

BRITISH COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES DURING THE ASIA PACIFIC FORESTRY WEEK – 'CLIMATE COOL' BOOTH, CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE, EXCITING SWISHING PARTY AND TALKS

The British Council organised a series of events to raise awareness of climate change issues, in support of the Asia Pacific Forestry Week being organised by the FAO, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations at the National Convention Centre Hanoi from 21 – 25 April.

Participation in the Asia Pacific Forestry Week.

The British Council managed a booth during the week of the convention to promote the Climate Security activities by the British Council in the East Asia region. The British Council's new regional project is called Climate Cool and will be run in twelve countries in the Asia Pacific region. To help run this booth and draw attention to the regional nature of the project the British Council has invited five young delegates from Indonesia, Thailand, Korea and Japan who are members of the British Council's Asian Young Leaders Climate Forum founded last year in Bali in Indonesia during the IPCC convention on Climate Change (Their profiles are included at the end). Visitors to this International Forestry Week will be able to talk to the five young delegates and learn more about what young people are doing in other countries in the region.



Science Café on Climate Change ‘Money does grow on Trees?’

The second in our series of Science Cafe panel discussions on the theme of Climate Change with the discussion title “**Money does grow on Trees!**”, took place at the National Convention Centre as an official Asia Pacific Forestry week side event on 24 April 2008. The discussion focused on the link between forests and global warming and how forests can help to provide solutions to global warming.



Guest speakers were prominent Vietnamese scientists and science communicators, Dr Dang Kim Son; Professor Vo Qui; Dr Nguyen Ngoc Lung, and writer Nguyen Ngoc. The British Council was represented by Science Manager Graham Sutcliffe and the discussion was led by journalist Pham Xuan Thach. The event was organised in collaboration with the Vietnamese Science magazine Tia Sang, and the discussion was in Vietnamese with simultaneous translation.



The title of the event was inspired by the popular phrase in English “**Money doesn’t grow on trees!**” which English people say when they want to complain about other people wasting money. This saying inspired a report by CIFOR, the Centre for International Forestry Research entitled “**Do trees grow on Money?**” which highlights the new REDD strategy (Reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) for developing countries, considered to be the most likely component of the global Climate protection regime being negotiated to follow on from the Kyoto protocol which ends in 2012. The strategy is seen as one of the least expensive climate change mitigation options which also promises a means of sustainable development and a lucrative source of income for developing countries.

Vietnam’s first swishing party

On 25th April, in the Information Centre of the British Council, the first ever ‘*swishing party*’ in Vietnam was held. The party was divided into two parts. The first part was an informal conversation with the five Asian Young Leaders and the British Council, who talked about what young people are doing in other countries in the region to tackle the problems of Climate Change, and what the British Council wants to achieve in this area. The second part was a fun “Swishing” party which was an opportunity to swap clothes and accessories with each other. Everyone who attended the party brought some clothes which they no longer use and were then allowed to take away items from someone else.



Informal talk about climate change with young people from Indonesia, Japan, Korea and Thailand before the 'swishing part'



The packed Information centre in British Council

This was a fun event but one which should raise awareness of consumerism in our society today. We want to highlight the wastefulness of our society today and stress that we should

all try **reduce – recycle and reuse** what we have rather than always buying something new. This will save our natural resources as well as save energy and contribute to reducing carbon emissions.



Browsing 'new' clothes.

'Swishing party' was a success and the first of its kind in Vietnam. We hope that it makes people want to contribute more for climate change issues by playing their small parts while still having fun and still being 'cool'. It was part of British Council's activities during Asia Pacific Forestry Week to raise awareness of people and to build a network of enthusiasts committed to taking action to protect our environment.

INDEX: PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE



2. Reggy Hasibuan (28), a founder of the Anomali Youth Empowerment Center in Malang, East Java. He has also been working in community empowerment since 2003. Reggy stresses the importance of not only creating awareness, but also providing the necessary skills and knowledge to empower youth to take an active part in being the motor of social change. "Currently I am expanding Anomali to cover an Environmental Program called the Urban Environmental Watch. This program is intended to gather Youth in my town and together tackle local environmental problems such as bird hunting, littering and promoting the awareness of bio-fuel."



4. Ibnu Najib (26), a planner from Planning Bureau at The Ministry of State-owned Enterprise. Ibnu says "The only way to effectively mitigate the risks of climate change is to act together now." Having been a contributing researcher and analyst for ministerial decision support, Ibnu will contribute to the forum his insights into policy making. Recently he was part of a team formulating campaign and presentation materials for Good Corporate Governance.



11. Azusa Fukushima (25), a research assistant from Tokyo Metropolitan University, Japan. Currently she is working on a project "Study for the quantitative estimation and calculation of human factor influenced on the variation of monsoon." (Funded by the Global Environmental Research Fund (B-061), the Japanese Ministry of the Environment). She was Graduate student, majoring in Climatology. She has very interest about climate change in Asia related to her study. Her most pressing concern around Climate Change in the 21st Century are increasing of natural hazard, especially, it's related to water; Flood, Drought, Typhoons. "Because, the water problem is most important for human life in the 21st Century world, I consider", she said.



13. Sooa Lee (23), an International Studies student from Seoul, Korea that has spent four years actively in the Asian Law Students' Association. She with a project called future forest had planted trees in both Korea and China. She also involved with an environmental group hosted by Bayer, and the group strives to raise awareness about the environment and volunteered with a Korean Environmental NGO. "Watching the documentary 'An Inconvenient Truth' had a major effect on me, and the events concerned with the global warming problem all seemed to prove that we are indeed experiencing a major chaos", she said. That's why she wants to become an international lawyer in the future, so she personally will take part in advocating NGOs and serving as a legal counsel to those organizations that work for bettering the environment.



29. Sainum Tangsombatvisit (19), a Junior Government Spokesman from Thailand. She currently participates in many organizations as senior advisor of Coral recovery project and Mangroove project, head of the first year student in Chulalongkorn University and Bayer Young Environmental envoy and co-advisor in Asia Pacific. She thinks that the problem of climate change and almost lacking of crude oil energy are the most worried problems in the world. This is because these two items made much more profits to humankind more than someone might expect such as the economy, education, water supply and more. She has a dream to become senator or a chairman in environmental organisation such as UNEP in order to make a difference in the globe.