1990's the water supply has been decreased and soil erosion due to overgrazing intensified leading to desertification.

Research in desertification and its future trend is an important step towards decreasing soil erosion and slowing down desertification process. With this in mind, the research organizations of our country have been for decades conducting ecosystem and desertification research on arid land. In this respect, we have been closely cooperating with the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea and Japan to evaluate the impact of dust-storm, to model its intensification, to forecast, to establish a unified system of monitoring and to elaborate a common policy and plan for the dust storm.

I am confident that the meetings and discussions in Ulaanbaatar will be both rewarding and far-reaching to deal with one of the pressing issues of today - land degradation.

I am also very pleased to emphasize that the Government of Mongolia and its relevant ministries intend to support and participate in this Conference.

I wholeheartedly welcome to Mongolia all international delegations for the 11th SCA Conference and look forward to its successful conclusion.

March 2011



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Batbold Enkhtuvshin'.

Prof. Batbold Enkhtuvshin
President
Science Council of Asia

THE SCA RESOLUTION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

Agreed by the Management Board and Endorsed by the General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur on May 15, 2002.

PREAMBLE

ASIA HAS THE ABILITY TO MAKE DEVELOPMENT SUSTAINABLE. TO MOVE FORWARD, WE MUST VIEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS AN EFFORT TO REVIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ACHIEVE A BALANCED GROWTH WITH SOCIAL EQUITY. TOWARDS THIS END, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE SCIENCE COUNCIL OF ASIA, DECLARE OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ONE ANOTHER AND TO FUTURE GENERATIONS BY AGREEING:

1. To realize a common vision of sustainable development for Asia;
2. To enhance the contribution of Asia towards the achievement of economic growth and sustainable development at a regional and global level;
3. To achieve equitable distribution of peace, health and prosperity within and between generations throughout Asia;
4. To establish environmental conditions in Asia that will secure sustainability of its natural resources and ecosystem goods and services

WE NEED A SHARED VISION OF BASIC VALUES TO PROVIDE THE FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. THEREFORE, WE HAVE **RESOLVED** TO CONSOLIDATE OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE “A PROSPEROUS, HARMONIOUS AND GREENER ASIA” THROUGH THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES AND ACTIVITIES.

PRINCIPLES

1. Sustained economic development, greater social equity and maintenance of ecological balance are the three pillars for sustainable development in Asia.
2. Stronger cooperation and networking within Asia are vital for the achievement of the goals and aims of sustainable development regionally as well as globally.
3. Each nation or state within a nation will formulate individual policies for making development sustainable, as well as develop monitoring systems to assess progress towards sustainable development.
4. Planning for sustainable development in Asia will take into account the primacy of the region's economic and environmental concerns as well as of local socio-cultural sensitivities.
5. Eradication of poverty is a primary concern in Asia and will be addressed together with the concern for the environment. An improved quality of life is a basic precondition to sustainable development.
6. The economic, social, and environmental objectives of development will be pursued in a balanced way that will involve new ways of thinking about and undertaking development as well as production and consumption.
7. Incorporation of Asian values will be an integral part of the initiative towards sustainable development in Asia. Absence of extreme individualism; a belief in strong family ties; a reverence for education; frugality; hard work; a strong social contract between the people and the State; moral wholesomeness; and respect for the environment will be taken together with the more recent ideals expressed in the United Nations principles on sustainable development.

8. Sustainable development policies in Asia in this era of globalization will promote balanced views on sustainable development and integrate traditional development concerns such as economic growth, political stability, and social equity with new themes such as transparency and good governance.

ACTIVITIES

TOWARDS THESE ENDS, THE SCA SHALL DURING ITS FIRST FIVE YEARS OF ESTABLISHMENT UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

1. The SCA will spearhead work to develop adequate frameworks and mechanisms for cooperation and collaboration among member countries to enable them to share knowledge and know-how for sustainable development in Asia. This will include *inter alia* frameworks of cooperation among countries within Asia as well as between Asia and the rest of the international community. Such cooperation should be based on mutual understanding and need to jointly develop and share resources in the development of environmentally friendly products, technologies, and management practices.
2. The members of the SCA will hold regional workshops that will contribute towards the planning and design of sustainable development trajectories and processes for Asia that will ensure improvements in the quality of life of all Asians while preserving human dignity and Asian values.
3. The SCA will initiate work to develop adequate theoretical and practical understanding of the science of sustainable development as a process of social, economic, and ecological change that requires integration of knowledge from all three prime systems in the world (economic, social, and ecological). Sustainability science will also contribute towards the development of tools for integration of economic, social, and environmental considerations in development planning, and tools for analysis and monitoring will be developed and made available for wide usage throughout Asia.
4. The SCA will undertake to spearhead efforts to disseminate knowledge and understanding of the need to approach sustainable development in an integrated and holistic manner. The Academies of Science in Asian countries must provide the means, leadership, and coordination in all work to develop the tools for integration and reconciliation of economic, social, and ecological considerations in development.
5. A joint program to develop, test, and use sustainable development indicators (SDI) will be initiated to enable the monitoring of progress towards sustainable development in Asia. These indicators will reflect economic, social, and ecological progress in an integrated manner and will make use of second-generation integrated SDI that take into account the interplay between them.
6. The SCA will also initiate work to develop indicators of cooperation between Asian economies as well as of the level of assistance from the global community towards the achievement of the goals of sustainable development.