

# **Country Statement on Impact of Climate Change on Health**

**May 16, 2009**

**Jakarta**

**The National Commission on Environment Affairs (NCEA) was established in 1990 and acting as the national focal point which is responsible for the management of environmental issues and promote environmentally sound and sustainable development.**

**The National Commission on Environment Affairs (NCEA) serves as an agency collaborating closely with government departments, private sectors and the international organizations in matters relating to environment, and it has also drafted Myanmar Environment Protection Law.**

**In addition NCEA has also formulated Myanmar Agenda 21 in 1997.**

# Ladies and Gentlemen

The first principle of the Rio Declaration states that ... human beings are of the centre of concerns for sustainable development and are entitled to healthy and productive life in harmony with nature and Chapter 6 of Agenda 21 stresses the commitment of sustainable development of protecting and promoting human health.

**In line with Agenda 21, the country has developed National Environmental Health Action Plan (NEHAP).**

**In the National Environmental Health Action Plan (NEHAP) there is one Project namely Climate Change, Ozone Depletion and Ecosystem Changes.**

**Some Health Impacts are resulted from direct-acting effects such as heat wave-related deaths, weather disasters, and others from disturbances to complex ecological processes like changes in patterns of infectious diseases, fresh water supplier & food production.**

**Due to the effects of Ozone Depleting Agents, the destruction of stratospheric ozone layer in some area during the past two decades lead to increasing level of UV-B radiation to the Earth's surface causing various types of skin cancer, cataracts and damage to the human immune system & causing harm to some crops & some forms of marine life.**

**The agent, host (human) & their environment co-exist in a stable state such that the transmission of the infections is maintained at a low level of endemicity.**

**Similarly such equilibrium and endemicity is maintained for diseases confined to the animals. Each of this occurs in a well-defined eco-system.**

**Any changes to the eco-system may offset this equilibrium which may trigger the occurrence of infectious disease outbreak.**

**Encroachment or displacement of one species into another ecosystem may introduce a novel pathogen which may lead to a fatal disease outbreak eg. outbreaks of newly emerging, novel infectious diseases such as The Nipah virus, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), avian influenza H<sub>5</sub> N<sub>1</sub> and New Influenza A H<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub>**

# National Health Policy

- To implement health activities in close collaboration and also in an integrated manner with related ministries.

- **To promulgate new rules and regulations in accord with the prevailing health and health related conditions and when necessary.**

- **To intensify and expand environmental health activities including prevention and control of air and water pollution.**

- **To promote national physical fitness through the expansion of sports and physical education activities by encouraging community participation, supporting outstanding athletes and reviving traditional sports.**

- **To encourage conduct of medical research activities not only on prevailing health problems but also giving due attention in conducting health system research.**

- **To expand the health service activities not only to rural but also to border areas so as to meet the overall health needs of the country.**

- **To foresee any emerging health problem that poses a threat to the health and well - being of the people of Myanmar, so that preventive and curative measures can be initiated.**

# Climate Change

Myanmar signed the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992 and ratified the convention in 1994. Myanmar acceded the Kyoto Protocol in 2003.

**As required by all parties to the UNFCCC, Myanmar conducted its first GHG inventory with the assistance of ADB in 1997 under the Asian Least Cost Greenhouse Gas Abatement Strategy (ALGAS) Project.**

**The inventory is for base year 1990  
and includes annual projections of GHG  
emissions through to year 2020.**

**CO<sub>2</sub> emission in metric tons per capita in 1990 was 1.8 metric tons and 0.725 metric tons in 1997.**

**The effect of Myanmar to global warming and climate change on the whole is minimal on account of large area of forest cover which acts as a carbon sink.**

**The ALGAS Project (ADB TA 5592-REG) has made an important contribution by helping Myanmar develop the technical and analytical capacity to explore options for the reduction of GHGs emission and to formulate policies to reduce future growth in emission.**

**According to the party of the UNFCCC, the effort toward making necessary preparation for initial communications have now been initiated and the Project for the preparation of National Communication for the adaptation to Climate Change funded by GEF is now implementing by National Commission for Environmental Affairs.**

# Ozone Depletion

Myanmar acceded to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and London Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on 24, November 1993.

**As a developing country Party to the said agreement, Myanmar has an obligation to phase out ODS as set in the phase out schedule of ODS for developing countries.**

**The National Commission for Environmental Affairs (NCEA) in collaboration with ministries concerned and with the assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) formulated the country programme to phase out ODS especially CFC in Myanmar.**

**According to the country programme, the base line of the consumption of CFCs in Myanmar is 54.3 metric tons.**

The NCEA has requested the Directorate of Trade, Ministry of Commerce to permit the maximum import of CFCs is up to 54.3 metric tones in 2003, 40 metric tones in 2004 and 26 metric tones each tones each in 2005 and 2006, 8.15 metric tones each in 2007. 2008 and 2009 and ban the import of CFCs from 2010.

**For the implementation of the country programme, the Institutional Strengthening (IS) Project for National Ozone Unit Team consisting representative from various respective ministries have been formed.**

**A Refrigerant Management Plan (RMP) had also been developed in April 2005.**

**This project aims to train technicians in retrofitting domestic refrigerators to hydrocarbon blends.**

**Hands on training had been given and retrofit kits which were handed over to the Ozone Unit for distribution and monitoring of their use.**

**The impact of the project will be to reduce the need for CFC-12 as refrigerant for domestic and small commercial refrigerators, and as it is expected to be self sufficient, there is better changes of success CFC-12 based refrigerators in use to be converted to hydrocarbon blends and continue to be used till the end of useful life there by reducing the economic impact.**

# Ecosystem

Myanmar is well endorsed with rich natural resources. According to an assessment made in 1989, that forest cover stands at 51 percent of the total land area of the country.

**This is due to the fact that Myanmar forests have been prudently managed over the decades and sustainable exploitation of timber is being carried out under the Myanmar Selection System.**

**The wide variety of forest types including mangroves provide for a rich diversity of flora and fauna. Myanmar is home to more than 300 known mammal species, 400 reptile species and 100 bird species and a haven for about 7000 species of plants.**

**It is however noticeable that the biological resources have deteriorated over the decades due to disturbances caused by humans and fragmentation of habitats.**

**Myanmar like other developing countries faces deforestation. During the 14 years period from 1975 to 1989 that total forest cover had been reduced at the rate of 15,000 ha per year.**

**Deforestation in Myanmar, Unlike in some other developing countries is not the result of commercial extraction of timber but due to shifting cultivation, fuelwood collection, charcoal production for energy needs of the country and to a certain extent population growth.**

**Some area of degraded forests are being cut down and converted to cropland. The Myanmar selection system has enable the country to use its forest resources on a sustainable basis.**

**Some of the wildlife habitats in Myanmar are degraded due to increasing human population pressure, construction of road and reservoirs.**

**Regarding promotion of fuelwood substitute, utilization 419700 of improved cooking stoves and 76.564 millions of briquettes were distributed to local people. Moreover, 203000 tons of agricultural residues were utilized for substitution of fuelwood.**

**Thank You**