



Press Release

Third Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum 17-19 March 2008, Singapore

1 November 2007, Colombo/Sri Lanka, Nagoya/Tokyo/Japan

The United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) and the Ministry of the Environment of Government of Japan will jointly organize the **3rd Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum** on 17-19 March 2008 in Singapore, in partnership with the local agencies.

Under the Asian EST Initiative, which is a joint initiative of UNCRD and the Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan, the Regional EST Forum provides a strategic and knowledge platform for sharing experiences and disseminating among Asian countries best practices, policy instruments, tools, and technologies in relation to various aspects of EST. The Regional EST Forum comprises: (1) high-level government representatives (from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Transport, and the Ministry of Health); and (2) a subsidiary group of experts in various thematic areas related to EST. Participating countries include the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Mongolia, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, and Japan. With an objective to further strengthen and expand the scope and coverage of the Forum, the 3rd Regional EST Forum is expected to have for the first time the participation of South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) in close coordination with the South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), an intergovernmental organization established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia to promote and support protection, management, and enhancement of the environment in the region.

The First Regional EST Forum was conducted in Aichi, Japan in August 2005 and resulted in the **Aichi Statement**. Follow-up discussions on the implementation of the **Aichi Statement** were held during the Second Regional EST Forum convened in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in December 2006, which was also attended by Ministry of Health officials from selected countries and city-level officials from the ASEAN countries. In the Second Forum, all participating countries made presentations and provided an update on the status of EST, and shared valuable information on best practices and advanced policies relevant to EST. Subsequently the Asian Mayors' Policy Dialogue for the Promotion of EST in Cities was held in Kyoto, Japan in April 2007 and resulted in the **Kyoto Declaration** which had the objective of bringing about greater coordination and collaboration among national and local efforts to realize the goal of sustainability in the transport sector.

The Third Regional EST Forum in Singapore will be an important meeting on environment and transport. Mr. Kazunobu Onogawa, Director of UNCRD, remarked: "The 3rd Regional EST Forum will help generate the required political will among the decision-makers across Asia to address in a more effective manner the social and environmental sustainability in the transport sector as emphasized in the Aichi Statement and the Kyoto Declaration by Asian Mayors. Hosting the 3rd EST Forum in Singapore will be an important step in formulating effective strategies to deal with the rapid motorization in Asia which

has resulted in growing problems related to air pollution, traffic congestion, and poor road safety. Singapore will serve as a good model for managing these issues effectively and in a sustainable way.”

Acknowledging the fact that efforts to promote environmentally sustainable transport will result not only in the improvement of human health through the reduction of urban air pollution but will also have important complimentary benefits, including the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the reduction of deaths and injuries from road accidents, the reduction of harmful noise levels, and the reduction of traffic congestion levels, the 3rd EST Forum will discuss policies and initiatives to promote environmentally sustainable transport and will take further steps to facilitate the full implementation of the objectives in the Aichi Statement and Kyoto Declaration towards realizing safer, cleaner, greener, and more efficient transport systems in Asia.

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UNCRD was established in 1971 as a United Nations organization promoting regional development in developing and transitional economies in Asia-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America. The Centre targets its programmes towards socially and environmentally sustainable development, focusing on the three key components of Human Security, Environment, and Disaster Management. The Centre in close cooperation with United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA) - (i) provides advisory services, (ii) facilitates the exchange of information, experience, and teaching, and (iii) fosters collaboration and cooperation among national and international organizations through its training, research, and project activities. For more information see www.uncrd.or.jp

Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan, reformed in 2001, has been responsible for national environmental policy since its establishment in 1971. The mission of the Ministry ranges widely from planning and formulation of Integrated Environmental Policy to promoting Global Environment Conservation, and from performing Environmental Management, Waste and Recycle Management to Nature Conservation and Environmental Health. For more information see www.env.go.jp/en

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) is an inter-governmental organization, established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region SACEP member countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. More details at: <http://www.sacep.org/>.