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Poverty-Environment Initiative Regional Mainstreaming Workshop
9–11 April, 2008, Thimphu, Bhutan

Report of the Poverty-Environment Initiative Regional Mainstreaming Workshop

I. Background

1. There is growing recognition that sustainable management of environmental resources is inextricably linked to poverty reduction. The impacts of environmental degradation brought about by intrusive development practices and climate change are more severely felt by the poor who disproportionately rely on natural resources and environmental resources for their survival and well-being. With the growth of government revenue in the Asia-Pacific, increased decentralization and a vibrant private sector, it is important that the management of environment and natural resources is strategically mainstreamed into economic development and poverty reduction strategies.
2. The United Nations (UN) system has developed a strong internal partnership between United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) through the Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI). The PEI is a global UN-led program to support country-level efforts to mainstream environmental management into national planning processes through financial and technical assistance, and capacity development. The program includes helping national governments establish links between environment and poverty, and promoting the role of environmental management in poverty reduction by integrating environmental considerations in national plans, budget processes, sector strategies, and local implementation mechanisms as well as building national commitment.
3. Since 2005, a Joint Regional Team comprising advisors from the UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok (RCB), UNDP Regional Centre in Colombo (RCC), and UNEP Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (ROAP) have provided technical, financial, and capacity support to governments, UN Country Offices and other partners to strengthen their capacity to integrate environmental concerns of the poor into national planning and policy frameworks, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Five-Year Plans (FYP). Countries in the region are now at various stages of developing PEI programs. Vietnam is currently the most advanced country in Asia in terms of implementation of their PEI program. The country was the first to start the PEI program in the region and is scheduled to complete it in 2009. Bhutan and Bangladesh are relatively advanced in their PEI activities and will soon begin the implementation of Phase 1 activities. Other countries, including Lao PDR, Cambodia and Nepal, have just begun scoping activities. The Joint Regional Team have visited and provided support to PEI countries in developing and finalizing concept notes, program documents, work plans, and terms of reference for PEI preparatory activities.

II. Workshop Rationale and Objectives

4. The PEI, among other things, seeks to develop knowledge and share ideas on how to implement PEI programs and how best to support countries in implementing innovative strategies aimed at sustaining the livelihoods of the poor, including the emerging concept of decentralization of environmental management and its integration into the PEI process. A series of regional workshops have been planned to promote knowledge management by sharing of lessons and experiences gained during the implementation of PEI programs by various countries in the region.
5. Accordingly, a PEI Regional Mainstreaming Workshop was organized from 9th to 11th April in Thimphu, Bhutan. The workshop was followed by a one-day field trip to Phobjikha valley for interested participants to have a first-hand look at some of the conservation-based livelihood activities practiced by the local communities.
6. The workshop builds on previous PEI workshops, including the regional workshop on “Mainstreaming Environment for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Growth in Asia and Pacific, held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2007. The Bangkok workshop, which brought together 55 representatives from planning, finance and environment ministries of national governments from Bhutan, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, and Vietnam, identified several issues that required further deliberation. These included: review of mainstreaming approaches, methodologies and tools; discussion and identification of good and bad mainstreaming practices; and setting future directions for mainstreaming through country-specific action plans.
7. Specifically, the objectives of the Bhutan mainstreaming workshop were to:
 - provide an opportunity for PEI countries to exchange ideas, experiences and knowledge on how to carry out PEI programs and environmental mainstreaming;
 - examine case studies and strategies to create a better understanding of PEI activities and key steps in the development of national poverty-environment mainstreaming programs that have been carried out in various countries in the region;
 - build on past experiences and ideas to envision next steps for poverty-environment mainstreaming at national, sub-national and local levels;
 - update participants on the progress of PEI and the Nairobi-based Joint UNDP-UNEP Poverty Environment Facility; and
 - discuss priorities for knowledge-sharing and South-South cooperation through cross-country regional support and regional communities of practice on poverty-environment mainstreaming.

III. Participants and Organisers

8. Participants from various organizations involved in development planning, finance and environmental management in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Nepal, and Vietnam attended the workshop.
9. UN staff who were present at the workshop belonged to UNDP Bangladesh Office, UNDP Bhutan Country Office, UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok, UNDP/GEF Regional Office in Bangkok, UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme in Bhutan, UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility in Nairobi, and UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.
10. Altogether, 47 participants attended the workshop. The names and contact details of the participants are provided in Annex I.

11. The workshop was jointly organized by the Secretariat of the Gross National Happiness Commission (Royal Government of Bhutan), UNDP Bhutan Country Office, and the UNDP/UNEP Regional Poverty Environment Initiative Team in Bangkok. The Royal Society for the Protection of Nature, a Bhutanese non-governmental organization (NGO), provided assistance in organizing the field trip to Phobjikha valley.

IV. Agenda

12. The workshop consisted of ten sessions as listed below:
 - Session 1: Welcome and Opening;
 - Session 2: What is Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming?
 - Session 3: The Role of the Ministry of Environment in Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming
 - Session 4: Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming at the Local Level
 - Session 5: Group Discussions on Country Ideas for Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming and Possible Areas for UN Support
 - Session 6: Linking Climate Mainstreaming with Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming
 - Session 7: UN Support for Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming
 - Session 8: Country Presentations on Next Steps for Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming and Areas for UN Support
 - Session 9: Regional Learning and South-South Exchange on Mainstreaming
 - Session 10: Donor Harmonization on Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming
13. Detailed workshop agenda is provided in Annex II.

V. Workshop Proceedings

Session 1: Welcome and Opening

14. At the outset, *Marchang*, a traditional Bhutanese ceremony, was conducted for successful deliberation and outcome of the workshop.
15. Mr Karma Tshiteem, Hon'ble Secretary of the Gross National Happiness (GNH) Commission, extended a warm welcome to all the participants especially those from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Nepal, and Vietnam. Mr. Tshiteem stated that Bhutan's Gross National Happiness philosophy is an overarching development framework that takes environmental conservation into account as an integral component. He further stated that through the Gross National Happiness philosophy, Bhutan seeks to ensure that development priorities are better balanced and that poverty is tackled in the right context of the broader definition of environment. He also described that environmental conservation occupies an important place in Bhutan's draft constitution and that the country has a constitutional obligation to maintain at least 60% of the country's area under forest cover at all times. He went on to explain that Bhutan's 10th Five Year Plan (2008-2013) will be focusing on poverty alleviation as poverty persists at relatively high rate despite annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of 8-9% over the last few decades. The oncoming 10th FYP aims to bring down the proportion of people living below poverty line to 15% from the existing 23%. Key strategies of the 10th FYP to reduce poverty through environmental management interventions include sustainable use of environmental resources as an asset by the local communities for better income and wellbeing, development of incentives for right behaviours leading to sustainable practices of natural resource use, community-based ecotourism, bio-

prospecting, and implementation of interventions to reduce human-wildlife conflicts. Mr. Tshiteem felt that the PEI provides an ideal platform for learning and understanding the complexity of issues related to poverty-environment mainstreaming, and for creating enabling conditions to address the dual goals of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.

16. Dasho Nado Rinchhen, Hon'ble Deputy Minister of the National Environment Commission, gave the opening address. He expressed that it was a great pleasure for Bhutan to host the PEI Regional Mainstreaming Workshop and have participants from other countries in the region. He stated that fast changing lifestyles and rapid development activities pose a serious challenge to environmental conservation. He emphasized the need to link environmental conservation efforts with those for economic growth and poverty reduction so that human beings look at environmental resources as a source of their well-being and not as an obstacle to their development. He went on to explain that conservation of environmental resources is very critical in developing countries such as Bhutan because a large majority of the population in these countries live in rural areas and depend on environmental resources for their livelihoods. In Bhutan, the population is predominantly agrarian with nearly 70% of the population subsisting on agriculture, livestock and use of forest resources. However, arable land constitutes only about 8% of the total land area. As a result, a large proportion of the rural people depend substantially on off-farm livelihood sources such as free-range grazing and use of various forest products. Environmental degradation will have adverse consequences on the livelihoods and socio-economic wellbeing of the majority of Bhutanese population, and create further poverty. It is, therefore, critical to mainstream poverty and environmental concerns in government policies, plans and programs to ensure that the poor do not become poorer and to give them the opportunity to improve their lives through sustainable management of environmental resources. Dasho Nado Rinchhen hoped that the PEI Regional Mainstreaming Workshop will serve as an excellent opportunity for the participants to share success stories and good practices, and will help strengthen South-South cooperation to develop linkages among countries in the region for poverty-environment mainstreaming.
17. Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, Hon'ble Resident Coordinator of the UN System in Bhutan, commenced his introduction to the workshop by highlighting that Asia-Pacific is one of the fastest growing regions in the world. He stated that while GDP growth rates of 8% in some countries have lifted millions out of poverty, it has often come at high costs to the environment and human health. Economic growth to reduce poverty essentially comes from natural resources-based activities such as agriculture, forestry, fishery, tourism, mining, and hydropower production in most developing countries. It is, therefore, important that sustainable environmental management measures are mainstreamed in poverty reduction and economic growth strategies. He stressed that climate change is a major concern for all of us and that it can no longer be regarded just an environmental issue. Climate change now threatens every aspect of human development and the worst impacts can be only avoided if we take strong actions now. The poorest countries and the poorest populations are hit hardest by the impacts of climate change, even though they have contributed the least to the causes of climate change. Mr. Rosellini further stated that current development planning and policy-making in many countries undermine pro-poor environment outcomes. Environmental institutions will need to increasingly work with planning and finance agencies to integrate poverty and environment linkages in development plans and budgets. This will help create sound investments in management of environmental assets to reduce poverty. Towards the end, he said that he was greatly satisfied to see the partnership between UNDP and UNEP grow through the PEI in Bhutan as well as other countries in the region. In conclusion, he emphasized that progress in eliminating poverty will only be possible with expanded, more targeted investments in environmental management as a means of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Such investments must be accompanied by the empowerment of communities, local governments and the private sector, and by favourable policy reforms.

Session 2: What is Poverty-Environment Monitoring?

Presentations

18. Ms. Dechen Tsering of UNEP and Mr. Sergio Feld of UNDP gave a joint presentation providing an overview of Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming. The presentation outlined the concept and principles of poverty-environment mainstreaming, the progress and future activities of PEI, lessons learnt from PEI activities in various countries, and the challenges of poverty-environment mainstreaming in the Asian context. The PEI is a joint UNDP/UNEP program to support country-level efforts to mainstream poverty-environment linkages in the development planning processes by strengthening country capacities, building partnerships, and facilitating learning and knowledge-sharing. The PEI relies on using key development planning strategies, such as PRSP and MDG strategy, for entry, finding and nurturing “champions” for poverty-environment mainstreaming at the policy as well as implementation level, commitment from national planning and financial agencies, country-specific evidences to support poverty-environment mainstreaming, integrated policy appraisals, donor harmonization, and broad-based stakeholder participation. In Asia, PEI program was first launched in Vietnam. In 2006, UNDP and UNEP joined hands to scale up PEI in Asia and other regions. PEI activities are now under way in Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Lao PDR while PEI scoping is ongoing in Afghanistan, China, Nepal, and Papua New Guinea. The key lessons from the PEI work so far were that integration of poverty and environment linkages in development planning and fiscal strategies is a complex, long-term process, the various drivers of development require to be understood and considered in poverty-environment mainstreaming, and sustained efforts are required to ensure that poverty-environment mainstreaming at the policy level permeates down to the implementation level. At the end of the presentation, it was emphasized that a change in development approach which recognizes that environment is no longer just an “end of pipe” development concern but a broad reality with which development policies, programs and projects have to be compatible will lead to more benefits for the people, a new competitiveness for business, and realization of the value of poverty-environment mainstreaming.

19. The overview presentation on Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming was followed by a presentation on “What Role for Ministries of Finance and Planning for Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming” by Mr. Shankar P. Sharma, Professor and Former Vice Chairman, National Planning Commission of Nepal. Mr. Sharma began his presentation by highlighting why environmental mainstreaming is a priority. He stressed that: the contribution of environment to social and economic development is often poorly understood; unsustainable use of environment reduces socio-economic benefits produced by environmental resources; pro-poor development is hindered when environmental degradation occurs; and there are insufficient successes to date in operationally integrating poverty-environment linkages into national and sectoral development plans. To highlight some of the linkages between environment and livelihood, he informed that worldwide 1.3 billion people lived on marginal lands, one billion people were affected by land degradation caused by deforestation, overgrazing and unsustainable agriculture, and more than two billion people relied on biomass fuel for cooking and heating. He then illustrated various examples of environment-livelihood linkages from various countries in the region, such as Bhutan, Nepal and Lao PDR. Mr. Sharma outlined that the planning ministries had the role for formulation of plans and strategies and were better suited to address cross-cutting issues in an integrated manner. The role of planning ministries in poverty-environment mainstreaming was critical in terms of providing indicative budgets, and monitoring and evaluation. The role of finance ministries was considered crucial in poverty-environment mainstreaming because they had the responsibility for public resource management including sectoral allocations, budgetary prioritization of projects and programs, development of medium-term expenditure framework, and coordination of foreign aid. At the end of his presentation, Mr. Sharma illustrated the horizontal and vertical linkages between PRSP process and poverty-environment mainstreaming inputs to highlight the value of poverty-environment mainstreaming in PRSP-based development planning.

Comments from the Discussants

20. Mr. Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury, Hon'ble Secretary of Bangladesh's Ministry of Planning, commented that the poverty situation in the world has assumed a gigantic magnitude over the years. While it is the poor who are the most vulnerable to environmental degradation, it is the wealthier people who, though in minority, consume much of the world's resources and cause environmental degradation. Poverty-environment mainstreaming will require coordination between various sectors but development concepts and models tend to vary from organization to organization. Planning commissions or ministries are best placed to integrate and balance the interests of various sectors because they have a macro-view of development. Therefore, engagement with planning agencies is crucial for poverty-environment mainstreaming in national and sectoral policies, plans and programs.
21. Mr. Tuon Thavrak, Director General of the Ministry of Planning of Cambodia, commented that planning ministries have a very vital role in poverty-environment mainstreaming as they are required to prepare well-balanced development plans, which among other things address poverty and environment issues. The role of finance ministries is also critical as they are required to prepare budgets and align resources according to country's priorities and development policies.

General Comments and Additional Information

22. Environment has been a global concern for the last few decades, yet environmental mainstreaming in development sectors remains a challenge to this day. Environmental issues are often neglected in the pursuit of GDP growth. Developing countries tend to focus on economic growth and perceive that environmental issues can be resolved consequentially when economic development needs are achieved. There is a need to understand why there are problems in environmental mainstreaming in development plans, why governments hesitate to mainstream poverty and environment linkages in their development planning and policy-making processes.
23. Sound economic cases need to be developed for poverty-environment mainstreaming. Country-specific evidences to demonstrate the linkages between poverty and environment issues and how sound environmental management investments can contribute to better economic growth and reduced poverty are required to inform development planners and decision-makers. In addition, existing data gaps on important environmental indices such as biodiversity loss, land degradation, and deforestation in many developing countries make it difficult for poverty-environment mainstreaming proponents to convince governments about the urgency of integrating poverty-linked environmental issues in economic development strategies. Furthermore, conventional institutional structures and the hierarchy inherent in such structures are generally not readily conducive for poverty-environment mainstreaming.
24. There are several good plans in place that can contribute to poverty-environment mainstreaming but these plans do not essentially translate into actions. For example, Cambodia has National Adaptation Program of Action for Climate Change (NAPA) and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan but their implementation has been a problem mainly due to capacity constraint and lack of awareness across various sectors. This emphasizes that the real challenge of poverty-environment mainstreaming lies at the implementation level and not so much at the policy level.
25. Governments cannot alone take up poverty-environment mainstreaming especially at the grassroots level because of the inherent bureaucracy as well as capacity constraint. Engagement of NGOs, civil society organizations, local communities and private sector is very vital for effective poverty-environment mainstreaming and creating multiplier effect. The PEI experience in Vietnam shows how poverty-environment mainstreaming can be pursued using participatory approaches that involve a wide range of partners.

26. There is need for “champions” for poverty-environment mainstreaming but these “champions” need to be found in the field of action and not in just offices.
27. Very often, culture moulds the outlook on environmental conservation. There is the need to approach poverty-environment mainstreaming taking into account the culture of target communities.

Session 3: What Role for the Ministry of Environment?

Presentations

28. Mr. Chuon Chanrithy, Director of the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia, gave a presentation on the institutional set-up of Cambodia’s Ministry of Environment and the key policies, plans, programs, and projects that have direct relevance to poverty-environment mainstreaming. He began his presentation with an overview of Cambodia’s demographic, geographic, and administrative settings. He also presented key socio-economic indicators, including poverty prevalence rate, of Cambodia. He then described the policy, legal and institutional frameworks within which the Ministry of Environment carries out its various plans and programs. In terms of development plans, he highlighted the National Environmental Action Plan (1998-2002), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2002), Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plans (1996-2000 and 2001-2005), National Poverty Reduction Strategy (2002), and Cambodia Millennium Development Goals (2003). He also explained the development of the National Strategic Development Plan (2006-2010) as a broad development framework using comprehensive rectangular strategy, which involves political, governance, economic, infrastructure development and private sector development elements. He then went on to explain the process of environment impact analysis in Cambodia. In addition, his presentation highlighted the implementation of Biodiversity Corridor Conservation Initiative (BCI) Program in Cambodia. Finally, he explained the process undertaken for Rapid Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Tourism Sector, which was identified as one of the priority sectors for SEA.
29. Mr. Sonam Yangley, Director of Bhutan’s National Environment Commission, gave an overview of the conception, institutional set-up and functions of the National Environment Commission (NEC). The NEC was first established in 1989 by Royal Decree as a National Environment Committee under the Planning Commission. Subsequently, in September 1992, the NEC was delinked from the Planning Commission to serve as a more vigorous, cross-sectoral government body with an independent Secretariat. The NEC was reconstituted in its present form in September 1998. It is the highest regulatory and advisory body for environmental matters in the country. One of its primary functions is to ensure the implementation of the Environmental Assessment Act, which requires all development projects to go through the process of environmental impact analysis and have environment clearance prior to implementation. He also informed that at one point the Royal Government of Bhutan discussed whether or not to transform the NEC into a Ministry. However, it was decided to retain the NEC as a commission so that it can function as an inter-ministerial policy-making, advisory and regulatory body for environmental matters, which would not be possible as a ministry.

Comments from the Discussants

30. Both the discussants, Mr. Pulakesh Mondal from the Ministry of Environment and Forest of Bangladesh and Mr. Phan Tuan Hung from the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Vietnam, commented that it was not clear from Cambodia’s presentation what the key poverty and environment issues were in various strategies and plans, such as the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals and the National Strategic Development Plan. Mr. Mondal also stressed that every environment ministry or commission should have a poverty alleviation policy. This will be an indication of the environment ministry or commission’s commitment to align environmental

management programs to poverty reduction objectives and will send a positive signal to other ministries.

General Comments and Additional Information

31. The Cambodian representatives clarified that the various national policies and plans recognize several poverty and environment issues although the presentation may not have been explicit about it. For instance, the law on protected areas in Cambodia gives local communities the right to protect the surrounding natural resources from illegal use. The protected areas policy requires protected areas to be divided into different zones such as core zone, buffer zone and community zone. Sustainable use of natural resources by the local communities is allowed in buffer and community zones. The Ministry of Environment has also made it mandatory for the environmental impact assessment process to have local community participation.
32. Query was raised about the coordination of various planning processes and activities in Cambodia. To this, the Cambodian representatives clarified that earlier they had several development planning processes and strategies, such as the multi-development framework, socio-economic development plans, and PRSP. They have now done away with multiple national development plans and instead developed one mother document, the National Strategic Development Plan, which encompasses all development issues and needs including those pertaining to poverty and environment. Cambodia's NSDP is expected to be reviewed shortly.
33. Micro enterprises form an important component of the Cambodian economy. These micro enterprises are largely dependent on use of forest resources but the existing forest resource use techniques are not very efficient. Sustainable forest use techniques are being designed through programs such as community forestry.
34. Institutional realities differ in various countries where poverty-environment mainstreaming is being attempted. There is a need to understand these realities better for effective poverty-environment mainstreaming. However, PEI cannot wait for ideal institutional setting. Rather it would seek to create enabling conditions for poverty-environment mainstreaming through institutional support and capacity development.

Session 4: Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming at Local Level

Presentations

35. Mr. M. Aminul Islam, Assistant Country Director of UNDP Bangladesh, gave a presentation on "Mainstreaming Poverty-Environment at Local Level" based on Bangladesh experience. He stated that in the case of Bangladesh, given the extreme vulnerability of the country to climate change impacts, poverty-environment mainstreaming explicitly includes climate issues and is called "poverty-environment-climate mainstreaming". He said that mainstreaming requires operating in a multi-ministerial framework and linking local level experience and priorities with national policy and planning processes. Land, water, climate, air, and biodiversity were outlined as the key thematic entry points for poverty-environment-climate mainstreaming at the local level. He explained that poverty-environment mainstreaming is required because conventional development policies are largely sector-based, creating inter-sectoral policy conflicts especially where environment and climate change issues are involved. In the context of Bangladesh, increasing development pressures on land and forests, population growth, poverty, and recurrent climate-related disasters are the key factors that influence the need for poverty-environment mainstreaming. The impacts of pollution on resource availability and health, livelihood impacts of natural resources degradation, vulnerability of poor people to climate change hazards, access to and co-management of common property resources by the poor, empowerment of local decision-makers for environmental management, and gender-based environmental issues are some of the key areas for analysis of poverty-environment linkages. The PEI program in Bangladesh

recognizes the task of taking poverty-environment mainstreaming from policies and strategies to implementation level, integration of poverty-environment mainstreaming process in development targets and indicators, inter-sectoral coordination, and establishing sustainable financing mechanism for environmental investments as the main challenges for institutionalizing poverty-environment mainstreaming. In Bangladesh, there are around 4,600 *Union Parishads* (local government administrative institutions). Traditionally, these institutions were basically involved in development and administration of rural infrastructure. They have limited experience of developing and managing environment and climate change-related programs using local-level planning and budgeting processes. The PEI in Bangladesh seeks to develop guidelines for poverty-environment mainstreaming in local development plans and budgets. In order to demonstrate poverty-environment-climate mainstreaming at the local level, PEI has decided to pilot its activities in three different ecosystems, namely the coastal, arid and hilly regions, where the impacts of climate change such as floods, droughts and soil erosion are most severe. Institutional structure for poverty-environment mainstreaming at the local level is being developed. An inter-ministerial steering committee, comprising representatives from all the ministries and to be chaired and coordinated by the planning ministry, is being proposed for policy guidance and direction on PEI activities. The PEI will be administered through advisory services, policy functions, and implementation of poverty-environment mainstreaming at local levels. Advisory services will be secured mainly from the National Economic Council, Planning Commission, and General Economic Division (which is responsible for the MDGs and PRSP). In terms of policy functions, the PEI will review all the sectoral policies with the aim to harmonize them in the context of poverty and environment issues. The implementation will be carried out at division, district, sub-district, union, and village levels. The results derived from the implementation of the eco-specific pilot demonstration activities will be used to inform policy-making at the central level.

Comments from Discussant

36. Ms. Phan Thi Ha of the Poverty and Environment Project in Vietnam in her comments drew some comparisons between the Bangladesh and Vietnam PEI implementation scenarios. While the Vietnam and Bangladesh poverty-environment mainstreaming approach and the areas that they address are more or less similar, the Vietnam PEI also looks at renewable energy, fishery, gender, and migration issues during sectoral and local level planning. Since 2000, the planning approach in Vietnam has been shifting from top-down to bottom-up, giving local communities the opportunity to contribute to planning of activities that addresses poverty and environment issues in their areas. The PEI in Vietnam has also been able to develop some evidences of poverty-environment linkages and monitoring indicators for poverty-environment mainstreaming which could be used for planning purpose.

General Comments and Additional Information

37. Poverty-environment mainstreaming proponents need to reflect on how the poor can effectively participate in the mainstreaming. If poverty-environment mainstreaming is to be bottom-up – a call from the bottom rather than a command from the top – then “champions” need to be also found from the poor and not just from the elite. The proponents need to facilitate and give the “champions” from the poor the space necessary to articulate their views and knowledge in poverty-environment mainstreaming.
38. Query was raised as to how access to natural resources by the poor and sustainable management of natural resources can be pursued at the same time. Sustainable management of natural resources will inevitably entail certain restrictions on access to natural resources. In response, it was clarified that if access to natural resources is given to the local communities together with management responsibility, access and sustainable management can go hand in hand. Several countries have successfully taken up participatory management of natural resources to ensure increased access to and use of natural resources for livelihoods using practices which are within

the limits of environmental sustainability. For instance, community forestry programs in Nepal have improved the lives of many local communities whilst improving local forest conditions. Similarly, co-management of natural resources and eco-tourism initiatives in Bangladesh are intended to benefit local communities without degrading their natural environment by means of sustainable practices.

39. In Bangladesh, the scenario for poverty-environment mainstreaming is different from most other countries. It has the highest population density in the world, so access to natural resources is indeed a big challenge. Bangladesh has been repeatedly afflicted by climate-related disasters for several decades. Against the backdrop of such enormous adversities, the local communities have shown immense resilience and survival instincts. Poverty-environment mainstreaming has been happening at the grassroots level for many years as an instinctive response to environmental hardships. Rural communities have been for ages planting trees and shrubs to protect their homes from floods and storms, growing medicinal plants for their health, protecting their sources of safe drinking water, and maintaining village woodlots for fuelwood and small timber. The PEI program in Bangladesh does not want to re-invent the wheel of poverty-environment mainstreaming at the grassroots level. Instead, it seeks to tap existing indigenous knowledge and practices, and build on them. In terms of grassroots level participation, Bangladesh has had a very successful history of grassroots level NGO movement. There are more than 10,000 NGOs and success stories of NGO participation in Bangladesh are now being replicated in over 50 countries around the world.
40. Mainstreaming should be two-sided. We need to not only look at mainstreaming environmental management in development policies, plans and programs but also at how best environmental management can be aligned in national development policies so that it effectively contributes to economic development. This approach will help to bring about a more positive outlook on environmental issues among various development sectors.

Session 5: Break-out Groups to Discuss Country Ideas for Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming

41. Ms. Dechen Tsering and Mr. Sergio Feld asked the participants to break out into country groups and to prepare country presentations answering the following questions:
- What specific areas should the planning, finance and environment agencies tackle as priorities?
 - What are the immediate capacity gaps and resources available?
 - What are the possible areas for UN support?

Session 6: Linking Climate Mainstreaming with Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming

42. Mr. Thiyagarajan Velumail of UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok gave a presentation on “Climate Mainstreaming”. He started off by describing that climate mainstreaming is about integrating climate change concerns, policies and measures that address climate change, and climate change information into development planning and decision-making. He outlined some of the impacts and consequences of climate change. These included glacial melting affecting river flows, increased floods and droughts, decreased agricultural productivity and threat to food security, high mortality due to climate-related diseases, land inundation and coastal hazards due to rise in sea level, water scarcity, decrease in reliability of hydropower production, and attrition or loss of biodiversity. Given the wide range of impacts and consequences of climate change, it can be described as a development issue and not just an environmental issue. The 2001 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Assessment Report underlined that developing countries were most at risk from climate change. In recent years, there has been increasing efforts to link climate change and poverty. As climate change poses a challenge to meeting MDGs, adaptation measures will need to be consistent with development priorities. Initial work to integrate climate issues into development process involves critical assessments and in this respect UNDP has been

doing work in three areas. The first area pertains to the risk of climate change to policies, programs and projects, and their deliverables, for example water supply, food security and human health. The second area pertains to the vulnerability to climate change of the community or ecosystem that is the beneficiary, and the third is the possible effects of the projects and its deliverables on the vulnerability of the beneficiaries. Climate mainstreaming faces enormous challenges. While climate change has been recognized as a global concern, uncertainties and difficulties to project the extent and future impacts of climate change in sufficient detail has made it difficult for many governments to commit targeted investments. Climate change adaptation needs to be addressed within the whole milieu of development priorities such as access to water and food, health and sanitation, education, and livelihood security; otherwise people may not see it as an important issue. Technical measures of climate mainstreaming need to be accompanied by non-technical measures like training and institutional support.

Comments from Discussants

43. Ms. Munira Begum from the Ministry of Finance of Bangladesh commented that climate change is one of the biggest issues in Bangladesh. Given the huge concern that the Government of Bangladesh has about climate change and its impacts, climate issues are now required to be integrated in PRSP and sectoral development plans. For instance, the PRSP, among other things, emphasizes on coastal afforestation and reforestation programs. Another key concern is that environmental degradation in the watersheds in neighbouring countries has adverse impacts on Bangladesh because the rivers that flow into the country originate from the neighbouring countries.
44. Mr. Sam Chamroeun from the Ministry of Environment of Cambodia commented that 80% to 90% of the Cambodian population are farmers and their livelihoods depend on climate patterns. Succession and combination of floods and droughts have destroyed many farmlands and caused great economic losses. Deforestation is one of the causes of floods but the Cambodian people are not yet convinced that floods are caused by deforestation. Between 2000 and 2002, floods have caused 438 casualties and incurred damages of about US\$ 205 million to the economy. Climate change has also increased vector-borne diseases such as malaria, which takes about 800 human lives every year, in Cambodia. The malaria prevalence rate in Cambodia is known to be the highest in Asia. Since the poor are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, the Cambodian government have in their NAPA discussed strategies to support the local communities, especially the impoverished, for community-based adaptation to climate change.

General Comments and Additional Information

45. Business as usual will not work for climate mainstreaming. Policy makers in many countries are still not concerned about climate change and continue to pursue economic development activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. The general perception is that climate change is taking place gradually. There is a need to raise awareness of the abrupt nature and uncertainty of the impacts of climate change, and the drastic consequences of belated action. More strategic and ground-breaking awareness programs, which blend science, economics, ethics and politics, are required to raise awareness and consciousness at the planning and policy-making level.
46. Query was raised as to whether or not climate mainstreaming and poverty-environment mainstreaming should be taken up as one process because logically it would be imprudent not to discuss climate issues when mainstreaming poverty-environment issues in development policies, plans and programs. What are the challenges of doing poverty-environment mainstreaming and climate mainstreaming together or separately? In response, it was informed that one of the arguments for separate climate mainstreaming was that it involved a different timescale and required different analytical tools and skills. These differences notwithstanding, it would be still meaningful to do a PEI version of climate mainstreaming as the Bangladesh case has shown by linking climate mainstreaming and poverty-environment mainstreaming. This is, however, not to

remodel poverty-environment mainstreaming as climate mainstreaming but to demonstrate that climate change issues to some extent can be addressed through poverty-environment mainstreaming.

47. National planning agencies have experienced a proliferation of mainstreaming activities in the recent years. This could inundate and burn out existing capacity. There is also the risk of diluting mainstreaming. The idea of separate climate and poverty-environment mainstreaming seems to be donor-driven because of availability of funds for climate change adaptation. An integrated approach is desirable but the PEI is relatively small compared to climate change adaptation program, so the scale does not allow integration.
48. The Poverty and Environment Project in Vietnam has just initiated a study to look at enhancing the resilience of poor coastal fishing communities to extreme weather events. This study is a part of the national targeted program for climate change adaptation, which has now been commissioned by the Prime Minister. It is being undertaken in two provinces, one in the north and the other in south. It will involve participatory approaches to directly understand from these people their adaptation needs and the kind of policies that can be created to support them to adapt to climate change.

Session 7: How can UN Support Country Level Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming?

49. Mr. John Horberry of the UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility in Nairobi gave a presentation on “How can the UN Support Country Level Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming”. He commenced with an overview of the conception and set-up of the PEI. Initially, UNDP and UNEP were carrying out poverty-environment linkage work separately. In 2006, the two agencies decided to formally work together and formed the joint PEI to scale up poverty-environment linkage work based on experience and lessons learned from pilot countries, mostly in Africa. The proposal to scale-up through the joint UNDP/UNEP PEI was discussed with strong engagement of key donors such as DFID, Denmark, EC, Belgium, Ireland, Norway, and Sweden. The UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility was set up in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2007 to coordinate and support PEI scale-up process, and to work with donors. The PEI has for now seven country programs in place in Africa and has the plan to launch PEI programs in another three African countries. In Asia, the PEI has established a country program in Vietnam. The target is to establish up to 10 country programs by 2011 in Asia. At the present, PEI activities are under way in Bhutan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Lao PDR while PEI scoping is ongoing in Afghanistan, China, Nepal, and Papua New Guinea. The PEI has not yet begun any programs in Latin America/Carribbean and Europe/CIS regions. Plans are afoot to launch PEI programs in these two regions in the first half of 2008. The UNDP/UNEP PEI Regional Team for Latin America/Carribbean region will be based in Panama while the one for Europe/CIS region will be based in Geneva or Bratislava. The PEI country programs typically involve three phases. The preparatory phase focuses on finding the entry points and making the case for poverty-environment mainstreaming. Then comes Phase 1 which focuses on integrating environment into national development processes by developing country-specific evidences, influencing policy processes, and developing policy interventions and programs. Phase 2 focuses on operationalizing the poverty-environment mainstreaming process through policy and program implementation, budgeting and financing, and poverty-environment monitoring. Capacity development is pursued as a continuous process cutting across all the three phases. The role of the UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility involves resource mobilization, donor liaison, management of inter-agency partnerships, support to regional PEIs, knowledge management, and delivery of technical assistance. The UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility can support countries with funds, technical assistance, training, and access to knowledge “products” such as case studies, guidance notes and evaluation reports. It can also facilitate experience-sharing between PEI countries. There is already exchange of poverty-environment mainstreaming experiences, lessons and ideas taking place between Vietnam and Tanzania. Lastly, the Facility can help coordinate and harmonize the works of different donors around poverty and environment issues at the regional and country level.

50. Mr. Michael G. Parsons of the Poverty and Environment Project (PEP) in Vietnam gave a presentation on his project. At the outset of the presentation, he outlined the project in terms of timeframe, implementing partner, project financing, and project location. The PEP was started in 2005 and is expected to end in 2009. It is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and has international financing of US\$ 1.4 million from UNDP and US\$ 2 million from DFID. The project is currently being implemented in the provinces of Ha Tay and Ha Tinh. It is made up of three components. The first component focuses on poverty-environment linkage studies and awareness building, and on strengthening poverty-environment data gathering, monitoring and reporting. The second component focuses on mainstreaming poverty and environment concerns in policy frameworks and strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to develop policy and legal instruments for poverty-environment mainstreaming. The third component focuses on improving coordination within and between government and donors and facilitating effective partnerships for environmental management. In terms of implementation set-up, the PEP has a steering committee at the central level. This committee is chaired by the former Vice Minister and now the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, and has representatives from the Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Provincial Project Committees. For overall project management and functioning, a Project Management Unit has been established and is supported by the UNDP Country Office and a multi-sectoral technical working group. A provincial project unit has been established in both Ha Tay and Ha Tinh provinces. The poverty-environment mainstreaming approach in Vietnam is to develop policy through practice. This essentially involves a bottom-up approach which requires PEP to work together with the poor communities in eliciting practical evidences that will help integrate poverty-environment concerns in development policies and plans, and poverty reductions goals in environmental policies and plans. The PEP operates on four pillars, i.e. direct interventions, indirect interventions, policy and legislation development, and strengthening partnerships. Direct interventions include development of commune-level environmental regulations and stipulation of environmental responsibilities at the local level and participatory research on poverty-environment linkages against issues such as water and sanitation, gender, migration, and environmental impact assessment. The results of participatory research are being used to develop and pilot poverty-environment investment models in Ha Tay and Ha Tinh provinces. Indirect interventions include introduction and implementation of economic instruments for environmental protection and poverty reduction. In terms of policy and legislation development, PEP has supported the development of Law on Environmental Protection and the Guidance Decree. Other policy and legislation development activities were support for inclusion of pro-poor principles in the draft Biodiversity Law, assessment of joint resolutions on environmental protection between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and mass organizations, review of legislative gaps to help future development of environmental legislation, and aiding the development of pro-poor policy on climate change adaptation through a case study of climate change adaptation needs of poor marine fishing communities in the coasts of Ha Tay and Ha Tinh provinces. To foster partnership between government, donors and civil society in addressing poverty and environment issues, the PEP has established the Poverty Environment Network, currently with more than 130 members.
51. Mr. Phuntsho Wangyel of Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Commission Secretariat outlined some of the key poverty-mainstreaming activities that Bhutan would undertake. He stated that Bhutan will be looking at development of nature-based livelihoods such as ecotourism, employment of local people in protected area management activities, policy changes that will give local communities, especially the poor, better access to natural resources, and income generation through sustainable use of non-timber forest products.

General Comments and Additional Information

52. The PEP in Vietnam has organized internal study tours between different communities and provinces. These have helped create broader awareness and interest among provincial governments in the whole issue of developing commune-level environmental legislation that is

pro-poor. As a result, other provincial governments have also started taking up activities to develop similar commune-level environmental legislation to address key poverty issues in their provinces. The other practice-policy integration work that PEP will be doing is to look at the results of ongoing case studies of the poverty-environment issues, and use them in the development of provincial policies and plans. In Vietnam, it is more meaningful to carry out policy work at the provincial level than at the national level because there is a large degree of decentralization of activities at the provincial level, which have an upward effect. Moreover, there are 64 provinces each with their unique set of poverty and environment issues. So, in order to be able to engage at both policy level and practical level of poverty-environment mainstreaming, it is most appropriate to work at the provincial level. At the national level, the poverty-environment issues become too broad and the real issues tend to get watered down.

53. The PEP in Vietnam has strengthened inter-agency partnership, such as with the planning agencies. The Ministry of Planning and Investment is a member of the PEP Steering Committee. At the operational level, the Department of Planning and Investment is heavily involved in activities in the provinces.
54. Query about how the draft Biodiversity Law in Vietnam has dealt with poverty-environment issues was raised. In response, it was clarified that the current draft of Biodiversity Law incorporates elements of benefit-sharing of biodiversity on a pro-poor basis and payment of environmental services to specifically assist poor communities.
55. Query was raised as to how the development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) in Bhutan contributes to poverty reduction and environmental conservation. In response, it was explained that the GNH philosophy rests on four pillars, namely equitable socio-economic development, environmental sustainability, cultural preservation, and good governance. Of these, equitable socio-economic development and environmental sustainability are direct factors for poverty-environment mainstreaming while good governance is a condition that is necessary for such mainstreaming to take place effectively. Bhutan is currently looking at strategies to operationalize and measure GNH. In this connection, the Centre of Bhutan Studies is developing a whole set of indicators for GNH, including indicators for environment and poverty, to guide development planning and policy-making.
56. Query was raised whether the poverty-environment indicators the PEP in Vietnam has come up with are poverty-environment linkage indicators or separate poverty and environment indicators. In response, it was clarified that the indicators that the PEP is currently looking into are separate for poverty and environment. Additionally, it is also looking into livelihood indicators because livelihood is a key element that links poverty and environment. These indicators have been developed based on PSIR (pressure-state-impact-response) framework that is used in State of the Environment Report in Vietnam. Poverty-environment-livelihood index is being developed on the lines of human development index. The question, however, is that some indicators that give positive results on poverty reduction may give negative results on environmental management because of certain inherent contradictions. These indicators, thus, provide a measure of the contradictions and trends, and help the PEP to have a better understanding about various factors that come into play when dealing with poverty-environment mainstreaming.

Session 8: Country Presentations on Next Steps for Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming and Areas for UN Support

57. Each country group gave a presentation outlining ideas for poverty-environment mainstreaming in terms of: (a) priorities that need to be tackled by the planning, finance and environment agencies; (b) immediate capacity gaps that need to be addressed; and (c) areas of UN support. The country presentations are available in Annex III.

Session 9: Regional Learning and South-South Exchange on Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming

58. An open discussion was held to elicit ideas for regional learning and south-south exchange on poverty-environment mainstreaming. The discussion generated the following ideas.
59. Alliance between Vietnam and Bangladesh would be mutually beneficial because of similar demographic and geographic conditions that influence poverty and environment issues in the two countries. Vietnam can learn from Bangladesh's experience in the development and implementation of targeted climate change adaptation program, while Bangladesh can learn about eco-village models and sustainable paddy cultivation techniques in Vietnam. Additionally, Bangladesh is interested in learning about poverty-environment mainstreaming guidelines and tools from countries that have developed such guidelines and tools.
60. Given the growing emphasis on local environmental governance as a part of the national decentralization policy, Bhutan is interested in learning from Vietnam's experience in developing community level environmental legislation to address poverty issues. In return, Bhutan can share its experience and documents related to development and implementation of environmental assessment and environmental clearance guidelines in various sectors such as hydropower projects, roads, industries, and mines.
61. Bhutan and Nepal share interest in engaging parliamentarians as key players in poverty-environment mainstreaming. The International Parliamentarian Union (IPU), which has signed a memorandum of understanding with UNDP recently, has requested the UNDP and UNEP to look at strategies for the IPU to collaborate in facilitating interaction between parliamentarians and PEI work in selected countries. UNDP and UNEP's collaboration with IPU would, thus, be of assistance to Bhutan and Nepal.
62. Cambodia is keen to learn from Bangladesh about their experience and lessons learnt in developing and implementing economic instruments for poverty-environment mainstreaming. Cambodia and also other countries like Nepal that are interested in setting up environmental trust fund can learn from Bhutan the various aspects, including administrative framework, investment strategy and expenditure management, involved in establishing and operating an environmental trust fund. The Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation was established in 1992 and is now known to be a successful model.
63. Lao PDR will like to learn about the methodology and tools for poverty-environment mainstreaming that other countries may have developed. They will also like to learn from Vietnam about eco-village development approach, from Bhutan about hydropower-related environment issues, and from Bangladesh about integration of climate change adaptation needs in policies and plans at national as well as local level.
64. Nepal has done a lot of work in natural resources management based on community participation, which has socio-economically benefited local communities whilst improving their local forest conditions. Experience in Nepal has shown that if the local people are given access to natural resource along with management responsibility, they can, with some technical and capacity development support, sustainably manage their natural resources. Other countries could learn about the approaches, processes and methods that were used for participatory management of natural resources at the local community level in Nepal. Another area where Nepal has made significant progress is in renewable energy (micro-hydro, solar, biogas); 7% of the Nepalese population now rely on electricity from renewable energy sources. Nepal's experience in the renewable energy sector would be useful for other countries. In terms of learning from other countries, Nepal is interested in looking at studies that other countries may have done to assess the contribution of budgetary policies and environment sector policies in the reduction of poverty.

65. The UNDP/UNEP Regional PEI Team in Bangkok will work with the country programs over the next few months to look at how the regional learning and cooperation ideas emanating from the discussions could be implemented. Initially, the Team would like to set up an e-mail exchange network to facilitate exchange of ideas and information between various countries and people involved in PEI programs. There could also be the need to look at how best the existing PEI websites, including the one recently launched in Bangkok, could be used as a tool for regional learning and cooperation. The website of the UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility in Nairobi has sections that provide information on PEI country programs and access to knowledge materials. Regional and inter-regional training workshops for PEI will also be valuable forums for regional and inter-regional learning. For instance, the upcoming PEI Champions training in May 2008 will give the PEI practitioners from Asia to learn from their counterparts in Africa, where there is a longer experience of PEI implementation.

Session 10: Donor Harmonization for Poverty-Environment Mainstreaming

66. Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, Hon'ble Resident Coordinator of the UN System in Bhutan, and Mr. Karma Tshiteem, Hon'ble Secretary of the Gross National Happiness Commission Secretariat, joined this last session of the workshop. Ms. Tashi Pem from the Swiss Development Cooperation/Helvetas Bhutan Office, Mr. Chencho G. Dorjee from United Nations Capital Development Fund Bhutan Office, and Ms. Chime P. Wangdi from Tarayana Foundation, an NGO that works on the upliftment of poor and rural communities in Bhutan, also attended this session.

67. After a brief introduction on the need for donor harmonization by Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, the session was opened for discussion.

68. Donor harmonization has been a major challenge. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness has set some very ambitious commitments. There is already a major change in how the donors operate. In the context of PEI, collaboration between donors has become stronger. UNDP and UNEP had initially started separate PEI programs but as their programs evolved and lessons were learnt at various country levels they considered it would be more meaningful to work together so that they can scale-up PEI and have greater impact for poverty-environment mainstreaming. At the country level, the PEI seeks to work with UN Country Teams so that PEI work falls meaningfully within the country framework of UN initiatives.

69. The increasing proliferation of different mainstreaming initiatives has become a concern for governments. The climate mainstreaming has alone brought along a whole new gamut of complexities and it will be a huge challenge for donors to harmonize mainstreaming activities. Poverty-environment mainstreaming has had a head-start compared to climate mainstreaming and therefore its experiences in developing partnerships and donor harmonization may be of help for climate mainstreaming.

70. Donor harmonization is required more at the global level than at the country level. At the country level, there are more or less adequate institutional mechanisms for donor coordination and harmonization. PEI generally seeks to work with existing in-country donor coordination groups such as the ones set up for PRSP or MDGs.

71. The UNDP/UNEP PEI does not have huge funds. Its strategy is to play a catalytic role in developing donor interest and fostering effective partnerships between donors, governments and NGOs. Largely, the PEI will aim at creating enabling conditions for countries to institutionalize poverty-environment mainstreaming by mobilizing donor support, developing institutional capacity and delivering technical assistance. There is a trend of donors moving away from stand-alone environmental project assistance. They are increasingly looking at projects that link environmental and development objectives, especially those pertaining to poverty, livelihood and gender.

72. In the initial stage, involvement of too many donors in poverty-environment mainstreaming may create complications and confusion. An appropriate strategy would be for the UNDP/UNEP PEI to demonstrate how poverty-environment mainstreaming in development policies and plans can be achieved based on pilot activities. This would basically involve training, development of guidelines and tools, and case studies on poverty-environment linkages in selected priority sectors such as rural enterprises and human health. Once country-specific poverty-environment mainstreaming strategies have been demonstrated and adopted, support from other donors can be mobilized for full-scale poverty-environment mainstreaming across various development sectors.

The workshop came to an end with the conclusion of the session on donor harmonization for poverty-environment mainstreaming.

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Annex II: Workshop Agenda

Day 1, Wednesday, 9th April 2008 (Thimphu, Bhutan)	
0830 hours	Registration
0900 hours	Traditional Welcome Ceremony: "Marchang"
0930 hours	<p><i>Session 1: Welcome and Opening Remarks</i></p> <p>Moderated by Ms. Sonam Lhaden Khandu</p> <p>Welcome Address: Mr. Karma Tshiteem, Secretary, Gross National Happiness Secretariat, Bhutan</p> <p>Inaugural Address: Dasho Nado Rinchen, Deputy Minister, National Environment Commission, Bhutan</p> <p>Workshop Introduction: Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, UN Resident Coordinator</p> <p>Vote of Thanks, Mr. Phuntsho Wangyel, Gross National Happiness Secretariat, Bhutan</p>
1000 hours	Tea/Coffee break
1030 hours	<p><i>Session 2: What is Poverty Environment Mainstreaming</i></p> <p>Moderated by Mr. Toshi Hirotanaka, Deputy UN Resident Representative, Bhutan and Mr. John Horberry, Manager, Poverty Environment Facility, Nairobi (UNDP-UNEP)</p> <p>Overview presentation of Poverty Environment Mainstreaming: Ms. Dechen Tsering, Regional Office of Asia and Pacific (UNEP) and Mr. Sergio Feld, Regional Centre in Bangkok (UNDP)</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>Poverty Environment Mainstreaming: what role for Ministries of Finance/Planning Presentation by Mr. Shankar Sharma, Former Vice Chairman, National Planning Commission, Nepal</p> <p>Discussants: Mr. Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury, Secretary, Planning Commission, Bangladesh Mr. Tuon Thavrak, Director General, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia Mr. Bounsamack Sayaseng, Deputy-Director, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Lao PDR</p> <p>Discussion</p>
1230-1330 hours	Lunch
1330 hours	<p><i>Session 3: Poverty Environment Mainstreaming: what role for the Ministry of Environment</i></p> <p>Moderated by Mr. Sergio A. Feld, Regional Centre in Bangkok (UNDP)</p> <p>Presentation by Mr. Chuon Chanrithy, Director, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia</p>

	<p>Discussants: Mr. Pulakesh Mondal, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Bangladesh Mr. Sonam Yangley, Director, National Environment Commission, Bhutan Mr. Phan Tuan Hung, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Vietnam</p> <p>Discussion</p>
1500 hours	Tea/Coffee break
1530 hours	<p>Session 4: Poverty environment mainstreaming at the local level</p> <p>Moderated by Mr. Prabhu Budhathoki, Former Country Representative, IUCN Nepal</p> <p>Presentation by Mr. Aminul Islam, UNDP Bangladesh</p> <p>Discussant: Ms. Phan Thi Ha, Poverty and Environment Project, Vietnam</p> <p>Discussion</p>
1630 hours	<p>Session 5: Break Out Groups to Discuss Country Ideas for Poverty Environment Mainstreaming and possible areas for UN support</p> <p>Introduction to break out groups: Ms. Dechen Tsering, Regional Office of Asia and Pacific (UNEP), Mr. Sergio Feld, Regional Centre in Bangkok (UNDP)</p> <p>Country Teams: Bangladesh Bhutan Cambodia Lao Nepal Vietnam</p>
1830 hours: Welcome Reception and Dinner Hosted by Secretary, GNH Secretariat, Royal Government of Bhutan at Hotel River View	
Day 2, Thursday, 10th April 2008 (Thimphu, Bhutan)	
0900 hours	<p>Session 6: Linking Climate mainstreaming with poverty environment mainstreaming</p> <p>Moderated by Ms. Sultana Bashir, Regional Centre in Bangkok (UNDP)</p> <p>Overview presentation of climate mainstreaming: Mr. Thiyagarajan Velumail, Regional Centre in Bangkok (UNDP)</p> <p>Discussants: Mr. Sam Chamroeun, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia Ms. Munira Begum, Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh</p> <p>Discussion</p>
1030 hours	Coffee Break
1100 hours	Session 7: How can the UN support poverty environment mainstreaming

	<p>Moderated by Mr. Iori Kato, UNDP Lao PDR</p> <p>Overview by Mr. John Horberry, Poverty Environment Facility, Nairobi (UNDP-UNEP) Presentation by Mr. Michael G. Parsons, Poverty Environment Project, Vietnam Presentation by Mr. Phuntsho Wangyel, Gross National Happiness Secretariat, Bhutan</p> <p>Discussion</p>
1230 hours	Lunch (and country group presentations completed)
1400 hours	<p><i>Session 8: Country presentation on next steps for poverty environment mainstreaming and areas for UN support (20 minutes each country)</i></p> <p>Moderated by Dechen Tsering, Regional Office Asia-Pacific (UNEP)</p> <p>Bangladesh Bhutan Cambodia Lao Nepal Vietnam</p>
1600 hours	Tea/Coffee
1630 hours	<p><i>Session 9: Regional learning and south-south exchange on mainstreaming</i></p> <p>Moderated by Sergio Feld (UNDP)</p> <p>Open discussion</p>
1715 hours	Close of day 2

Day 3, Friday, 11th April 2008 (Thimphu, Bhutan)	
0900 hours	<p><i>Session 10: Donor harmonization on poverty environment mainstreaming</i></p> <p>Moderated by Mr. Nicholas Rossellini, UN Resident Coordinator, Bhutan</p> <p>Introduction by Mr. John Horberry, Poverty Environment Facility, Nairobi (UNDP-UNEP)</p> <p>Discussions based upon feed-back from Countries on Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing the Poverty Environment Initiative</p> <p>Close of formal workshop</p>
1100 hours	Coffee Break
1500 hours	<p>Field Trip to Phobjikha valley, black-necked crane habitat (for interested participants afternoon of 11 April to 12th April)</p> <p>12th April - day in Phobjikha Valley, afternoon leave for Paro. Overnight in Paro Leave from Paro on Sunday 13th April</p>

Annex III: Country Group Presentations

BANGLADESH GROUP

1. Priorities that the Planning, Finance and Environment Agencies need to tackle

Planning:

- ensuring that environment is not disturbed while giving poor people access to natural resources through co-management, social and community participation;
- ensuring that every project has environmental analysis so that the projects are environment-friendly;
- ensuring that development projects do not affect biodiversity;
- ensuring that the Ministry of Environment takes stock of development activities that are not compatible with sustainable environment and undertake mitigation plan;
- ensuring capacity building for developing and applying integrated guidelines / tools for planning practitioners to develop proposals on P-E-Climate related projects.

Finance:

- ensuring that every development program commensurate with pro-poor growth;
- ensuring priority in releasing funds for programs that are pro-poor;
- encouraging other ministries to adopt programs which are pro-poor and pro-environment;
- Ensuring P-E concerns in financing policies so that other ministries incorporate poverty-environment needs in their mid-term budgetary frameworks.

Environment:

- ensuring that there is environment impact analysis of every project/ program;
- ensuring that industrial enterprises are equipped with affluent treatment plant;
- periodically monitoring that other ministries and relevant agencies comply with existing environmental rules and regulations;
- regularly monitoring of environmental performance in the activities of the private sector enterprises;
- organizing community and participatory management of natural resources, such as forest, fishery and wetland;
- developing eco-tourism and safari parks with participation of local communities;
- engaging NGOs and civil society organizations in poverty-environment advocacy programs and management of natural resources;
- Coordinating with relevant ministries with regards to governance of environmental laws, rules and policies.

2. Immediate Capacity Gaps and Resources Available

Immediate Capacity Gaps:

- Local and regional institutions do not have capacity in terms of manpower, technology and resources;

- Ministry of Environment lacks proper working linkages with other ministries, national level agencies and institutions engaged in activities related to environment;
- Capacity is lacking within the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Directorate of Environment, and Department of Forests to provide coordination and advisory support;
- Coordination between various sectoral ministries, namely Ministries of Land, Fisheries & Livestock, Water Resources, Relief and Disaster, Agriculture, Local Government and Rural Development, Women Affairs, Health, is a major gap;
- Steering by Planning Commission is needed so that poverty-environment factor is in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and also in relevant projects;
- Establish network of environmental data bank and P-E-Climate information sharing arrangement with all the relevant sectoral Ministries, Agencies, research and academic institutions.

Resources Available:

- Development assistance/ Foreign resources from the UN system and GEF for certain projects;
- Govt. of Bangladesh allocate resources for financing maximum projects;
- 56% of annual development programs directly addresses poverty reduction;
- The 56% embraces many sectors such as environment, water and sanitation, health, social safety net programs, rural infrastructure, embankments, and women empowerment;
- Limited technical assistance support from donor agencies for environmental sustainability and poverty-environment related activities;
- Limited resources for implementing NAPA, NBSAP, coastal zone management (ICZM), wetland management, and sustainable land management.

3. Possible Areas for UN Support

- Capacity development in terms of training and technology transfer;
- Provision of resources for the long, medium and short term to develop and implement targeted projects/ programs to address poverty-environment mainstreaming;
- Support for knowledge management that helps understanding of poverty-environment mainstreaming issues at regional, national and local levels;
- Support to establish “Climate Resilient Development Trust Fund”.

BHUTAN GROUP

1. Priorities that the Planning, Finance and Environment Agencies need to tackle

Planning:

- Sectoral guidelines on PE mainstreaming
- National spatial planning
- Rural – urban poverty reduction – targeted interventions
- Review of policies and legislation to facilitate pro-poor development strategies (e.g. harvesting and use of non-timber forest products by local communities)
- Tools and procedures to operationalize the good policies (e.g. resource allocation formula – environment quality, poverty incidence)

Environment:

- Decentralizing approval/appraisal functions (capacity issues)
- Enhance capacity at the local level for sustainable management of environment and natural resources
- Payment for ecosystem services - incentives
- Addressing human-wildlife conflicts (alternatives, access to natural resources, small and medium enterprises, ecotourism, etc.)
- Strengthening Environmental Information Management System

2. Immediate Capacity Gaps

- Capacity building at all levels
- Compliance monitoring – Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment
- Trade – off analysis (capacity)
- Are there adequate tools to mainstream poverty and environment?
- Expanding the mandate of BTF (not focus just on biodiversity issues)
- Environmental education and awareness
- Co-ordination among different agencies (Ministries)

3. Possible Areas of UN Support

- Insurance schemes, compensation mechanisms
- Building capacity
- Technical – linking to small and medium enterprises, community based eco-tourism
- Renewable and efficient energy – decentralized options
- Operationalization of Strategic Environmental Assessment

CAMBODIA GROUP

1. Priorities that the Planning, Finance and Environment Agencies need to tackle

- Consultation UNDP-UNEP, Regional Office/Center.
- Organization of national workshop on "Poverty Environment Mainstreaming (PEM) Concepts" to preliminarily introduce this concept to govt. senior officials, decision makers, etc. with the technical and financial support of the UNEP and UNDP - This is jointly organized by the MoE & MoP.
- In-country Training Workshop on "PEI and Concepts" jointly organized by the MoE & MoP for government, academic and private institutions/organizations.
- Joint-preparation of the PEM Concept Notes highlighting the work plan and budget by taking into account the comments and suggestion made from the national workshop - This work is conducted by the MoE & MoP Focal Points and the UNDP and UNEP Regional Office/Centre.
- The PEM Concept Note will include the following:
 - Review of existing policy, legal framework and development planning process;
 - Poverty and Environment Linkage.
- Activities under the preparatory phase will also include:
 - Awareness raising and partnership building; and
 - Putting in-place the Institutional Mechanism/Arrangement for the PEM.
- The project document for implementation will be the output of this phase.
 - The potential activities within implementation could include pilot demonstrations to showcase local Poverty Environment Mainstreaming.

2. Immediate Capacity Gaps

- Lack of understanding and capacity on poverty environment linkages.
- Lack of technical and human resources.
- Not adequate resources available for poverty environment mainstreaming

3. Possible Areas of UN Support

- Technical assistance to develop the poverty environment mainstreaming programme in Cambodia.
- Financial resources to support the preparatory and implementation phase

LAO PDR GROUP

1. Priorities that the Planning, Finance and Environment Agencies need to tackle

- Prepare and implement the **National Strategic Plan on the Environment**
- Strengthen **participation**, especially by the poor, in the preparation and implementation on national and local plans, policies and strategies
- Take advantage of the **Mid-Term Review** of the current 6th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2006-2010) to examine the progress towards poverty-environment outcomes
- Further mainstream environment in the **next NSEDP** (2011-2015)
- Refine P-E **indicators and targets** for NSEDP implementation and M&E
- **Capacity development** of relevant government officials (both central & local) for using available tools and methodologies for environment mainstreaming
- Increasing **aid effectiveness** and donor coordination for P-E mainstreaming

2. Immediate Capacity Gaps

- Laws, regulations and policy guidelines not fully enforced (due to lack of capacity and increasing activities)
- Coordination and information sharing among different ministries, and between central and local governments, difficult
- Limited understanding, especially among the poor and vulnerable, about the poverty-environment linkages
- Limited budgets

3. Possible Areas of UN Support

- Capacity development of government officials with tools and methodologies for P-E mainstreaming (for more “champions”)
- Effective management of Environment Protection Fund
- Legal framework (e.g. upgrade EIA regulation to the level of ministerial decree)
- Work with MDGI Framework (pro-poor and pro-environment) for next Round Table & NSEDP
- Work with 8 Sector Working Groups for mainstreaming P-E and aid effectiveness
- Environment-friendly private sector development
- Eco tourism
- Environmental education
- Alternative livelihoods and income diversification for the poor who depend upon natural resources
- Policy options for natural resource-based economy for human development (hydropower, mining, wood- and agro-processing)

NEPAL GROUP

1. Priorities that the Planning, Finance and Environment Agencies need to tackle

Planning:

- Prepare for p-e mainstreaming in forthcoming PRSP
- Coordination mechanism to be established for mainstreaming process
- Training/capacity building on mainstreaming

Finance:

- Poverty-Environment expenditure review
- Assess contribution of current expenditure to p-e benefits
- Fiscal incentives study

Environment:

- Assessment of environment sector contribution to poverty reduction
- Piloting environmental mainstreaming function in key ministries

2. Immediate Capacity Gaps

- Lack of country-specific evidence of p-e linkages
- Lack of human resources in key ministries
- Lack of capacity for use of p-e mainstreaming tools
- Need for sustainable financing mechanism for long-term p-e mainstreaming
- Poor donor harmonisation on p-e issues

3. Possible Areas of UN Support

- Public Expenditure Review on p-e sector
- P-E linkages: collect country specific evidence
- Capacity development on p-e mainstreaming tools
- Develop case for donor harmonisation on p-e mainstreaming around PRSP process
- Institutionalise p-e mainstreaming approach for PRSP and beyond

VIETNAM GROUP

1. Priorities that the Planning, Finance and Environment Agencies need to tackle

- Priority areas of PEP – forestry, fisheries, renewable energy, environment, climate change adaptation, (water and sanitation, solid waste disposal management)
- Legal priorities – Law on Environmental Protection, Law on Biodiversity, Pro-poor economic instruments for environmental protection (Action Plan, valuation of environmental damages, PES).

2. Immediate Capacity Gaps

- Capacity of provincial governments to integrate poverty – environment concerns into sectoral and 5-year social-economic development plans
- Capacity of broader community (Govt, private sector, NGOs, INGOs, donors) to address P-E issues in a collaborative manner – P-E network.

3. Possible Areas of UN Support

- Support for Pro-poor National Target Programme for Climate Change Adaptation
- Support for Development of a pro-poor National Policy for Coastal Zone and Islands
- UNEP has confirmed support of the Viet Nam PEN, following the completion of PEP in Sep. 2009. UN agencies (UNDP/UNEP) can provide resources for holding meetings and seminars on PEN.
- Linking PEP to knowledge network e.g. establishing focal point for information resource gathering at Vietnam headquarter, universities and institutions in U.K and USA.

Annex IV: List of Acronyms

DFID	UK Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
FYP	Five-Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNH	Gross National Happiness
IPU	International Parliamentarian Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NAPA	National Adaptation Program of Action for Climate Change
NEC	National Environment Commission (Bhutan)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan (Cambodia)
PEI	Poverty-Environment Initiative
PEP	Poverty and Environment Project (Vietnam)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RCB	UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok
RCC	UNDP Regional Centre in Colombo
ROAP	UNEP Regional Office for Asia-Pacific
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program