

PROFILE OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT CENTRE (GEC)

The *Global Environment Centre* was established in 1998 to work on environmental issues of global importance. The Centre is registered in Malaysia as a non-profit organization (Reg. no. 473058-T) but works regionally and internationally both directly and through many partners. It supports information exchange and capacity building as well as undertakes strategic projects particularly in developing countries. It works in partnership with other like-minded agencies worldwide.

Mission

To support the protection of the environment and sustainable use of the natural resources to meet local, regional and global needs, through strategic partnerships with communities and like-minded organizations.

Objectives

1. To promote integrated management of biodiversity and water resources with a focus on community involvement and biodiversity conservation.
2. To promote the protection and sustainable use of forests and wetlands with a focus on integrated management for biodiversity and climate change
3. To enhance awareness, understanding and capacity as well as partnerships between different organizations and sectors to address environmental issues.

Programme Areas

These are:

- River Care Programme
- Forest and Biodiversity Programme
- Peatland Programme
- Outreach and Partnerships Programme

River Care Programme

The focus of this programme is to promote and support the integrated management of river basins with particular emphasis on ensuring that biodiversity and wetland conservation and community considerations are incorporated into river basin management.

GEC has undertaken a range of projects and initiatives related to Integrated river basin management including:

Workshops and meetings

GEC has organized or co-organized a number of meetings including:

- Training of Trainers for Community participation in River Management under DID 1 State 1 River programme (2009-now)
- RIVER Ranger training (2009-now)
- SMART Ranger training (2008-now)
- Workshop on river auditing (2009-now)
- Workshop on water auditing (2010)
- Training programme for Government agency and community leaders on community based river management (2006-2008)
- Training courses on community based river management and assessment (2005)

- Workshop on Biodiversity and River Management in Malaysia (2004)
- Workshop on Integrated management of Wetlands, Biodiversity and River Basins, World Water Forum, Japan (2003)
- East Asian Seminar on River Restoration, Malaysia (2003)
- Workshop on Community approaches to river management, Malaysia (2001)
- Workshop on design of River Basin Initiative, Netherlands (2001)
- Workshop on Sustainable management of Water resources In Malaysia (1999)

River management, rehabilitation projects

GEC has been involved with various partners in the following site-based riverine assessment and management projects which emphasize community participation:

- River of Life Initiative (2012 – ongoing)
- Sg Way Rehabilitation Project under GAB Foundation W.A.T.E.R project (2007-on going)
- Sg Pinang River Care programme (2010-on going)
- Sg Klang River Ranger (2009-2010)
- Rehabilitation of Kelana Jaya Lakes, Selangor (2002-2009)
- Rehabilitation of Sg Pencala, Federal Territory/Selangor Malaysia (2003-2009)
- Community Involvement in Conservation of Biodiversity of Sg Nenggiri basin, Kelantan (2003-2009)
- Assessment of aquatic resources of Meliau Range Conservation Area, Sabah (2003-2005)
- Assessment of the Perak River (2005-2006)
- Integrated Management of the Salut-Mengkabong River Basin, Sabah (2003-2006)

Information exchange

GEC is supporting a range of information exchange and networking activities including:

CBD-Ramsar River Basin Initiative

The River Basin Initiative (RBI) is an activity under the joint work plan of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the Convention on Biological Diversity. This initiative aims to help establish a global network to share information, as well as support activities and projects that demonstrate the principles and practice of integrated water resources management. The work of GEC focuses on support to the River Basin Initiative Network – including electronic newsletters and web portal.

Malaysian River Network

The Malaysian River Network was established in 2004 to link groups working on the restoration and rehabilitation of river systems in Malaysia, including communities participating in river management. Activities include organizations of workshops and meetings, an electronic discussion group, a small grants scheme, manuals and guidelines and collaborative projects.

Forest and Biodiversity Programme

The Forest Programme includes activities related to assessment and management of forests at local, national and regional levels. The Programme includes a focus on protection and rehabilitation of mangrove and hill forests in partnership with local communities. Activities completed or underway include:

Forest and wetland management and restoration projects

- Assessment and rehabilitation of portions of the North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest, Malaysia (2008- present)
- Mangrove rehabilitation, Kuala Gula, Malaysia (2007-Present)
- Meliau Range Conservation Programme, Sabah (2003- 2006)
- Rapid assessment of impacts of tsunami on coastal ecosystems in Aceh, Sumatra (2005)
- Rapid assessment of impacts of tsunami on mangroves in Malaysia (2005).
- Community based rehabilitation of mangroves in Malaysia (2006-2009)
- Community based protection of forests (2006-
- Urban Forest protection and Tree planting initiative (2007-
- Community based forest management programme in northern Vietnam (2008-2009)

Networking and partnerships

- Development of a Coastal Greenbelt Initiative to exchange experience and best practices in coastal forest protection and rehabilitation.

Peatland Programme

The Peatland Programme includes a broad range of activities related to assessment and management of peatlands at local, national and global level. The Programme includes a focus on community involvement, biodiversity and climate change. Activities completed or underway include:

Workshops and meetings

GEC has organized or co-organized a number of meetings including:

- Workshop on Fire prevention and Control in peatlands, Malaysia (2002)
- Workshop on Wise use and sustainable management of peatlands, Thailand (2003)
- Workshop on Best management practices for peatlands, Indonesia (2003)
- Workshop on Peatlands Biodiversity and climate change, Canada (2003)
- Workshop on peatlands and climate change, Italy (2004)
- Workshop on Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate change, Malaysia (2004)
- International Workshop on integrated management of peatlands for biodiversity and climate change, Malaysia (2004)
- Workshop on conservation of biodiversity of Ulu Tungud Forest Reserve, Sabah (2004, 2005)
- International Workshop on peatland Conservation, restoration and sustainable use, China (2004)
- Workshop on Tsunami and coastal wetlands, India (2005)
- Workshop on peatland Biodiversity and Climate change, Canada (2005)
- Workshop on peatlands Biodiversity and climate change, UNFCCC COP12, Kenya (2006)
- Workshop on Peatlands, Biofuel and Climate change, UNFCCC COP13 Indonesia (2007)
- Workshop on Peatlands and REDD, Forest day UNFCCC COP14 Poznan (2008)

Forest and wetland management and restoration projects

- Rehabilitation and Sustainable Use of Peatland Forests in South East Asia (2010-2014)
- Sustainable Management of Peatland Forests in Southeast Asia (2011-2014)
- Rehabilitation of the Ruoergai peatlands, China (2002-9)
- Restoration of drained and burnt peatlands in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia (2002-7)

- Development of a management strategy for the Merang-Kepahayan peat swamp forest in Sumatra Indonesia (2005-7)
- Development of regional project for the rehabilitation and sustainable use of peatlands in Se Asia. (2006-8)

Networking and partnerships

- Coordination of South East Asia Peat Network with 500 members
- Establishment of Peat Portal Web site www.peat-portal.net

Intergovernmental Cooperation programmes

- Technical and operational support agency for ASEAN Peatland Management Initiative
- Member of the Coordinating Committee for Global Action on Peatlands
- Coordinating the Assessment of Peatlands Biodiversity and Climate Change in association with the Convention on Biological Diversity
- Member of the Peatland Group for the Revised guidelines on Greenhouse Gas Emissions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- Actively promoting the inclusion of peatlands in Climate change mechanisms (especially REDD, LULUCF, CDM and Bali Road Map implementation).

ASEAN Peatland Management Initiative (APMI)

In 2003 GEC was formally appointed by the ASEAN secretariat to act as a lead partner for the ASEAN peatland management Initiative (APMI) with a focus on technical and operational support. In this role GEC has facilitate numerous workshops, meetings and exchanges and also played a key role in generating resources to support development and implementation of the initiative. Since 2005 GEC has been appointed by ASEAN counties as the executing agency for the development and implementation of a project to support the rehabilitation and sustainable management of peatland forests in Se Asia with funding from IFAD/GEF.

Outreach and Partnership Programme

This programme area incorporates activities relating to general capacity building, environmental education, information exchange and awareness raising on global environment issues.

Capacity Building Assessments

GEC has been actively involved in a number of capacity building assessments including:

- Assisting in the coordination of the preparation of the Asia Pacific component of the UNDP-GEF Capacity Development Initiative and the synthesis report on Biodiversity.
- Training needs assessment on fire prevention and control in peatlands in Malaysia
- Global needs assessments for integration of management of wetlands, biodiversity and river basins for Ramsar convention and Convention on Biological Diversity.
- Needs assessment for integrated management of peatlands in SE Asia for ASEAN Secretariat.

Training courses and materials

GEC has organized or provided input to a number of training activities including

- Training Course on Fire prevention and control in peatlands, Malaysia
- Awareness and communication skills for peatland conservation, Indonesia
- Integrated implementation of environmental conventions, United Nations

- Manual on best management practices for fire prevention and control in peatlands
- Training Programme on Negotiation and implementation of MEAs for Government of Malaysia with UNU and UNEP.
- E-learning programme on Multilateral Environment Agreements for Government of Malaysia with UNU and UNEP.

Information dissemination and environmental education

- Posters, leaflets and information materials on lake pollution, peatlands, climate change and community participation.
- Student Activity Book and Teachers Guide on environmental issues affecting urban rivers and lakes
- Arts and Earth Festival (August-September 2006)

Development of networks and partnerships

- Establishment of Global Environment Network with members in 30 countries
- Partnerships to implement collaborative projects in Malaysia, Indonesia, China, India and Thailand
- Partnership and cooperation with international organizations and conventions including Convention on Biological Diversity, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations University
- Regional Focal point GEF NGO Network (2007-2015)
- Central Focal point of the GEF NGO Network (2009-2013)

Mode of Operation

- *Partnership with other like-minded organizations*
- *Building cross-sectoral or integrated coalitions to address key issues*
- *Information exchange and dissemination* - through newsletters, web-sites and the Internet.
- *Institutional strengthening* – South-South network and training programme.
- *Education and public awareness* – through dissemination of awareness materials & organisation of awareness campaigns.
- *Policy development* – through strategic workshops and policy development initiatives.
- *Demonstration Projects* - undertaking strategic projects in conjunction with partner agencies.

Networks

The Global Environment Centre coordinates a number of networks relating to environment activities including the South East Asia Peat Network, The River Basin Initiative Network, Malaysian River Network, SE Asia CSO Environment Alliance and the Global Environment Network (GEN). It has been elected as the Regional Focal Point for SE Asia for the GEF-NGO Network (2008-2015) and is currently the Central Focal Point of the Network.

Partners

GEC works with many organizations in implementing its programmes. Currently major partners include: ASEAN Secretariat; Centre for Environmental Technologies; Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Malaysia; Environment Action Committee, Sabah; International Fund for Agriculture Development; Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia; Ministry of Environment, Indonesia; Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, Malaysia; Petaling Jaya Municipal Council, Ramsar Convention Secretariat; Sabah Forest Department, Secretariat of the Biodiversity Convention; State Forestry

Administration China; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations University, Wildlife Habitat Canada, and Wetlands International (HQ, China, Indonesia, Russia, South Asia and Thailand).

Members

GEC has member organisations through its various specialised networks from more than 30 countries – mainly in Asia and Africa.

Funding

Funding for GEC activities has been provided by a broad range of agencies including: ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity Conservation; Asia Pacific Network for Global Change (APN); AusAID; Canadian High Commission, Malaysia; Canadian International Development Agency; DANIDA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark; Department for International Development UK, Directorate General for International Cooperation, Netherlands, Global Environment Facility; Global Peatland Initiative, Global Water Partnership, International Fund for Agriculture Development, Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund, Japan; Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment Malaysia, Netherlands Embassy, Malaysia; Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; Wildlife Habitat Canada; and Wetlands International. In addition many organizations and individuals have provided significant support for activities or contributed in kind to the Centre.

GOVERNANCE

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Ms Akiko Domoto,

Governor of Chiba Prefecture, Japan

Former Vice President of IUCN

Mr Delmar Blasco

Former Secretary General, Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)

Mr Effendy Sumardja

Former Special Assistant for International Relations to the Minister of Environment

Ministry of the Environment, Indonesia

Tan Sri Razali Ismail

Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Malaysia

Former President of the United Nations General Assembly (1996/7)

First Chairman of the Commission of Sustainable Development

Prof Dato' Dr Zakri Abdul Hamid

Science Advisor to Prime Minister of Malaysia

Director, Institute of Advanced Studies, UN University, Japan,

Former Chairman of SBSTTA, Convention on Biological Diversity

Dato' Wong Sai Hou

Former State Assemblyman for Kg Tunku and Chairman, Petaling Jaya City Environment Committee

Datuk Zul Mukhshar bin Md. Shaari

Former Director General Forest Department of Peninsular Malaysia

MANAGEMENT BOARD

Mr Zainudin Ismail - Chairman

Environmental Lawyer

Former Chairman of the KL Bar Council

Professor Mohd Ali Hashim

Department of Chemical Engineering, University Malaya

Malaysia

STAFF

GEC's activities are coordinated through a secretariat currently with fifteen staff. In addition, a broad range of associates and partners assist in the implementation of activities. GEC undertakes projects in more than 10 countries mainly in the Asia Pacific region either operating directly or through local partner organizations.

Key Management and technical staff of the GEC HQ include the following:

FAIZAL PARISH (fparish@gec.org.my)

Director

Ecologist / Environmental Management Specialist

- Overall direction
- Programme development
- Partnership with international organizations and conventions
- Peatland and climate change
- Integrated River Basin Management

VICTORIA LOUIS (victoria@gec.org.my)

Office Manager

Accountant

- Administration of office and projects
- Recruitment and administration of personnel
- Provision of finance and admin services for partners and projects

DR K. KALITHASAN (kalithasan@gec.org.my)

Coordinator, River Care Programme

Water and Waste Management Specialist

- Kelana Jaya Lake Rehabilitation Project
- Urban waste management
- Sungai Pencala Rehabilitation Project

CHIN SING YUN (chinsy@gec.org.my)

Coordinator, Peatland Programme

Forest and Natural Resource Management Specialist

- Mangrove rehabilitation
- Forest management
- Community participation

ADELAINA TAN (adelaine@gec.org.my)

Coordinator, Outreach and Partnerships Programme
Outreach and Networking Specialist

- Civil society participation and networking
- Community participation
- Indigenous peoples participation

ANRIE TOO (anrie@gec.org.my)
Snr Programme Officer/ Outreach and Partnerships Programme
Resource Development Specialist

- Corporate partnership
- Community participation
- Resource development

AZLI ABU BAKAR (azliab@gec.org.my)
Snr Programme Officer/ River Care Programme
Aquatic Biologist / IT Specialist

- River restoration
- Community participation

JULIA LO (julialo@gec.org.my)
Programme Officer, Forest and Biodiversity Programme
Forest and Natural Resource Management

- Forest management
- Community participation

HYRUL IZWAN (hyrul@gec.org.my)
Programme Officer, Forest and Biodiversity Programme
Forest and Natural Resource Management

- Mangrove rehabilitation
- Forest management
- Community participation

YAP NI YAN (NIYAN@gec.org.my)
Communication Officer/ Outreach and Partnership

- Information resource materials management
- Community events and education programmes

SERENA LEW (serena@gec.org.my)
Programme Officer/Peatland Programme
Forester

- Project development
- Haze prevention
- Tree planting

NOOR AZURAAHMAD (azura@gec.org.my)

Programme Officer/Outreach & Partnership Programme

Communication and Networking Officer

- Communication and Networking
- Environmental Management

JAGEDESWARI MARIAPPAN (jagedeswari@gec.org.my)

Programme Officer/ River Care Programme

EIA Expert

- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Environmental Management
- Water Quality Monitoring and Auditing