

# The GEF NGO NETWORK e-NEWSLETTER



**"FROM THE GROUND UP"**

**An Electronic Newsletter for the GEF NGO Network**

**Second  
Edition**

**July 2006**

## **Welcome!**

Welcome to the Third Edition of our e-Newsletter! Our aim is to keep everyone abreast of the GEF NGO Network and its activities.

For this, our Third Edition, we have taken the opportunity to further inform you of the GEF NGO Network - our function, our responsibility, who we are, what we represent and where we are from. In this edition, we have focused on another region - **Asia**.

**MEMBER PROFILES - ASIA : ASIA  
PACIFIC**  
[Foundation of the Peoples of the  
South Pacific International \(FSPI\)](#)

**MEMBER PROFILES - ASIA : SOUTH EAST ASIA  
(to be elected)**

**MEMBER PROFILES - ASIA :  
WESTERN ASIA**  
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**MEMBER PROFILES - ASIA : EASTERN ASIA  
(to be elected)**

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# MEMBER PROFILES

## Asia

### ASIA PACIFIC

The countries that fall within the Asia Pacific region are as follows :  
**Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Palau, Australia and New Zealand.**

### Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)

The FSPI Network is an independent group of like-minded NGOs who work at the grassroots level in nine Pacific countries. In addition, FSPI has three metropolitan partners: Australian Foundation of the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific (AFAP), Just World Partners (JWP) and Counterpart International, USA who offer a range of project services that extend beyond the Pacific. The community work undertaken by FSPI affiliates varies from country to country and from sector to sector. Community development remains the core business of our network, which includes various types of awareness programs and advocacy work. As a network, FSPI is committed to increasing stability and reducing poverty throughout the region.

Our work at the FSPI Secretariat is derived from needs identified by our affiliates and their constituencies. Each affiliate has a representative on the FSPI Board of Management, which meets annually and appoints an Executive Committee to oversee the functions of the FSPI Secretariat.

FSPI is now the largest, most experienced secular civil society network in the Pacific with affiliates in Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, East Timor, United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. As the Secretariat for the FSPI network, the focus of all of our work is encapsulated in the following vision and mission statement.

**OUR VISION :** Together we build communities in the Pacific.

**MISSION STATEMENT :** We work with Pacific communities through people-centered programs to foster self-reliance within a changing world. This mission statement is translated into action on the ground through the work of our country affiliates and community partners.

The focus of our work at national and regional level is the local community. The overarching aim is to encourage community members to take responsibility for their own development. This involves assisting them identify self-determined priorities and goals and to assert their right to influence and access public services and decision-making processes.

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## **WESTERN ASIA**

**The countries that fall within the Western Asia region are as follows : Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and Turkey.**

### **The Centre for Sustainable Development (CENESTA)**

The Centre for Sustainable Development (CENESTA) is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting sustainable community- and culture-based development. Its main area of work is Iran and Southwest Asia. CENESTA experts have also engaged in extensive activities in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and in the international arena in general. CENESTA is a member of IUCN—the World Conservation Union and is affiliated with the University of the North (Iran).

CENESTA works with a variety of partners, from local communities in Iran and other countries to local and national governmental agencies, from universities and research organizations to national and international NGOs. The UN bodies with which CENESTA and its experts entertain on-going collaboration include UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, UNSO, IFAD, UNCCD and the UN Secretariat.

CENESTA has a small core of staff and a large network of associates - ranging from

community-based groups to women's associations and technical experts who act on the basis of common concerns and specific capacities.

CENESTA staff and associates work in the context of project contracts and/or on a voluntary basis, contributing time as well as financial and material resources for the goals of the organization. Set up in Tehran originally in 1979 and re-organised after the war in 1991, CENESTA is active in the following areas:

- Community empowerment and equity (participatory development planning, social animation, Community Investment Funds and rural credit schemes, women and development initiatives)
- Community health, environmental health and pollution control
- National and international policies for sustainable development
- Social communication
- Renewable energy (solar, wind, biomass technologies)
- Sustainable agriculture (non-chemical control of pests, regenerative soil management, agro forestry, farming systems research)
- Collaborative management of natural resources (common property management, traditional management institutions for watershed, fisheries, water, pasture, etc.)
- Living with the desert (policy and practice on arid lands, nomadic pastoralism, climatic and vernacular architecture)
- Environmental impact assessment studies.

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**SOUTH ASIA**

**The countries that fall within the South Asia region are as follows :  
India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Maldives.**

## **Community Development Library (CDL)**

### **VISION AND PHILOSOPHY**

CDL strives to develop a knowledge network to facilitate the sustainable, effective, appropriate and affordable exchange of information at local, national, regional, and global levels.

### **Objectives**

- To provide in-depth material and information on areas of key concern, particularly on environment, education, health, women, children, human rights, good governance, peace and ethnic minorities.
- To provide audio-visual services and training to NGO workers and other beneficiaries.
- To develop a video resource center on development issues.
- To raise mass awareness through publications, workshops, seminars, study circle and networking activities.
- To promote development initiatives of different grassroots groups and organizations through advisory service, training and logistic support and introducing those initiatives to the larger audience through print / electronic media.
- To highlight the positive aspects of development endeavors through documenting and disseminating case studies on successful initiatives.
- To lobby and campaign on issues which have direct and indirect impact on the lives of the people, specially those who are poor and under-privileged.
- To establish development information network among NGOs and citizen's groups.
- To establish linkage and strengthen relationship with existing networks.
- To arrange dialogues, study circles, workshops, video shows, etc., on various socio-economic issues.
- To bridge the communication gap that exists between the policy-makers, social development activists, program implementers and the grass-roots people by providing information on ideas and experiences of innovative and sustainable development efforts.

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## **SOUTH EAST ASIA (to be elected)**

**The countries that fall within the South East Asia are as follows :  
Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, Lao**

## **PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam.**

### **EASTERN ASIA (to be elected)**

**The countries that fall within the Eastern Asia are as follows : China, Republic of Korea, Korea DPR and Mongolia.**

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# **Climate Change, Vulnerability and Social Justice**

*An extract from a paper by Roger E. Kasperson and Jeanne X. Kasperson - Risk and Vulnerability Programme, Stockholm Environment Institute (contact them by email : [postmaster@sei.se](mailto:postmaster@sei.se) or visit their website : [www.sei.se](http://www.sei.se))*

### **What is vulnerability?**

Put simply, vulnerability is the capacity to be wounded from a perturbation or stress, whether environmental or socioeconomic, upon peoples, systems, or other receptors. In the case of this paper it is the exposure and susceptibility to harm or damage from climate change. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) has adopted the following definitions relevant to assessing vulnerability :

**Vulnerability :** The extent to which climate change may damage or harm a system; vulnerability is a function of not only the system's sensitivity, but also its ability to adapt to new climatic conditions.

**Sensitivity :** The degree to which a system will respond to a change in climatic conditions (e. g. the extent of change in ecosystem composition, structure and functioning, including net primary productivity, resulting from a given change in temperature or precipitation).

**Adaptability :** The degree to which adjustments are possible in practices, processes, or structures of systems to projected or actual changes of climate; adaptation can be spontaneous or planned, and can be carried out in response to or in anticipation of changes in conditions.

Assessments of the ecological and human risks from climate change need to take account of both the magnitude of the stresses that may result from alterations in the characteristics of climate--precipitation, temperature, droughts, severe storms--and the degree of vulnerability of human and ecological systems to them. Thus, even modest changes in climate, either in mean temperature change or in the frequency and severity of extreme events, can have large effects if people or ecological systems are highly sensitive to the climate change. Such sensitivity may be very high if exposure to the change is high or if the buffering or coping capacity of people or systems is constrained. Assessing such effects requires an integrated approach, one that examines interactions between ecological and human systems as a particular place or region responds to the change or perturbation.

Ecosystems are important in relation to climate change because they provide the life-support systems that sustain human societies. In doing so, they deliver such essential goods and services as (1) providing food, fibre, shelter, medicines and energy; (2) processing and storing carbon and nutrients; (3) assimilating and remediating wastes; (4) purifying water; (5) building soils and reducing soil degradation; and (6) housing the planet's store of genetic and species diversity. Climate change will alter these goods and services in complex and uncertain ways--through their geographic location, mixes of species, and array or bundles of services essential to human well-being. Those ecological goods and services themselves are also constantly changing because of ongoing human activities, so that climate change and human activities will interact, often in unknown ways, in modifying patterns of ecological goods and services that support human societies.

Human societies show a wide variability in their sensitivity to environmental change and their abilities to anticipate, cope with and adapt to such change. Many factors shape this variability, including wealth, technology, knowledge, infrastructure, institutional capabilities, preparedness and access to resources. Human endowments in such assets vary widely in a world of mounting inequality. ***Developing countries, and particularly the least developed countries, are clearly the most vulnerable regions to climate change. They will experience the greatest loss of life, the most negative effects on economy and development, and the largest diversion of resources from other pressing needs.*** Since such countries and regions are also under stress from the forces of globalization, including population growth, urbanization, resource depletion, contamination of environments, dependence on global markets, and growing poverty, climate change will interact in uncertain ways with other accumulating problems. All peoples and regions have some level of vulnerability, and even the richer countries will not escape future damage and loss of life from climate change. ***Nevertheless, the vulnerable countries, regions, and places of the world will almost certainly bear most of the ongoing and future toll that will occur as a result of climate change.***

## **CONTACT THE GEF NGO NETWORK e-Newsletter**

We value your comments, suggestions and contributions. You can communicate with us at either: [info@zeroregional.com](mailto:info@zeroregional.com) or [dorothy@zeroregional.com](mailto:dorothy@zeroregional.com).

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