The Role of AIT in the Region Towards Environmentally Sustainable Cities

3rd High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities

Siem Reap, Cambodia,
6-8 March 2012

Professor Said Irandoust
President
Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)

AIT Mission

To develop highly qualified and committed professionals who will play a leading role in the sustainable development of the region and its integration into the global economy

Multicultural Environment

- 2300+ Students from 50 + Countries/Territories

- 17000+ Alumni from 80 Countries/Territories

- 26000+ Short-term Trainees from 70+ Countries/Territories

- 130 Internationally recruited Faculty from 20+ Countries

- 468 Research and Support Staff from about 30 Countries

- About 450 Sponsored Research Projects

- Intergovernmental Organization: 18 members

New AIT Charter

- AIT is Inter-governmental in status from 30 January 2012

- Countries signed the New Charter: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM),

- Countries Ratified the charter: Bangladesh, India, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Sweden

- Others processing but confirmed to join are Bhutan, China, Lao, France, Germany, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam

- There is interest and ongoing discussion with Azerbaijan, Ethiopia, Israel, Kenya, Russia, Turkmenistan, USA, and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) among others.

New AIT Charter
International Intergovernmental Organization

AIT Characteristics

- Strong research emphasis in all teaching and learning activities

- Internationality with an Asian orientation

- Interdisciplinary, agile academics

- Real-life development problems & industrial practice

- Capacity building for sustainable development

- Orientation towards professions

- Global network of partners

AIT's Future Strategy

Multi-pronged approach:

- new AIT Charter;

- New funding model: setting up of a number of satellite campuses in Asia and beyond, which will enable AIT to replicate its model of holistic international learning with an Asian perspective;

- more entrepreneurial AIT through the development of innovative initiatives and academic offerings geared to the needs of the region and market, which are all being pursued in parallel, in a synergistic manner.
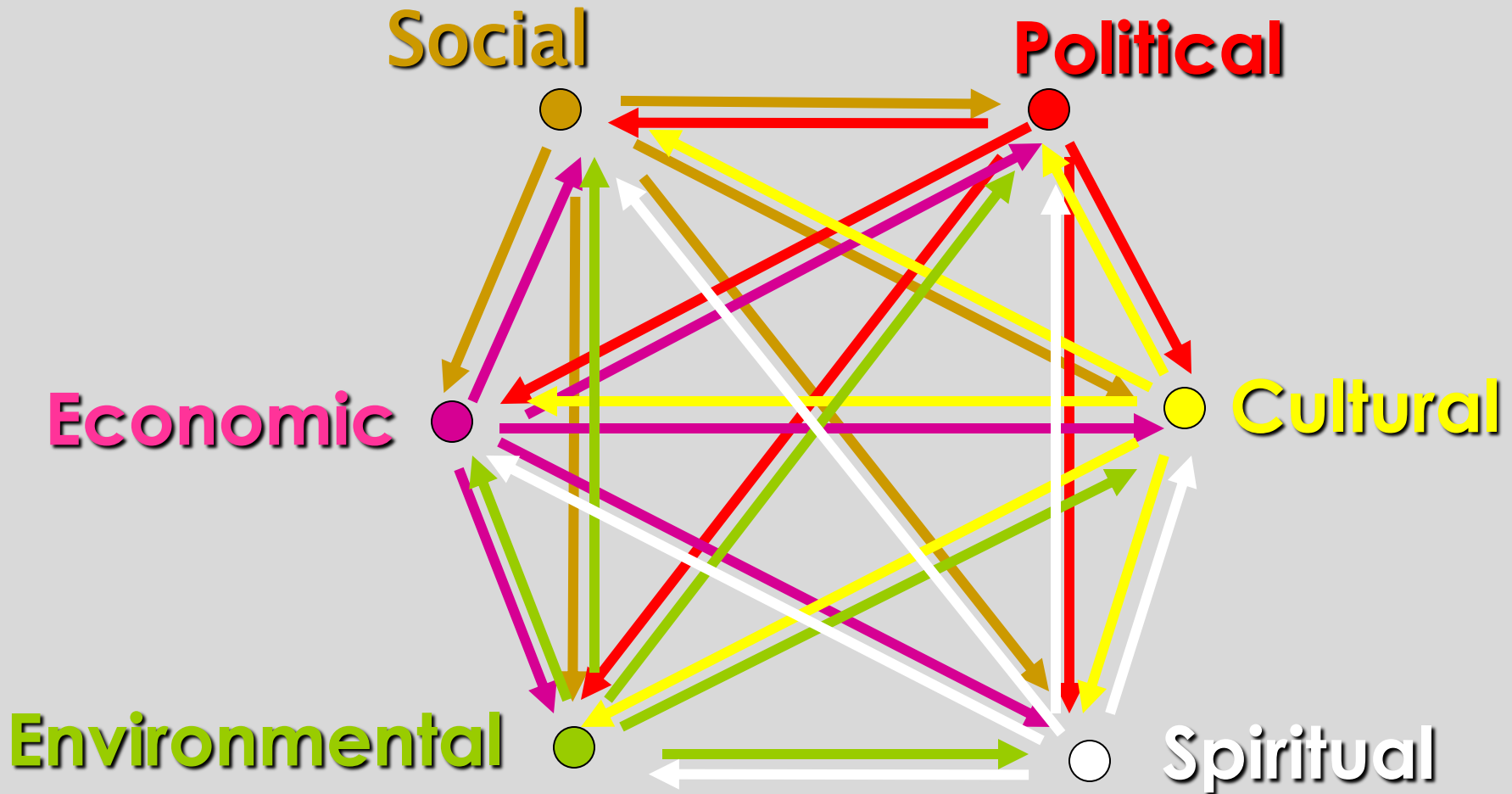
AIT's Role in Promoting Environmentally Sustainable Cities:

On-going and Recently Completed relevant Activities

Sustainable Development is Holistic Development

Ref: Cielito F. Habito, Ph.D.; Ateneo Center for Economic Research & Development (ACERD), Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines (*presentation made at National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) Workshop, held at AIT, Bangkok, September 10-12, 2009)*

Center of Excellence on Sustainable Development in the Context of Climate Change (SDCC)

Based on :

- Considerable experience in the region
- Working in the area of sustainable development for more than 2 decades
- Consolidating this research for Climate Change under broader umbrella of Sustainable Development to create niche for ourselves.
- A core critical mass of faculty and staff strength in the thematic area which has been endorsed by various donor agencies and stake holders

Thematic Area of SDCC

Vulnerability and Disaster Risk Reduction

Land and Water Resources Management for Sustainable Production and Consumption

Urban and Rural Quality of Life and Sustainability

Low Carbon and Cleaner Production Technology and Management

Business and Innovation Models for a Green Economy

ARCMDG

ASEAN Regional Centre of Excellence on MDGs

- AIT serves as the site of the world's first Regional Centre of Excellence on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), dedicated to the promotion and achievement of the MDGs in Southeast Asia through education and training, which has been endorsed by the UN.

- A ''Joint Declaration on the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in ASEAN'' signed and adopted by the ASEAN leaders at the 14th ASEAN Summit officially acknowledging the Center as an important avenue and platform for the ASEAN in meeting its MDG targets.

- Offers **specialized training courses** on *Partnerships with Business for Development* for businesses as well as public and civil society organizations respectively

- Provides advisory services, research, and engagement and convenes a Business Round Table to disseminate knowledge and build capacity for effective multi sector partnerships to promote sustainable development in the Mekong Region

- Offers a Professional Masters program in CSR with School of Management - one of three key issues is to address t*he need to alleviate poverty and deliver on other Millennium Development Goals through active partnerships between governments, civil society organizations and the private sector*
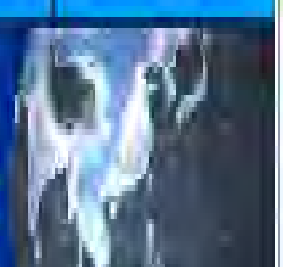
Yunus Center at AIT

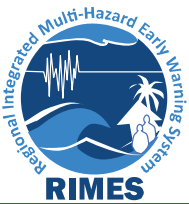In August 2009, Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus inaugurated the Yunus Center at AIT

AIT-UNEP Regional Resource Centre forAsia and the Pacific (RRC.AP)

20 Years of Service

- Celebrated AIT's 50th and AIT-UNEP.RRC.AP's 20th year anniversary celebrations respectively in 2009.

- AIT-UNEP.RRC.AP started as GRID Bangkok in the early 90's and from its initial focus on providing GIS and Remote Sensing data within Southeast Asia, has grown significantly over the years.

- In response to the changing demands for information on environment and development the Center has expanded to become the Regional Resource Centre in Asia and Pacific (RRC.AP) in its present form. The three pillars of the AIT-UNEP collaboration have been: education, research and outreach.

RIMES-AIT Cooperation

- The **Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES)** is an international and intergovernmental institution, owned and managed by its Member States, for the generation and application of early warning information. RIMES evolved from the efforts of 26 countries in Africa and Asia, in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, to establish a regional early warning system, within a multi-hazard framework, which generates and communicates early warning information, and builds capacity to prepare for and respond to trans-boundary hazards.

- RIMES was established on 30 April 2009, and registered with the United Nations, under article 102 of the UN Charter, on 1 July 2009.

- RIMES regional facility for early warning, established with support from the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and the Tsunami Regional Trust Fund administered by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), is located at AIT

International Partnership for Expanding Waste Management Services of Local Authorities (IPLA) Program

- **Participating countries:** Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, China, Colombia, Hungary, India, Lao PDR, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherland, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, PNG, Romania, Samoa, Solomon, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tanzania, Trinidad-Tobago, UAE, USA, Vietnam, Yemen.

- **Goal**: to enable local authorities to expand their waste management services by accelerating the uptake of waste-related infrastructure and services at various stages of waste management through promotion and facilitation of meaningful collaboration with a wide range of partners such as governments, business and financial sector, and civil society.

- **Activities**: (a) Introduce institutional, business or financial models and/or improve their current practices in waste management services (b) Access international financial mechanisms (including carbon financing), (c) Enhance awareness and capacity of member local authorities (d) Implement and replicate innovative projects that apply appropriate technologies in the jurisdictions of member local authorities. (e) Integrate /mainstream sustainable waste management strategies such as ISWM and the 3Rs at the national and local levels. (f) Collate database on waste generation, technology performance and standards, benchmarks, and key performance indicators.

- Support and strengthen Asia-Pacific's regional capacity in generating innovative development concepts and technologies relevant to ADB and its developing member countries (DMC), and to promote networking among the regional institutes for knowledge dissemination.

- Mainstream new concepts in innovation, science, technology, management development, and related fields for the region.

- Promote information exchange and sharing of knowledge and information.

Regional University Consortium (RUC)

UNEP Asia-Pacific University Consortium on Environment for Sustainable Development

Members:

- Asian Institute of Technology
- Tongji University
- Griffith University
- University of New South Wales
- Nanyang Technological University
- United Nations University
- Wollongong University
- Yale University

Poverty Reduction and Agricultural Management (PRAM)

Professional degree for *Poverty Reduction* **and Agricultural Management** (PRAM)

Lao district and provincial staff (in-service professional development) – linked to official Ministry systems of staff promotion.

Laos Government will "purchase" educational services from Thailand as scholarships.

Degree would be issued by AIT and partners: courses delivered by Thai provincial educational institutions in Northeast Thailand.

AIT

Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation and Management

AIT along with its institutional partners has developed a new academic program on "Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation and Management"

- Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USA
- International Institute for Geo-information Science and Earth Observation (ITC), the Netherlands
- International Center for Urban Safety Engineering (ICUS), The University of Tokyo, Japan
- University of Washington Extension (UWE), International Tsunami Training Institute (ITTI), USA
- Coastal Resources Center (CRC), University of Rhode Island, USA
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), Japan
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
- Disaster Prevention Research Institute (DPRI), Kyoto University, Japan
- Asia Pacific Initiative in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance
- Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF)
- Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (RIMES)

Wetland Alliance Program (WAP)
Building Local Capacity for Sustainable Wetlands Management

Brings together strengths of four institutions in:

- education
- training
- conservation
- development
- research

focusing on wetlands in and around the Mekong region

Bottom up approach

Greater Mekong Subregion Academic and Research Network (GMSARN)

- The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) consists of Cambodia, China (Yunnan & Guanxi Provinces), Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

- The Greater Mekong Subregion Academic and Research Network (GMSARN) is composed of eleven of the region's top-ranking academic and research institutions.

- GMSARN carries out activities in the following areas: human resources development, joint research, and dissemination of information and intellectual assets generated in the GMS. GMSARN seeks to ensure that the holistic intellectual knowledge and assets generated, developed and maintained are shared by organizations within the region. Primary emphasis is placed on complementary linkages between technological and socio-economic development issues.

Mekong Region Waste Refinery-International Partnership Project (Sep'11 to Nov'12)

- Collaboration between EEP Mekong and AIT
- Funded by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland
- Partners: University of Boras and City of Boras Sweden; and 4 cities in Mekong Region (Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Vientiane, Lao PDR; Detudom, Thailand, & Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam)
- Goal: Improved knowledge on technology and technological know-how to reduce solid waste origin greenhouse gas emission in the Mekong region and motivated to transfer of technology in the region.
- Activities: Study visit & Technical training in Sweden for policy makers & city officials, regional training, feasibility study on landfill site, biogas plant installation and dissemination of results

Action towards Resource efficient and Low Carbon Cities in Asia (Dec'09-Sep'12)

- **Collaboration** between French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME, France) and Asian Institute of Technology (Thailand)

- **Beneficiary cities**: Chiang Mai, Rayong, Nonthaburi (Thailand), Da Nang, Chau Duc, Hue (Vietnam), Matale, Kandy, Kurunegala (Sri Lanka), Luang Prabang (Lao PDR)

- **Goal**: the select cities will be capable of formulating policies and adopting strategies that favor equitable growth and sustainable production and consumption practices; be knowledgeable on techniques (policy and technology) to introduce low carbon initiatives

- **Activities**: Training city authorities and other stakeholders on Territorial Climate and Energy Plan (TCEP) and *Bilan Carbone*™ and their applicability to small and medium size cities in Asia; pilot scale activities in selected Asian cities; and Information dissemination among a wider spectrum of cities

CIDA-AIT Southeast Asia Urban Environmental Applications (SEA-UEMA) Project (Aug'03-Aug'10)

- **Collaboration** between Canadian International Development Agency (Canada) and Asian Institute of Technology

- **Beneficiary** SEA 8 countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam

- **Goal**: to improve urban environmental conditions in SEA region

- **Activities**: Graduate education, alumni demonstration project, pilot project, UEM sub-sector network and support program, joint action research, applications of research results and lessons learned, flagship project, policy advocacy, Policy dialogue, learning network and training etc.

Technology Needs Assessment in Asia

The objective: The objectives of the project are (a) to identify and prioritize technologies that can contribute to the mitigation and adaptation goals of the participating countries (b) to identify barriers hindering the acquisition, deployment, and diffusion of prioritized technologies, and (c) to develop technology action plans (TAP) to overcome the barriers and facilitate the transfer, adoption and diffusion of selected technologies in the participating countries

Main activities: (a) research (b) capacity building workshop (c) scoping technical and process support (d) information sharing, dissemination and communication

Key stakeholders: Local Authority, National Government, Research/Academic Institute, and NGO

Participating Countries: (1) First round: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Georgia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam; (2) Second round: Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka

AIT and ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Model Cities Programme (Scope of Partnership and Collaboration)

- AIT serves the regional countries over 50 years for the *capacity development* of *urban managers*, *policy maker* and planners for the *sustainable management of cities* & to ensure *providing urban environmental services through offering academic program, conduct research and implementation of projects*.

- AIT has a strong presence in the region through its good number of networks and alumni engaged in rendering urban services.

- AIT's different field of studies, Centre of Excellence on SDCC and other centre's are working on most issues underline in ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Cities Program.

AIT and ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Model Cities Programme (Areas of Partnership and Collaboration)

AIT is interested to collaborate & partner with ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Cities Program for the followings:

1. Overall management responsibility (secretariat tasks)

2. Coordination and cooperation with partner cities in the implementation of project activities and achieve results

3. Conduct internal monitoring, and external monitoring & evaluation

4. Conduct research priority issues

5. Provide technical assistance

6. Conduct survey to capture results for reporting

7. Dissemination of results

8. Capacity development of Model Cities staff by offering training & academic program.

The Way Ahead

- *'Partnership'* is key word to address common challenges, build capacity and produce globally and locally relevant knowledge.

- Having played a crucial role in Asian human capital building and urban environmental improvement in the region, it will be a significant step for AIT to partner with ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Model Cities Programme to work together on common issues through utilization of the past experiences, expertise and lessons learned to Create Environmentally Sustainable Cities in the ASEAN Region.

Why AIT ?

- Reputation and credibility

- Intergovernmental organization

- Neutral platform and a non political environment

- Networking institute - hub of international organizations, NGOs and Centers

- Multidisciplinary and integrated ways of working – combining research, teaching and learning and outreach

- English as a common instruction language

- Flexibility and agility

Thank You

Asian Institute of Technology
http://www.ait.asia