

**First Conference of the Science Council of Asia
8-12 May, 2001
Sofitel Central Grand Plaza Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand**

Academic Symposium on 10 May, 2001

Summary: Country Approach to Sustainability

Montri Chulavatnatol, President of SCA

Reports from China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam.

1. Sustainability is a process to achieve a balanced integration of the three aspects (pillars) of development, namely economic, social and environmental. Asian countries aim to have a prosperous economy, a harmonious society and a greener environment.

2. Among the Asian countries, the levels of their economic development differ greatly. However, the Asian societies are reasonably harmonious due to long periods of peace and the peaceful nature of the Asian ways of life. Because of the recent rapid economic growth, environmental deterioration is wide-spread among several countries in Asia.

3. All Asian countries are aware of the imbalance between economic growth and the destruction of their environment. They all have taken various measures to correct the imbalance. These measures include (a) policy and planning addressing the economic competitiveness and the environmental conservation, (b) governmental actions and enforcement of the existing laws, (c) establishment of organizations to deal with the environmental issues and (d) formulating new regulations and laws to better conserve the environment.

4. Due to different stages of the economic development among the Asian countries, the scope and the strength of the measures to correct the imbalance vary from one country to another. Those with great economic strength are taking more vigorous measures. However, the developing countries concentrate more on their economic growth potential but less on measures dealing with the environment. The reports, therefore, should be regarded as the current status from which future progress can be measured.

5. The Science Council of Asia should focus on 3 roles in promoting the sustainability in Asia. Firstly, SCA should hold the annual conference as a forum for the member countries to report on their progress toward the sustainability. Secondly, SCA should promote the development and the use of science and technology by Asian countries to speed up the progress. Thirdly, SCA should promote cooperation among the Asian countries in order to accelerate the progress.