



United Nations Development Programme

Communications Office

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

September 11, 2007

POLICYMAKERS, EXPERTS REVIEW CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 11: Reviews on existing 'green' policies will begin today as policymakers, local and international experts assess measures needed to mitigate, and adapt to the impact of climate change.

Studies have shown that effects of climate change include rising sea levels, extreme floods, drought, typhoons and El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) can impact productivity in climate-sensitive sectors of the economy such as agriculture, fisheries, mining and plantation as well as cause the spread of diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

This may create adverse effects on food production, social security, export earnings and the country's development progress.

Some policies under review include The National Policy on the Environment, National Forest Policy, Biodiversity Policy, National Energy Policy, National Transport Policy (Land) and the Third National Agricultural Policy.

The discussions held at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)-Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MNRE) meeting will also stock take Malaysia's efforts in addressing climate change, ahead of negotiations at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)'s 13th Conference of Parties summit slated for December in Bali.

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Themed 'Towards Policy Changes', the meeting will culminate in recommendations for early-warning weather systems, flood-defense mechanisms, greater adoption of energy efficiency practices, increased utilization of renewable energy, solid waste management and transportation.

"These recommendations are feasible solutions to support the Ministry's many proactive steps to manage the consequences of climate change," said Richard Leete, UNDP Resident Representative of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam.

"It will enhance interagency collaboration in addressing and adapting to climate change to act as underlying principles behind a breadth of development activities.

"This review will not just ensure Malaysia's sustainable development but elevate the nation into a strategic position to lead Asian countries in year end negotiations for a new agreement to succeed the Kyoto Protocol at the Bali Summit."

The Kyoto Protocol is an agreement where countries that ratify this protocol commit to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases or engage in emissions trading.

The first phase of the treaty expires in 2012 and international talks began in May 2007 on a future treaty to succeed the current one.

"To guide implementation of policies and strengthen climate change mechanisms, the UNDP-MNRE conference will also introduce the Adaptation Policy Framework (APF)," added Leete.

Developed by the UNDP – Global Environment Facility (UNDP-GEF), the APF seeks to harmonize adaptation measures with development priorities, which can range from poverty reduction, food security enhancement and disaster management.

The UNDP-MNRE meeting on Climate Change Preparedness will also evaluate the success of Malaysia's climate change mitigation efforts carried out by the government as part of the Ninth Malaysia Plan such as the Clean Development Mechanism, among others.

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The Ninth Malaysia Plan aims to diversify fuel sources through greater utilization of renewable energy and encourages energy efficiency, especially in transport, commercial & industrial sectors and in government buildings.

At the same event, the Natural Resources and Environment Minister Yang Berhormat Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid launched a UNDP report on 'Malaysia's Renewable Energy Generation from Palm Oil Wastes' that highlights the achievement and lessons learned in implementing renewable energy pilot projects in Malaysia.

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About UNDP

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. 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.

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