

ACBeats

The Official Newsletter of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity • OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2022

Environment Champions awarded as 2022 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes



The 2022 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes were recognised in an award ceremony in Bogor, Indonesia on 2 November 2022 as part of the Seventh ASEAN Heritage Parks Conference. (L-R) Dr. Suchana Chavanich, Thailand; Ms. Meriden Maranan (representing Honorable Loren Legarda, ASEAN Biodiversity Hero of the Philippines); Mr. Khamphay Xayyalad, Lao PDR; Ms. Liaw Lin Ji, Brunei Darussalam; Mr. Chak Sokhacheaboth, Cambodia; Dr. Ibrahim Bin Komoo, Malaysia; Mr. Tin Mya Soe (representing Mr. Nay Win Swe, ASEAN Biodiversity Hero of Myanmar); Mr. Mervyn Tan (representing Dr. Chou Loke Ming, ASEAN Biodiversity Hero of Singapore); and Dr. Anhar Lubis, Indonesia.

BOGOR, Indonesia – The ASEAN has announced the recipients of the 2022 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Awards, shining a spotlight on the individuals whose exemplary efforts and advocacies make a wave of impact in their respective countries and in their own ways.

A youth leader, a legislator, a marine conservation pioneer, a geoheritage expert, a veterinarian, a marine biodiversity expert and science communicator, an environment officer, and two foresters were honoured at the awards ceremony held in Bogor, Indonesia on 2 November 2022. The awards night was one of the highlights of the Seventh ASEAN Heritage Parks Conference organised by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and Indonesia’s Ministry of Environment and Forestry-Directorate of Biodiversity Conservation of Species and Genetics.

Launched in 2017, the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes (ABH) is a flagship programme of the ASEAN that showcases the impactful advocacies and actions of environmental champions with the goal of inspiring more people to stand up for biodiversity.

This 2022, the Second ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes are awarded to:

Brunei Darussalam’s Ms. Liaw Lin Ji, Founder, Biodiversity and Natural History Society (BruWILD) and Head of Environmental Solutions and Brunei Country Manager, DHI Water & Environment – For implementing nature-based education in the country through the use of various creative and fun education materials to engage and inspire generations of biodiversity champions in children and people of all ages

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Environment champions awarded as 2022 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes



Cambodia's Mr. Chak Sokhacheboth, Deputy Director of Biodiversity Department, Ministry of Environment, Cambodia – For contributing significantly to wildlife research in the country

Indonesia's Dr. Anhar Lubis, Coordinator – Leuser Wildlife Rescue Team and Veterinarian, Leuser Conservation Forum, Indonesia – For protecting the wildlife of the Leuser Ecosystem and ensuring that biodiversity resources are conserved for Aceh's future

Lao PDR's Mr. Khamphay Xayyalad, Manager, The National Eld's Deer Sanctuary Areas – For devoting his expertise as a forester to protecting the endangered Eld's deer

Malaysia's Prof. Ibrahim Bin Komoo, Professor Emeritus, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia – For championing conservation geology and ensuring knowledge transfer to the general public

Myanmar's Mr. Nay Win Swe, Forester, Inlay Lake Wildlife Sanctuary, Myanmar – For dedicating his life to protecting the Inlay Lake Wildlife Sanctuary and the future of the locals who depend on the lake's resources

Philippines' Senator Loren Legarda, Senate President Pro-Tempore – For championing the environment in the media and legislative arenas

Singapore's Prof. Chou Loke Ming, Emeritus Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, National University of Singapore – For making a lasting impact on marine biodiversity conservation and inspiring younger generations to take up the conservation cause

Thailand's Prof. Suchana Chavanich, Professor, Chulalongkorn University,

Thailand – For making groundbreaking strides as a marine scientist and bridging the gap between the science community and society

In his welcome message, Mr. Ary Sudijanto, Chairman of ASOEN-Indonesia and Director-General, The Agency for Standardization of Environment and Forestry Instruments (ASEFI), Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia, commended the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes "for their countless dedication, works, and meaningful contributions through many ways and for manifesting concrete actions toward biodiversity conservation." He also called on the delegates of the Seventh ASEAN Heritage Parks Conference (AHP 7) to take concrete actions and enhance knowledge and skills on planning and implementing ecosystem management, restoration strategies, and building resilience.

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ASEAN exec urges new Ph landscape architects to design green and healthy public spaces



Members and inductees of the Philippine Association of Landscape Architects with guest speaker, Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, ACB Executive Director

PASAY CITY, Philippines — Passers of the 2022 Landscape Architecture Licensure Examination took oath as the newest addition to the Philippine Association of Landscape Architects during its 45th anniversary celebration.

Landscape architecture encompasses the study, design, planning, and development of built and natural environments to meet the needs of communities. With the increasing focus on sustainability and environment conservation, the need for landscape architects in designing a better and more resilient future is likewise growing.

Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, a wildlife veterinarian and the executive director of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), sought the new landscape architects' support in creating more sustainable and resilient cities and communities. "Your profession has made you a frontliner to restoring the beauty and functionality of dull and degraded lands. The rich and unique biodiversity of the Philippines and the ASEAN region provides you a natural mental playground that can serve to

feed your creativity and your desire to innovate," Dr. Lim said during the Induction Ceremony, where she served as the guest speaker.

Designing a greener future

Studies have already established the direct link between one's exposure to a healthy environment and human health. In the cases of therapeutic gardens in Singapore, key findings of the study on landscapes and mental well-being showed that exposure to therapeutic gardens displayed potential for mood improvements and less strenuous brain activities that hold a reasonable premise for depression treatment.

Lim provided concrete ways how landscape architects can design aesthetic public spaces while keeping nature intact.

She encouraged the new inductees to harness the beauty and potential of native species of plants and trees in designing landscapes. Unlike exotic species, native species are well adapted to the natural conditions of the area making them easier to

maintain and nurture. They also serve as hosts to good pollinators and insects that contribute to ecosystem balance and health. Lim likewise recommended obtaining plants and ornamentals that are locally propagated from legitimate sources.

Integrating biodiversity in infrastructure and in other development sectors is among the priorities of the ACB. The link between nature, health, economy, and other sectors has become more and more apparent, especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ASEAN nations, in partnership with the ACB, are continuously pushing for greener, healthier, and more sustainable cities.

"We now see huge and expanding pockets of synergy: patches of grays, intimately connected by corridors of greens, accentuated with bright yellows, vibrant reds, and stark blues that can be found in the avifauna that inhabit the forest parks," Dr. Lim said.

Aside from Singapore, Thailand opened a forest park that features

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ASEAN launches biodiversity report at COP 15



MONTREAL, Canada – The ASEAN, composed of 10 member states, namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam, launched the third edition of its biodiversity report called the *ASEAN Biodiversity Outlook (ABO 3)* at the margins of the UN 2022 Biodiversity Conference.

For two weeks, environment ministers, international organisations, and representatives from various sectors gather at the second part of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15) to finalise the newest set of global biodiversity targets. The ABO 3 launch was part of the ASEAN Strides Toward the Achievement of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, a CBD COP 15 side event organised by the ASEAN Secretariat, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), the European Union, the Federal Government of Germany through GIZ and KfW, and The Pew Charitable Trusts.

In line with the COP 15 theme, *Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth*, this side event engaged key policymakers from ASEAN Member States (AMS) to highlight progress in achieving biodiversity goals in the ASEAN region, including

challenges and innovative solutions to contribute to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF).

“At least 50 per cent of the AMS have indicated ‘on track’ progress in achieving the majority of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets,” said Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, ACB executive director, as she presented how the ASEAN region has fared in the achievement of the previous set of global biodiversity goals. She added that one AMS even exceeded meeting Aichi Target One for increasing awareness on biodiversity and another AMS in increasing the coverage of protected areas or Target 11.

H.E. Ekkhaphab Phantavong, Deputy Secretary-General of the ASEAN for Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) of the ASEAN Secretariat, lauded the AMS for its conservation efforts at the national and regional levels, as reflected in ABO 3. He likewise highlighted the need for a multi-stakeholder, participatory approach to achieve global biodiversity targets, and the need to implement nature-based solutions to environmental challenges such as biodiversity loss and climate change.

In preparation for the impending post-2020 GBF, key recommendations from major regional biodiversity conferences were presented by Dr. Khairul Naim bin Adham of

the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, Malaysia and Dr. Badiah Achmad Said of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia. Atty. Ernesto Adobo, Jr., Undersecretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Philippines; Dr. Lena Chan of National Parks Board (NParks) of Singapore; and Dr. Benchamaporn Wattanatongchai from the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), Thailand, shared their national priorities and strategies in promoting a more resilient and sustainable future. Ms. Masha Kalinina of Pew Charitable Trusts shared about the Blue Nature Alliance and the 30x30 initiative, which aims to conserve 30 per cent of terrestrial and marine habitat by 2030. Ms. Clarissa Arida of the ACB provided a brief summary of the ABO 3.

The detailed report of the ASEAN on how it contributed to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 is presented in the ABO 3, which will be made available through www.aseanbiodiversity.org. The publication’s highlights are presented in a video produced by the ACB.



ASEAN tags Miss Earth 2022 beauties as new voices of biodiversity



The ACB’s collaboration with Miss Earth formalised with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding; representing Miss Earth is previous Miss Earth winner Destiny Wagner and representing ACB is Atty. Genalyn Bagon-Soriano.

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA, Philippines

– Beauty, brains, and biodiversity advocacy. All these and more are embodied by the 87 Miss Earth 2022 candidates who gathered in the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) headquarters for the *Beauties for Biodiversity* event, where they shared their personal advocacies for nature while learning about the status of global biodiversity and the steps they can take to help curb species loss.

The ACB is collaborating with Miss Earth Foundation to scale-up its efforts in raising awareness on biodiversity issues to a wide range of audiences. With this year’s theme, *Miss Earth loves fauna*, the beauty pageant industry can be a strategic and effective platform in calling for collective actions to conserve, protect, and sustainably use the rich biological resources within and beyond the ASEAN region.

“I am confident that together, we can effectively communicate the values of protecting our diverse yet vulnerable animal species, and of biodiversity as a whole. All these animal species play vital roles in the ecosystem that provides us with all our needs to survive,” said Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, ACB executive director.

In 2021, the ACB launched the *#WeAreASEANBiodiversity: Our home, our lives, our stories* as a regional

campaign for biodiversity, which is aligned with ASEAN’s vision for 2025 where key actors are encouraged to take a more active role in promoting a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient community. Prominent media personalities and influencers from the ASEAN region volunteered to share their voices to amplify the call for an integrated and whole-of-community approach in biodiversity protection among wider local, national, and regional audiences.

“We, at Miss Earth, will endeavour to use our platform to educate the public on the impacts of different issues affecting ecological balance including habitat destruction and wildlife trafficking,” said Catherine Untalan-Vital, representing Miss Earth Foundation.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the ACB and Miss Earth Foundation was signed during the event, formally establishing

the partnership between the two institutions. An interactive learning session followed, where the Miss Earth 2022 candidates get to share and discuss various issues affecting the world’s fauna and flora.

At the end of the event, the candidates expressed their commitment to the advocacy through a manifesto stating their pledge for biodiversity. This event serves as a kick-off activity leading to the coronation night, which will be held on 29 November 2022 in Manila, Philippines.

“We thank the 2022 Miss Earth candidates for lending your voices and influence to make ripples of change for biodiversity by living up to the Miss Earth Foundation’s principle – beauties for a cause,” said Dr. Lim.

To know more about the *#WeAreASEANBiodiversity* campaign, log on to weareaseanbiodiversity.org



Dr. Renee Loric, the ACB’s Biodiversity Knowledge Management Division Director, lead the Biodiversity 101 session for the Miss Earth candidates.

ASEAN strides toward the achievement of the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework



H.E. Ekkaphab Phanthavong, Deputy-Secretary General of the ASEAN Secretariat, and Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, ACB Executive Director

In line the COP 15 theme: *Ecological Civilization-Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth*, the side event engaged key policymakers from ASEAN Member States to highlight progress in achieving biodiversity goals in the ASEAN region, including challenges

and innovative solutions to contribute to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Part of this side event is the ceremonial launch of the Third Edition of the ASEAN Biodiversity

Outlook (ABO 3), a report of how the ASEAN has fared in achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

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ASEAN, PH, ink partnership for ecotourism



Photo caption: (L-R) Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, ACB Executive Director; Dr. Mina Gabor, ISST President; and Dr. Glenn Gregorio, SEARCA Director signed agreements for the joint conduct of the International Ecotourism Travel Mart to be hosted by the Philippines in 2023. The signing was witnessed by Allan Pormento, External Relations and Policy Officer, ACB; H.E. Jesus Domingo, Undersecretary for Civilian Security and Consular Affairs, DFA; Marites Castro, OIC Regional Director DOT Region 4; Miguel Guioquio, ISST Treasurer; Merilita Del Mundo, ISST Finance; and Assoc. Prof. Joselito G. Florendo, SEARCA Deputy Director for Administration.

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA, Philippines

— The International School for Sustainable Tourism (ISST), the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), and the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), forged an agreement to collaborate in the *International Ecotourism Travel Mart* (IETM), the first-ever green travel mart and selling fair in the world organised by the Asian Ecotourism Network (AEN). The biggest ecotourism-focused fair is set to be held on 29 March to 2 April 2023 in Cavite, Philippines. This celebration of green technology and sustainable practices in the tourism industry signifies an opportunity towards a better normal and a more resilient community as the world slowly reopens.

For a region as naturally diverse and culturally rich as the ASEAN, tourism contributes significantly to economic growth and local livelihoods. Acknowledging the tourism sector’s vital role in recovery, the ASEAN has declared the revival of the tourism sector as an imperative in the region’s overall recovery efforts in its comprehensive framework.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has catalysed the growing awareness that nature is part of the solution to public health

and environmental challenges,” said Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, executive director of the ACB. “Thus, a regional fair that elevates the tourism sector as a leader in promoting the balance between economic development and harnessing nature as a solution to our current challenges only comes timely.”

This partnership is also part of the ASEAN’s efforts in mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors such as tourism and agriculture. Dr. Glenn Gregorio, director of SEARCA, shared that SEARCA recognises not just science-based, but also nature-based solutions to agricultural challenges since conserving biodiversity also contributes to food security. “We are more than willing to work with you in establishing this green economy for our farmers and farming families in the Southeast Asian region who can be part of this trade fair,” said Dr. Gregorio.

The IETM is designed to bring together delegates and exhibitors worldwide to showcase products and services that have a strong ecotourism component, green technology, and sustainable green practices.

Dr. Mina Gabor, ISST President, acknowledged the vital roles of sectors such as the youth and

indigenous peoples in promoting ecotourism. She likewise thanked the government of the Philippines, through the Department of Tourism, for expressing its full support to IETM 2023.

The event scheduled for 2023 will feature discussions that offer practical insights into improving sustainability knowledge and practice for tourism operators. Experts and tourism practitioners with over 40 years of combined experience will gather and share best practices and lessons on sustainable tourism from the Asia-Pacific region.

“As we try to build back better, we can also take the opportunity to build our tourism greener and more sustainable,” said Dr. Lim.

As a partner for the IETM, the ACB will feature the success stories of its biodiversity conservation and livelihood programmes through an interactive exhibition.

The ACB at COP 15



With the theme *Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth*, representatives and negotiators congregated from 196 countries to make history and finalise the new set of global biodiversity targets or the post-2020 global biodiversity framework or now known as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Here are some of the highlights during the CBD-COP 15.



Canadian President Justin Trudeau welcomes the parties at the CBD-COP 15. "Nature is a part of who we are. And we are today at COP 15, to make sure it remains a part of who we will be for generations to come," he said in his opening message. "Nature is under threat. In fact, it is under attack," he added.



ACB Executive Director Theresa Mundita Lim addressing the attendees at the ASEAN-Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals Meeting.



(L-R) ACB Executive Director Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim and Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Elizabeth Maruma Mrema.



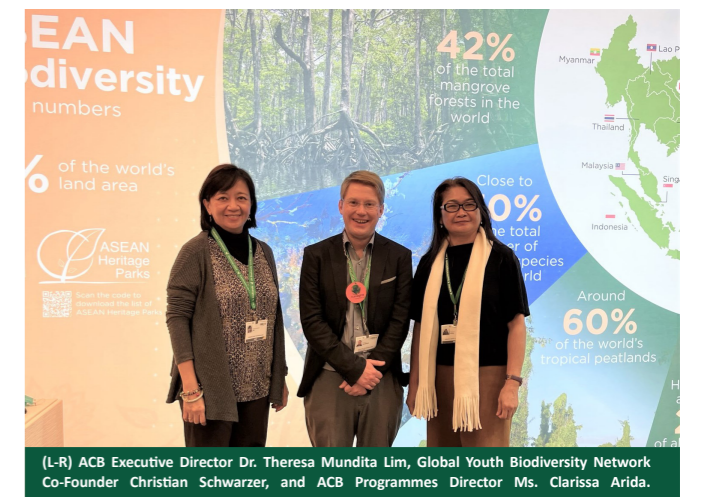
The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity recognised the Philippines, Malaysia, and the ASEAN in the Clearing-House Mechanism Awards held on the sidelines of the ongoing UN Biodiversity Conference-COP 15.



ACB Representatives at the CBD COP 15



The ASEAN-Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals Meeting is set to explore possible synergies and discuss ways forward as a region, in safeguarding and conserving migratory species as a nature-based solution to environmental challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss.



(L-R) ACB Executive Director Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, Global Youth Biodiversity Network Co-Founder Christian Schwarzer, and ACB Programmes Director Ms. Clarissa Arida.



Dr. Mary Kristerie Baleva, ACB's External Relations and Policy Specialist shared the Centre's efforts related to ABS in the ASEAN region at The Nagoya Protocol: State of play and perspectives side event.



The ACB represented by Ms. Clarissa Arida, Programme Development and Implementation Director, participates in a roundtable discussion on global knowledge support service for biodiversity, where she presented the ASEAN's efforts in biodiversity information management.

Blooming, thriving in the wild: A peek at ASEAN’s unique flora

During a global pandemic that forced us to stay isolated in our bubbles, many have turned to caring for plants to get a little closer to nature. Out in the wild, however, remains a remarkable diversity of plants that support ecosystems and habitats for many other living creatures to thrive.

The ASEAN region, despite covering only three per cent of the global total land area, boasts a rich plant diversity across all 10 Member States. It is estimated that Southeast Asia is home to approximately 50,000 plant species, representing one-sixth of the global plant species diversity.

Here’s a peek at some of the unique plants that thrive in the ASEAN region:

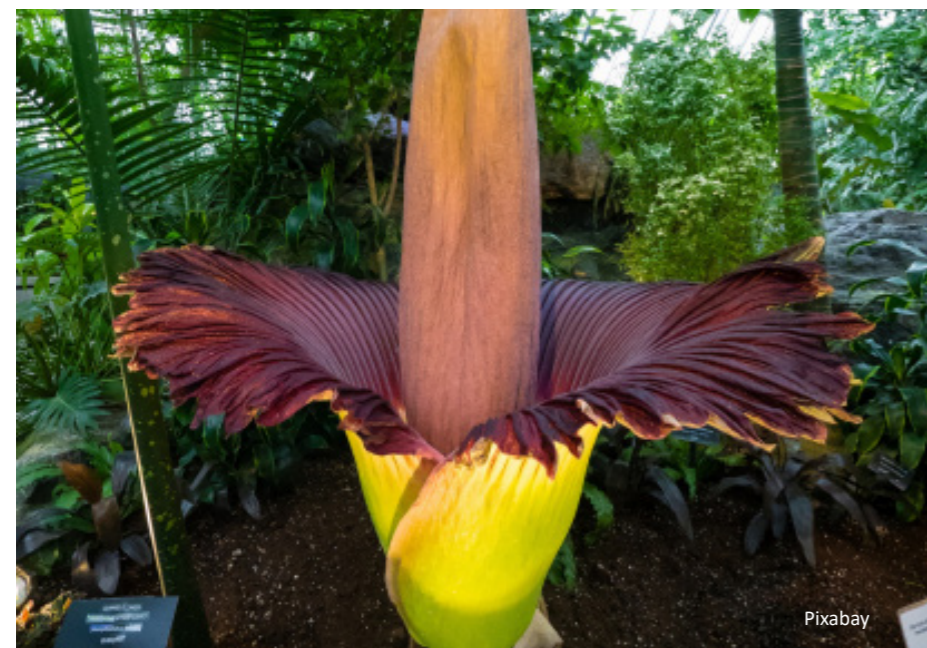
Rafflesia

Location:    

The Rafflesia is a genus of parasitic flowering plants, with approximately 28 species all found in Southeast Asia. It has no leaves, stems or roots, and the only part that is visible outside its host vine is its red, five-petaled flower. The flowers smell like rotting flesh, which attract flies that transport its pollen. The rafflesia is the national flower of Indonesia. Due to the plant’s size and smell, areas where it grows are often marketed for ecotourism.




Hu Toh Kai




Pixabay

Amorphophallus titanum

Location: 

This plant is also called the “corpse flower” due to its pungent smell that is reminiscent of rotting flesh, similar to the Rafflesia. However, it is famous for its rare flowerings: this stinky plant blooms once every seven to nine years. Each bloom lasts for only roughly a day (24 to 36 hours). The plant, also called titan arum, is massive, growing around 10 to 12 feet tall. It also has the largest collection of flowers, known as inflorescence, in the world. It is classified as endangered in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Paphiopedilum rothschildianum

Location: 

Commonly known as the Rothschild’s slipper orchid, this species commonly grows as a terrestrial plant, but also sometimes as a lithophytic plant (growing in or on rocks). Its blooms consist of attractive and large flowers that have green, red-spotted or even purple-striped petals.




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Jade vine

Location: 

Locally known as “tayabak,” the jade vine is a rare plant that is endemic in tropical forests in the Philippines. It is highly prized for its unique claw-shaped turquoise flowers that bloom usually in April or May. It is classified as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, and is threatened by habitat loss.

Sea teak

Location: 

An evergreen conifer that is native to Singapore, the sea teak sports bright green leaves and grow up to 20 metres tall. It produces seeds, but not flowers; instead, they develop their reproductive structures on cones. The sea teak is listed in Singapore as a critically endangered species.



Wikimedia commons

Burretiodendron hsienmu

Location:  

The *Burretiodendron hsienmu* is a canopy tree found in Cambodia and Viet Nam. Classified as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, this evergreen tree is highly valued for its timber. Its wood is known to be durable, tough and resistant to termites.




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Paphiopedilum wardii

Location: 

This orchid species is found in Myanmar and in southern parts of China. It often is found growing on forest floors, near tree trunks and on moss-covered cliffs. Single flowers are born on an erect spike and carry contrasting colors of green, reddish brown and white.

Books on taxonomy launched at ASEAN Heritage Parks conference



Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, ACB's Executive Director, hands over copies of the publications supported by the JAIF to Mr. Yoshiaki Inada, First Secretary, Mission of Japan to ASEAN.

BOGOR, Indonesia—The Seventh ASEAN Heritage Parks Conference (AHP7) recently opened with the launch of two books produced by the project on *Taxonomic Capacity Building on DNA Barcoding of Common Vascular Plants in the Tropics*.

The Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) project promoted the application of DNA barcoding in ASEAN and was implemented by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), in partnership with the Philippines' Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, Institute of Biology-University of the Philippines Diliman (IB-UPD), and the Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems.

The ACB-JAIF project provided training opportunities for the ASEAN Member States (AMS) to facilitate faster species discovery and identification and thus, conserve biodiversity. The programme produced two books – the *Field Guide to the Vascular Plants of the Mudspring area, Mount Makiling*

Forest Reserve, Philippines and Manual on DNA Barcoding of Vascular Plants in the Tropics.

DNA barcoding is a method of species identification that examines the species at the molecular level. It complements the morphological identification of species, which only examines the physical form and structure of organisms. DNA barcoding can increase capacities and the level of knowledge in taxonomy and strengthen efforts to conserve biodiversity, mitigate the spread of invasive alien species, and monitor and manage ecosystems.

“In more than 250 years of taxonomic research, scientists have identified only a fraction of all species on Earth. Increasing pressures on biodiversity stresses the need for us to work harder – and faster – to identify and conserve species. DNA barcoding provides this advantage by hastening species identification and discovery,” said Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, executive director of the ACB

Philippine taxonomist and lead author Dr. Edwino S. Fernando stated that the field guide features descriptions of 87 species found in the Mount Makiling Forest Reserve (MMFR), one of eleven AHPs in the Philippines, and of the now 55 in the region. Specimens used for the DNA barcoding training were sourced from MMFR, which is known for its species richness and serves as the forest laboratory of the students at the University of the Philippines Los Baños. DNA barcodes were generated for most of the species in the book.

Details on the DNA barcoding process, from specimen collection to laboratory work and sequence analyses and bioinformatics, are covered in the manual on DNA barcoding. According to lead author Adrian U. Luczon of the IB-UPD, DNA barcoding can be used widely in ASEAN to increase knowledge of taxonomic groups and biodiversity richness of AHPs and protected areas. The process can also support

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Environment Champions awarded as 2022 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes

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Dr. Suchana Chavanich, Thailand's ASEAN Biodiversity Hero for 2022, delivers her acceptance message.

"ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes Awards demonstrates that there are individuals who are concerned about environmental issues and are rising to the challenges of curbing biodiversity losses. These heroes are taking concrete actions and are implementing exemplary initiatives to promote the conservation of biodiversity in our region. Their works bring about to the peoples of ASEAN a better understanding, awareness and appreciation of the diverse values of biodiversity and inspire individuals to make real changes and actions for a sustainable future for all of us", said Mr. Ky-Anh Nguyen, Director for Sustainable Development, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Department, ASEAN Secretariat. Dr. Theresa Mundita Lim, executive director of the ACB, lauded the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes for deciding to face the growing problem of biodiversity loss

aggravated by a changing climate and choosing to act on it. "The region, with the rest of the world, is experiencing environmental, social, and global health crises that suggest a critical turning point. International communities all agree that decisive and transformative actions must be undertaken now before it is too late. It is but fitting that we recognise the exceptional changemakers during the AHP 7—an event that promotes healing and recovery through ecosystem protection and restoration. The work that our ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes do serves as a reminder and inspiration for us to do our part in safeguarding biodiversity for the future. They show us how actions – big or small – are vital contributions to a sustainable future for both people and nature. The diversity in their backgrounds,

passion, and advocacies are testimonies that conserving our web of life is everyone's concern," she said.

Since its inception, the ABH has been supported by the European Union through the *Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN* (BCAMP) project. This year, the ASEAN partnered with Metro Pacific Investments Corporation (MPIC).

"As a region with a very high biodiversity, the whole of ASEAN and its member states, together with dialogue and development partners, the private sector, and the public, it must take bold actions. The ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes

Environment champions awarded as 2022 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes

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Awards gives recognition to such people, passionate individuals from the ASEAN region who have dedicated their lives to diversity. With the first group of award winners in 2017, we have seen how inspiring the success stories can be. From developing ecotourism programmes that inspire generation of tourists, community leaders and conservation workers, to chairing the intergovernmental platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, the 2017 group of Biodiversity Heroes has not only inspired more people in the ASEAN, but also in the rest of the world," said Mr. Thibaut Portevin, Counsellor/Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to ASEAN. "I'm very pleased that the 2022 ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes are diverse leaders in their own rights, researchers and public servants and veterinarians, among others. Their contribution to the bigger cause of inspiring change for people in nature cannot be underestimated. I hope that you will continue to inspire

others so that they may follow your example with the same energy and passion for protecting the region's rich biodiversity," he added.

Each awardee received a Heroes' fund worth EUR 5,000 to augment the valuable advocacy efforts they are doing in their respective countries for biodiversity. An ASEAN trophy and a special prize courtesy of MPIC were also given to the awardees. The laureates, who will be known as the faces of biodiversity conservation in the ASEAN region, will also be invited to share their advocacies in various regional events.

"Championing biodiversity conservation is a collective responsibility. We are committed to set examples and use our huge influence in the private sector to encourage more companies to also take bold and urgent actions to protect, restore, and sustainably manage our natural ecosystems. It is our moral obligation to chart a better future for our people and planet,"

said MPIC Chief Finance, Risk, and Sustainability Officer Chaye Cabal-Revilla. The ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes were selected based on the relevance of their contributions to biodiversity conservation, the impact of these contributions to biodiversity conservation efforts in their respective countries and the region, the replicability of their actions, and the recognition they received in communities where they belong.

To know more about the ASEAN Biodiversity Heroes, log on to heroes.aseanbiodiversity.org. For questions, send an e-mail to heroes@aseanbiodiversity.org.



ABH Website



Brunel's ASEAN Biodiversity Hero for 2022, Liaw Lin Ji, accepts her award.

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Books on taxonomy launched at ASEAN Heritage Parks conference



(From L-R) Mr. Yoshiaki Inada, First Secretary, Mission of Japan to ASEAN; H.E. Igor Driesmans, European Union Ambassador to the ASEAN; Dr. Alue Dohong, Deputy Minister of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia; and Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim, ACB Executive Director at the launch of the JAIF publications.

efforts in species conservation, ecosystem restoration, illegal wildlife trade, and wildlife law enforcement, among others.

For more than a decade, the ACB and JAIF have been working together to enhance taxonomic knowledge and skills in ASEAN. This long-term collaboration helped train more than 600 representatives from the

AMS and produced manuals and field guides on different taxonomic groups found in various AHPs and protected areas in the region.

The development partners expressed their hope to continue this partnership to spread the use of new technologies in taxonomy, and support science-based decision-making and policy development in

biodiversity conservation. This will be crucial in the achievement of new global conservation goals, particularly those stated in the impending post-2020 global biodiversity framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

“As we celebrate the 50th year of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation next year, Japan is firmly committed to standing by ASEAN, as well as continuing cooperation in a wide range of fields, including environmental corporation,” said Mr. Yoshiaki Inada, First Secretary, Mission of Japan to ASEAN

The books can be downloaded from the ACB’s official website at www.aseanbiodiversity.org.



ASEAN exec urges new Ph landscape architects to design green and healthy public spaces

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walking and cycling paths, bird-watching spots, and nature trails and has a capacity of 10,000 visitors per day. Landscape architects designed the park by using original trees and adding more trees as nesting and resting places of various avian species.

Emphasising that young Filipino landscape architects have a special niche in designing a better and

resilient future, Dr. Lim ended her message by encouraging them to become strong, essential foundations of a sustainable and

healthy nation, by using their skills, knowledge, and talent, their love for nature, and their value for biodiversity.

