



# **Fourth ASEAN State of the Environment Report 2009**

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#### **Cover Illustration:**

*ASEAN celebrated ASEAN Day 2009 with the theme "Green ASEAN", and the design used for publicity materials is reflected on the cover of this Report. This Report has also adopted the theme of "Green ASEAN".*

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## FOREWORD

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I am pleased to present the ASEAN State of the Environment Report 2009, the fourth in the series. The first report was published in 1997 and since then this series of reports published every three years has tracked the status and progress of environmental management in the region.

This report comes soon after the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter on 15 December 2008. The Charter represents a significant development in the long history of ASEAN which transformed the coalition of nations born out of the Bangkok Declaration of 1967 into a legal and rules-based entity. The Charter, among others, has emphasized that ASEAN shall promote sustainable development so as to ensure the protection of the region's environment, the sustainability of its natural resources, and the preservation of its cultural heritage and the high quality of life of its people.

ASEAN celebrated the 2009 ASEAN Day with the theme "Green ASEAN". The theme reflects ASEAN's commitment to build an environmentally sustainable ASEAN Community by the year 2015. The Roadmap for an ASEAN Community 2009 – 2015 lays out the goals, strategies and actions to achieve this goal based on the principle of sustainable development through the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint, the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint, the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint, and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration 2nd Work Plan.

Accordingly the Report takes a holistic approach in presenting the socio-economic conditions, the status and trends in the various environmental sectors, and what ASEAN is doing to promote environmental sustainability while placing priority on socio-economic development. In line with the theme of "Green ASEAN", the Report has focused on greening the ASEAN economy, highlighting how a sustainable and resilient economic base could be built from the rich natural resources of the region while at the same time ensuring social development and environmental sustainability.

The environmental performance of most ASEAN Member States, as assessed by reputable studies, is above the world average, and the ecological footprint is much lower than that of many nations. However, ASEAN will continue to face growing environmental challenges given the need to lift a third of its population earning less than US\$ 2 a day out of poverty, and the many other pressures exerted on the environment such as population growth, urbanization and industrialization.

Furthermore, many of the environmental problems in the region are exacerbated by developments outside the region. This Report has outlined what we have done and are committed to do in the future to promote environmental sustainability. Therefore this Report provides a useful reference for all parties to join hands with ASEAN to make the region and the planet a better place for our future generations.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all those who have been involved in the preparation of this insightful report. I would like to particularly thank the Government of Japan, and the Hanns Seidel Foundation for their generous financial support for this publication.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Surin Pitsuwan".

**Dr. Surin Pitsuwan**  
Secretary-General of ASEAN

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