

Press Release

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World Environment Day: Civil Society Calls for Positive Environmental Action to Protect Biodiversity through Clean Energy Technologies

Preah Sihanouk - On the occasion of World Environment Day 2010, The Environmental Forum Network of The NGO Forum on Cambodia (NGOF) in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, the Department of Environment of Preah Sihanouk Province and the Sihanouk Province NGO Advocacy Network (SNAN) will celebrate Cambodia's rich biodiversity and the need for environmental conservation under the theme "**Many Species. One Planet. One Future**" at a public awareness raising event being held at Ochheuteal Beach, Sihanouk Province on June 4th 2010. This year's events will celebrate the incredible diversity of life on Earth as part of the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity. As a people's day for environmental action, various events around the world mark the day as it is celebrated by millions of people from around the world.

The event will urge the Cambodian public and policy makers, development partners, and the private sector to take bold steps towards managing Cambodia's biodiversity and natural resources in a sustainable and equitable way through the promotion of modern clean energy technologies and decentralized energy generation, in order to sustain livelihoods while filling Cambodia's energy needs and contributing to the country's sustainable economic growth.

The present approach to economic development worldwide and in Cambodia has contributed to great biodiversity loss and climate change due to the construction of oversized environmentally polluting and damaging coal-fired power plants and large hydropower dams for electricity. Additionally, these projects have contributed to the clearing of forests and lands, irreversible changes to the world's wetlands, loss of fisheries and livelihoods, and the emission of greenhouse gases creating climate change.

In order to better conserve our biodiversity, the Environmental Forum Network in Cambodia will call for policy makers, development partners, and donors to reconsider the environmentally damaging 100 MW coal-fired power plant being built in Stueng Hav district, Preah Sihanouk province, along with plans to build additional plants in Preah Sihanouk and Koh Kong provinces.

Rather than using yesterday's technology to build polluting coal plants, a more economical and reliable way to produce power would be to generate electricity on a much smaller scale, closer to where the power is needed through the use of sustainable, renewable energy technologies, such as solar photovoltaics, wind, micro hydro, biomass gasifiers or gas-fired combined cycle plants.

Cambodia's celebration will take place on the morning of June 4th and will bring together around 1,000 community members, non-governmental organizations, local authorities and government agencies. The celebration will include a parade and speeches by representatives from the Ministry of Environment, the Department of Environment, NGO Forum, along with the Provincial Governor of Preah Sihanouk province.

The Environmental Forum Network and the Sihanouk Province NGO Advocacy Network (SNAN) consists of approximately 30 local and national non-governmental organizations working to address key issues affecting Cambodia's environmental protection and natural resource management.

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