



United Nations Development Programme

Communications Office

PRESS RELEASE

MALAYSIA TO ADDRESS CLIMATE ADAPTATION MEASURES

Kuala Lumpur, Sept 6 – Policymakers, local and international experts will spotlight Malaysia’s climate adaptation measures when they gather for a meeting next week.

Climate adaptation measures are adjustments made in response to the effects of climate change, including its variability.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Ministry of Natural Resources & the Environment (MNRE) meeting will be instrumental in assessing the nation’s ability to adapt and respond to extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, typhoons and El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

It will act as a catalyst to lay the groundwork for the formulation of policies and processes that can reduce the vulnerability of climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture and water resources and identify opportunities to protect national food security and export earnings.

“As climate change takes its toll on the world’s natural systems, the impact of climate change will cut across all sectors and segments of society,” said Dr. Richard Leete, UNDP Resident Representative for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam.

“Malaysia’s early action and investment will ameliorate the harsh effects of climate change to help the country cope with its hazards, which reduce its vulnerabilities in climate change sensitive sectors,” said Leete.

According to Professor Khairulmaini Osman Salleh of the University Malaya Climate Change Centre, flood defence and adaptation measures are critical policy focus areas to ensure that economic development is not seriously impeded.

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“With the effects of increased storm magnitudes, the frequency and intensity of floods will continue and can result in substantial damage of properties, infrastructure as well as loss of livelihoods, as observed in the recent Johor floods,”

“With the proper mechanisms in place, we can be better equipped to cope with these disasters and save millions in economic and social costs,” said Prof. Khairulmaini.

Historically, floods have been fairly common in Malaysia, with flood prone areas covering about 9 per cent of the total land area and directly affecting about 22 per cent of the population.

In 2003, the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID) reported that floods cost the country in excess of RM 3 billion a year.

The recent floods in Johor, considered to be one of the worse in the nation’s history, forced the evacuation of about 300,000 people and cost the government RM 1.5 billion in damages.

Beginning September 11, the meeting on Climate Change Preparedness, themed ‘Towards Policy Changes’ will also take stock of climate change mitigation efforts carried out by the government according to guiding principles and policy direction in the 9th Malaysia plan.

It will serve as a platform to introduce the UNDP-Global Environment Facility (GEF) Adaptation Policy Framework to guide developing countries in implementing policies and strengthening the mechanisms to cope with climate change.

The policy framework seeks to harmonize adaptation measures with a country’s additional, often more pressing, development priorities such as poverty alleviation, food security enhancement, and disaster management.

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Note to Editors:

About UNDP

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We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they

develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. Its current priority is to help all countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. To read more about the work of UNDP in Malaysia, please visit our website at www.undp.org.my

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