

*The MAP News*, Washington D.C., Estados Unidos, Mangrove Action Project (MAP), Núm. 299, 13 de octubre de 2012.

Consultado en:

<http://mangroveactionproject.blogspot.mx/2012/10/map-news-299-oct-13-2012.html>

Fecha de consulta: 17/09/2013.

## **FEATURED STORY**

### **North Sumatra Fishermen See Mangroves in Their Future**

Fishermen in North Sumatra's Langkat district have begun replanting mangroves on 1,200 hectares of coastal land previously cleared for oil palm plantations. Activists from the Indonesian Traditional Fishermen's Association (KNTI) and the Fisheries Justice Coalition (Kiara) said at a press conference in Jakarta on Sunday that they hoped to restore the mangrove ecosystem in Pangkalan Berandan subdistrict and possibly set aside 300 hectares as a conservation area. Tajuruddin Hasibuan, head of the KNTI's Sumatra chapter, said fishermen in seven villages in the area were involved in the initiative. "When you consider how important the mangrove ecosystem is to the traditional fishermen, you need to consistently fight against the expansion of oil palm plantations in the area," he said. "We realize that what we're doing is just the start, and that there are other areas where plantations are expanding and mangrove swamps are deteriorating." [READ MORE](#)

## **AFRICA**

### **Nigeria oil spills: Shell rejects liability claim**



NIGERIA - The Anglo-Dutch oil giant Shell has rejected claims by four Nigerian farmers that it should pay compensation for damage to their land. The farmers are suing the company in a civil court in The Hague, claiming oil spills ruined their livelihoods. Shell's lawyers told the court it could not be held liable because most spills were caused by criminal damage. They said repairs were hard to carry out because of insecurity in the Niger Delta. Shell lawyer Jan de Bie Leuveling Tjeenk told the court that sabotage and oil theft were widespread in the region. The case is being brought against Shell by the farmers and the Dutch arm of the environmental group Friends of the Earth. If their case is successful it could pave the way for thousands of other compensation claims, says the BBC's Anna Holligan in The Hague.

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### **Activist Groups Denounce Bio-Economy and Sustainable Biomass Myth On International Day Against Monoculture Tree Plantations**

SOUTH AFRICA - On the occasion of the International Day of Protest Against Monoculture Tree Plantations, the Global Forest Coalition, Biofuelwatch, Critical Information Collective and Global Justice Ecology Project warn against EU and US plans to expand the bio-economy. The new industrial bio-economy being promoted as a so-called solution to the climate crisis assumes incorrectly that massive amounts of additional biomass could be produced sustainably in order to be burned for industrial and commercial electricity and heat, or processed to replace petroleum fuels used in transportation or various manufacturing and industrial processes. Evidence proves that increasing demand for biomass, and the land on which to produce it, is contributing to staggering increases in food prices, leading to hunger and malnutrition. It is also encouraging land grabs, displacing and undermining the

livelihoods of peasant communities and Indigenous Peoples, and triggering greater forest and biodiversity loss. Furthermore, the belief that using biomass to replace fossil fuels is 'climate friendly' has been soundly refuted. While industrial proponents claim it is 'carbon neutral', scientists have shown that it may take decades or even centuries for new trees to reabsorb the carbon released into the atmosphere through the combustion of biomass-based fuels. [READ MORE](#)

## ASIA

### **Insecticides kill shrimp, fish and humans**



VIETNAM - ALTACH 5EC, VIFURAN, the pesticides with high toxicity, and even FASTAC 5EC, FURADAN, which have been prohibited by competent agencies, have been sold well in Mekong Delta, where farmers here have “invented” a new method to catch fish, shrimp and animals using the chemicals. A bottle of pesticide is enough for a section of river Truong An commune in Vinh Long province has been well known for using pesticides to catch aquatic creatures. It took reporters a couple of weeks to make acquaintance with the local boys, who were spraying pesticide at the Tan Nhon Bridge. “ALTACH 5EC just can be used to catch shrimp, lobsters and some small fish near the shore. If you want to catch birds, storks or eels, you need VIFURAN. All animals would be killed if they eat this chemical,” one of the boy explained. Just five minutes after the boys sprayed the pesticide to the river, shrimp began floating on the surface of the river. The boys then went picking up the dead shrimp and fish with paddles. [READ MORE](#)

### **Ricoh goes eco at Nature Park**

MALAYSIA - In Peninsular Malaysia, mangrove forests are commonly found along the west coast. These forests provide migratory bird with a safe resting haven during their transcontinental migrations. Unfortunately, our coastal mangroves have dwindled over the years due to, among others, climatic change, pollution and rapid development. Understanding the importance of mangroves, Ricoh Malaysia recently fulfilled its corporate social responsibility by organising a mangrove sapling planting activity at the Kuala Selangor Nature Park (KSNP), here. The activity was an initiative to conserve the environment under its "Go Eco with Ricoh" campaign. About 40 participants comprising Ricoh staff, customers and suppliers joined in the event. In collaboration with Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), Ricoh was determined to make its mangrove rehabilitation programme, "Much About Mangroves", a success. [READ MORE](#)

### **Sharing Lessons on Mangrove Restoration**

INDIA - The Ministry of Environment and Forests of India, together with Mangroves for the Future, a regional initiative to promote investment in coastal ecosystem conservation for sustainable development, convened a Regional Colloquium at Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu, 30-31 August, 2012, to share lessons on mangrove conservation, restoration and rehabilitation. Representatives from nine countries: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam, together with experts from Australia, Denmark, Germany and United States, participated in the Colloquium. After reviewing lessons learned from mangrove restoration and planting projects undertaken since the 2004 tsunami, guidelines for good practices in mangrove restoration and rehabilitation were discussed, with a focus on the need for community involvement, benefit-sharing and livelihood improvement, long-term monitoring and accountability. The Colloquium also considered the role that mangroves can play in climate change adaptation and mitigation, including their potential contribution to ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction. [READ MORE](#)

### **Impacts of climate change already felt in Bangladesh**

BANGLADESH - Could less rainfall than before for the major part of the monsoon and sudden downpour for a few hours be considered an impact of the climate change to prove the United Nations (UN) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report right? Local environmental experts here have nodded in favour of this view. Involved here are not only the change in monsoon wind that sweeps from across the Bay of Bengal up to the Himalayas but also the erratic rainfall pattern it causes with all kinds of adverse impacts on the life and livelihoods of people of vast areas of the sub-continent where Bangladesh features prominently. As much as 333 milimetre (mm) of rainfall in just six hours and 341 mm in 24 hours, as happened in Dhaka on July 28, 2009 and on a day in 2004 respectively are indeed a cause for serious concern. The worries over rainfall become graver still as the yearly amount of rainfall on this part of the world becomes thinner. [READ MORE](#)

### **Indonesia Ready Nagoya Protocol Ratification**

INDONESIA - Indonesia says ready to ratify the Nagoya Protocol at the end of 2012. It was announced by the Indonesian delegation at the plenary meeting of the High-Level Conference on Biodiversity The 11 in Hyderabad, India, October 8 to 19 2012. “The most important is the operationalization of ratification. There needs to be a change in Indonesian conservation agenda, particularly in relation to adopting and involve knowledge and traditional knowledge in conservation. Also protect the rights of the conservation area, “said Secretary General of the People’s Coalition for Fisheries Justice Riza Damanik contacted from Jakarta, Wednesday (10/10/2012). On the same day, Damanik doing a press conference with representatives of civil society from India, South America, and the group of African countries. [READ MORE](#)

### **EUROPE**

*Editor’s Note: MAP Board of Directors member Robin Lewis (Professional Wetland Scientist #725) was concerned about the science behind this article. He writes “Fatally flawed analyses in my opinion. Watch as they apply the same bad idea to mangroves. It really depends on the RATE of sea level rise and how well salt marshes, mangroves and seagrasses*

*keep up with SLR and when replaced, how well seagrasses move into former mangrove and salt marsh areas. Ideas a little too exotic for simple analyses at this point."*

### **Salt marshes to absorb carbon to 2050, but emit it later**

NORWAY - Salt marshes around the world's coasts will help slow climate change until about 2050 by soaking up greenhouse gases but then risk making the problem even worse as sea levels rise, a study showed recently. Plants such as grasses and shrubs - which thrive in salt marshes found from India to the United States - absorb heat-trapping carbon from the air. Much of it then ends up buried in sediment where it no longer stokes global warming. "The net impact of temperature warming and sea level rise is to increase carbon burial rates in the first half of the twenty-first century," researchers in the journal Nature wrote. Beyond about 2050, rising sea levels would start water logging plants however, the study said, halting the transfer of carbon into the muddy sediment. "At some point too much flooding is bad," lead author Matthew Kirwan at the University of Virginia told Reuters. Initially, gradually rising sea levels caused by temperature increases that will melt ice on land and make water in the oceans expand, would help wetland plants grow better. Flooding brings in more nutrients and washes out toxins. [READ MORE](#)

## **AMERICAS**

### **El Salvador in battle against tide of climate change**

EL SALVADORE - Rising sea levels and deforestation have destroyed the mangrove crops that villagers depend on to survive. The forest of towering, dead mangrove trees stretches along the beach as far as the eye can see. As the crashing waves rise and fall, short stumps emerge and vanish beneath the Pacific Ocean. Climate change has come early to the Bajo Lempa region of western El Salvador. A tiny rise in the sea level has, according to local people, seen about 1,000ft of the mangroves on which they depend vanish beneath the ocean since 2005. Another 1,500ft remains between the Pacific and their village, La Tirana. No one, it seems, knows how long it will take before the waves reach their homes. But even now, the rising waters are ruining the villagers' meagre livelihood. At low tide each day, the men

in this community of 22 families wade through the mud collecting punche, a local species of crab. [READ MORE](#)

### **B.C. Supreme Court upholds right of anti-salmon farm activist to make defamatory remarks**

CANADA - Activist Don Staniford had the right to make defamatory comments about a salmon farming company, Mainstream Canada, on the grounds that he fully believes what he said, the B.C. Supreme Court ruled. Justice Elaine Adair wrote in her judgment: "Although I have concluded that Mr. Staniford's statements are defamatory of Mainstream, I have concluded that he should succeed on his defence of fair comment. "I have found that he was actuated by express malice towards Mainstream. However, I have found that he had an honest belief in the statements he made, and injuring Mainstream because of spite or animosity was not his dominant purpose in publishing the words in issue. "In view of those findings, I do not intend to address damages or other remedies. The plaintiff's action is, accordingly, dismissed." [READ MORE](#)

### **Fish to shrink as global warming leaves them gasping for oxygen**

CANADA - Fish are likely to get smaller on average by 2050 because global warming will cut the amount of oxygen in the oceans in a shift that may also mean dwindling catches, according to a recent study. Average maximum body weights for 600 types of marine fish, such as cod, plaice, halibut and flounder, would contract by 14-24 percent by 2050 from 2000 under a scenario of a quick rise in greenhouse gas emissions, it said. "The reductions in body size will affect whole ecosystems," lead author William Cheung of the University of British Columbia in Canada, told Reuters of the findings in the journal Nature Climate Change. His team of scientists said a trend towards smaller sizes was "expected to have large implications" for ocean food webs and for human "fisheries and global protein supply." [READ MORE](#)

### **VCS approves Wetland Restoration**

USA - A Restore America Estuaries-led (RAE) initiative aimed at creating greenhouse gas offset opportunities for coastal wetlands got final approval under the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) today, paving the way for increased private investment in wetland restoration

and conservation projects through the issuance of internationally recognized carbon credits. The new VCS requirements for Wetlands Restoration and Conservation (WRC) create a project category for measuring and crediting climate benefits from a broad range of wetlands, including mangroves, freshwater tidal coastal wetlands, salt marshes, seagrasses, floodplains, peatlands, and other wetland types. The importance of the VCS wetland carbon credit registry cannot be overstated, according to Patrick Megonigal, Senior Scientist and Deputy Director, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. “This is the first carbon-crediting standard to advance conservation and restoration across the full diversity of the world’s wetlands,” said Megonigal. “We hope that by adopting wetlands under the VCS Standard, wetland conservation and restoration activities will be stimulated,” added Stephen Crooks, Climate Change Services Director at ESA PWA, an environmental consulting group. [READ MORE](#)

### **Meeting for resistance in San Dionisio del Mar, and new threats**

MEXICO - On 14 and 15 September, there was held a national meeting with the Ikojts nation that is resisting the “San Dionisio” megawind project, financed by Mareña Wind Energy (backed by Japanese, Australian, and Dutch capital) in their land. More than 300 persons – indigenous people, activists of 25 civil and social organizations from 6 states – participated at the meeting. In this way, the imposition of the wind megaproject in San Dionisio was denounced, with the claim that it had been done so by means of trickery, aggression, and corruption, provoking divisions and conflicts within the peoples of the region. During the event, a plan of action was drawn up to include mobilizations and actions of denunciation directed at the transnational firms that, with their energy megaprojects, “are destroying and looting local residents throughout the country.” For this reason, they demanded that the Inter-American Bank for Development and international firms to cancel funding for the project immediately. [READ MORE](#)