

# RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies YEAR IN REVIEW 2012

CENTRE FOR  
NON-TRADITIONAL  
SECURITY STUDIES





# RSIS CENTRE FOR NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY STUDIES *YEAR IN REVIEW 2012*

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S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
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# Message from the Dean

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Dear Readers,

The Year in Review series has been gaining in readership since the first issue was published in 2009. Each year, we strive to improve the Year in Review, to make it even more relevant and informative for you. Our aim is to provide an overview of issues through a non-traditional security (NTS) lens and with a focus on the Asia-Pacific.

States today confront challenges on multiple fronts – climate, energy, food, health and water, among others. These issues often cut across boundaries, thus increasing their complexity and also the difficulty of addressing them. Importantly for the Asia-Pacific, such issues have wide-ranging impacts on communities and individuals, which in turn have implications for political stability and both human and economic development. There is thus a pressing need for greater understanding of what the key challenges are; the nature of these challenges, including the connections between and among them; and where agenda priorities should lie.

With the scale of NTS challenges continuing to rise, it is more important than ever for the conversation on NTS to reach a wider range of stakeholders. It is only through highlighting the pertinent issues, raising the level of discussion and supporting dialogue at all levels that countries and regions can come to broader consensus on the urgency of concerted action on the NTS threats facing them today.

This Year in Review aims to contribute to such efforts by providing an overview of the key developments of the year. In particular, the various sections highlight questions relating to institutions and governance, noting their salience to international and regional initiatives to tackle NTS challenges. It is my hope that you will find this Year in Review useful.

**Ambassador Barry Desker**

Dean

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

# Message from Head of Centre

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Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 2012 issue of our Centre's Year in Review. Each year, as we prepare the Year in Review, we ask ourselves: what is the state of non-traditional security (NTS) studies, the concept as well as its application to real-life problems around the world?

This year, we thought that, approximately two decades after policymakers and scholars first noted the need to expand security thinking beyond geostrategic, military-focused concerns to address emerging problems brought about in part by the forces of globalisation and also by rapid economic growth, it is time to do a stock-take. Analysts noted that concerns about climate, energy, food, health and water, among others, cut across borders, in the process manifesting in complex, interdependent ways. Today, such problems are no longer 'emerging'. They are here.

As I am writing this, a typhoon caused immense devastation in the Philippine island of Mindanao. This is just the latest in a series of increasingly frequent natural hazards facing the Philippines. And it is not alone in facing NTS threats. India was hit by a power outage that affected over 700 million people. In Myanmar, even while the nation celebrated amazing strides in democratic reform, ethnic conflict in Rakhine state once again escalated. The drought in the US earlier this year had far-reaching impacts, affecting global supply of wheat and grain, the consequences of which may extend to the next year.

And those are just the headline news, and a small selection of them. Just as significant are various issues and problems that, while perhaps occurring on a smaller scale, have serious, cumulative impacts on communities and individuals and their sense of well-being and security.

More than ever, then, there is a need for international and regional institutions that are able to provide leadership and action on these issues, which are often transboundary and require strategies of cooperation and dialogue rather than military posturing. Thus, in this 2012 Year in Review, our researchers have focused on institutional developments – at the international level and also around Asia – to highlight where we are and what is left to be done.

We at the RSIS Centre for NTS Studies believe that the coming years will bring greater challenges. Hence, the international and regional community must do no less than commit resources to addressing NTS concerns.

**Associate Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony**  
Head  
RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies

# Key NTS Events 2012



Bernard Jaspers-Faler / EU ECHO.

China completed a tunnel beneath the Yellow River that is critical to the construction of the eastern line of the South-North Water Transfer Project. While the project will increase water security in the country's north, it has attracted controversy due to its possible social and environmental impacts.

Myanmar continued its democratic reforms with the holding of by-elections. The elections, which were largely viewed as free and fair, saw the National League for Democracy led by Aung San Suu Kyi win 43 of the 45 seats available. [\[p.12\]](#)

Communal conflict struck Rakhine state in Myanmar, pitting the minority Rohingya population against members of the Buddhist majority. The ensuing violence led to the death of untold numbers and the displacement of thousands, bringing added attention to Myanmar's struggles to manage ethnic strife. [\[p.14\]](#)

A nationwide survey confirmed that China has the highest annual number of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis cases in the world, representing a quarter of the global total. [\[p.30\]](#)

The Rio+20 conference, convened on the 20th anniversary of the landmark 1992 Earth Summit, sought to rejuvenate international and multi-stakeholder efforts towards sustainable development. Outcomes were largely seen as being mixed, with the strong presence of the private sector gaining significant attention. [\[p.16\]](#)

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN

India's Supreme Court ordered the government to implement a project to link 30 major rivers, including the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, and divert waters to parched areas, sparking concerns in neighbouring countries.



Dan Kamminga / Wikimedia Commons.

A territorial dispute between China and the Philippines heightened in mid-May over the Scarborough Shoal in the South China (West Philippine) Sea. Fishing rights represented one driving force behind the tensions.

The 65<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly, attended by nearly 3,000 delegates, signalled an important shift in global health priorities with the adoption of a target of a 25 per cent reduction in premature deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by 2025. [\[p.28\]](#)



WHO / Pierre Albouy.

At their annual meeting in Phnom Penh, ASEAN foreign ministers failed to issue a joint communique for the first time in the organisation's 45-year history. Discord centred on the South China Sea disputes, and the failure to produce an output led to accusations of Chinese co-option of ASEAN processes.

The hottest month in US history brought a drought that devastated the country's corn and maize crops and had ripple effects throughout global food markets. [\[p.25\]](#)

Over 700 million people in 20 of India's 28 states were left without power, leading to fears that protests and even riots could follow if the country's electricity supply continues to falter in the face of growing demand. [\[p.33\]](#)

Japan established the Nuclear Regulation Authority in an important move towards strengthening nuclear safety. Energy safety was also emphasised in the St. Petersburg Declaration, signed by energy ministers of the member economies of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in June. [\[p.23\]](#)

Greater Jakarta residents faced an 'unprecedented' water crisis due to prolonged drought and growing demand for drinking water. [\[p.35\]](#)



Lao PDR launched the construction of the Xayaburi dam on the Mekong River, despite strong criticism and opposition from neighbouring countries and many environmental groups. Earlier, in September, the government had begun work on a second hydropower project on the Mekong, the Don Sahong dam, despite unresolved concerns over the Xayaburi dam. [\[p.32\]](#)

The ASEAN Human Rights Declaration was signed by leaders of the grouping, signalling to some that the regional body has growing capabilities for dealing with contentious issues.

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

Heavy rainfall and floods in North Korea led to food and water shortages. More than 200,000 were made homeless, and 60,000 hectares of farmland washed away.



NCDOTCommunications / Flickr.

North Korea had the worst decline in food security over the past two decades, according to the 2012 Global Hunger Index.

Hurricane Sandy hit the Caribbean and the US East Coast. More than 70 per cent of crops in Haiti were destroyed, worsening the food insecurity situation. The impact on New York City residents once again showed that such disasters have a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable segments of society, even in developed economies.

The Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) signed a preliminary peace agreement, the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro, increasing hopes that decades of hostilities may finally move towards resolution.

The annual Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP18) in Doha, Qatar, saw the launch of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, set to begin in 2013. While falling short of more ambitious goals, the extension of the Protocol ensured that several key climate mitigation efforts would continue. [\[p.19\]](#)

Typhoon Bopha struck Southern Philippines, affecting 400,000 lives, with at least 650 dead and 900 missing.

# Non-Traditional Security 20 Years On: Assessing the Place of the Field

*J. Jackson Ewing and Mely Caballero-Anthony*

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The expansion of security studies that accelerated after the fall of the Soviet Union has proven to be more than a passing fad. Contemporary trends and events in the environmental, food, energy, health, development and other sectors that have traditionally fallen outside the purview of 'security' have propelled these issue areas up the policy strata of many states, international organisations and civil society agendas. These shifts have led to the language and conceptual underpinnings of 'security' being applied in novel ways and in new areas as tools for understanding and addressing contemporary challenges.

NTS responds to challenges in the food, energy, environmental and health sectors, among others, which threaten the lives of countless vulnerable communities and the future progress upon which societies across the world depend.

Such 'securitisation' is on one level unsurprising, as emergent challenges in 'non-traditional' sectors have a clear capacity to affect the lives of individuals and the progress of societies, and can potentially foment geopolitical competition, instability and violent conflict. Moreover, tenable arguments suggest that threats of inter-state conflict have waned in recent decades, while conflicts within states have gained in

relevance alongside a range of non-military threats to stability and prosperity. As a result, non-traditional security (NTS) issues have been increasingly salient parts of policymaking and dialogue in the Asia-Pacific.

Despite the maturation of scholarship and policy attention on NTS issues, however, pervasive questions remain about the relationship between non-traditional and traditional security sectors, what or whom is being secured, and the conceptual and practical value of 'securitising' more generally.

- Should NTS issues relating to health, the environment, food and the like be assessed for their direct effects or for their capacity to contribute to conflict and instability?
- Are such explorations mutually exclusive or can they be complementary?
- Who has the ability to securitise an issue and what are their intentions in doing so?
- Does securitisation bring issues a needed sense of urgency, or simply place them in a convoluted milieu of ministries and organisations with differing strategic outlooks?

These issues, and others like them, were present throughout the phases of reconceptualising security that preceded NTS, and they challenge the emergent paradigm as they did its predecessors. This section of the 2012 Year in Review looks back briefly on the history of the widening of security thinking, and looks forward towards the future place of NTS within security discourses and policies.

## Cold War Priorities Ebb

During the heightened tension of the Cold War, threat calculations and great power rivalries led a majority of scholarship and policymaking to equate security

studies with military strategy. Resulting ideas and policy approaches focused on threat manipulations, force projections and strategic balances, and understood

security largely in terms of external threats coming from spaces outside of a state's sovereign control. In turn, military policies and contingencies were formed to counter such threats and these approaches dominated the security policies of the day.

The realignment of international security priorities during the early 1990s expanded this security scope substantially. The fall of the Soviet Union reduced considerably the threat of nuclear confrontation involving major global powers, which had underpinned the strategic competition between the world's two great powers since World War II, and created a bipolar structure that affected the security priorities of states around the world. The break-up of the Soviet Union,

by removing a primary player, unambiguously ended the need for such calculations. This fundamental change in international security dynamics created a

*The end of the Cold War brought a fundamental change in security dynamics, and created conditions conducive to a widening of security thinking.*

setting conducive for expanding the security discourse by allowing for greater attention and resources to be allocated towards a wider range of security concerns.

## The Tide Turns for NTS

The emergence of a broader category of issues was already apparent by the early 1990s, and the end of the Cold War provided them oxygen even in traditional security communities. Individuals and organisations typically concerned with military affairs began widening their scope of enquiry. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary of the time, for example, stated that issues of demography, climate change, wealth differentials and the like must be included in NATO's security calculations. Other scholars and practitioners likewise began to trumpet environmental stresses and resource scarcity in particular as being salient to the future of the security field. This formative period marked the beginning of a litany of conflict-oriented literature and policy

prescriptions aimed at addressing instability arising from NTS challenges.

It is important to note, however, that in the developing parts of Asia – particularly Southeast Asia – such expansive security orientation and practices were not new. Concepts like 'comprehensive security' and 'cooperative security' defined the security practices and policies of states even before the end of the Cold War and reflected the security concerns of states in the region. Security, to these states, has been comprehensively defined to include not just state and military security, but also political, economic and socio-cultural issues that could threaten and destabilise the state and its people.

## NTS Arrives at the Mainstream

In a rapidly changing international environment that has become more connected with globalisation, security challenges brought on by changing demographics, climate change, and increasing food and energy demands have bolstered these arguments and led to a burgeoning of NTS-conflict work during the late 2000s and early 2010s.

Conflict and instability, however, are only part of the NTS picture. Also in the wake of bipolarity's death knell were voices arguing that the everyday dangers facing individuals, communities and societies represented acute security threats that were often lost in the state-centric security shuffle. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) was influential in this regard, and

its contribution of human security concepts in 1993–1994 altered the expansionary security landscape in profound ways. Human security arguments suggest

*Human security arguments suggest that stresses arising from environmental declines, lack of adequate food or sanitation, acute poverty and the like are security concerns in and of themselves, regardless of whether they foment conflict or instability.*

that the types of stresses arising from environmental declines, lack of adequate food or sanitation, acute poverty and the like are security concerns in and of themselves, regardless of whether or not they foment conflict or instability. Moreover, human security challenged state-oriented paradigms by pointing out that security threats often play out at sub-state levels and that state apparatuses themselves can create the

acute security threats faced by their people. These UNDP concepts fundamentally reframed questions about who or what should be secured, and in doing so contributed to maturing ideas on ‘comprehensive’ and non-traditional’ security that have since gained in policy relevance and overall influence.

Critical security studies further addressed elemental concerns about the appropriate subjects of security thinking and the processes by which issues are securitised. The Welsh and Paris schools both called upon Western philosophical traditions to largely reject the statist assumptions of more mainstream security arguments. They also empirically explored how securitisation practices affected conditions on the ground, questioning their efficacy both implicitly and overtly. In combination with the UNDP’s human security offering, such critical security work revealed important questions about the place of security within larger political, socioeconomic, environmental and developmental contexts, and helped form the more encompassing security agenda that NTS is now taking forward.

## Institutionalising NTS in the Asia-Pacific

NTS is no longer on the fringe of security thinking at international, regional, state or sub-state levels. The UN has provided an international platform for expansionary security thinking and policy formulation, not only through the aforementioned efforts of the UNDP, but also via UN Security Council meetings on health and climate change, and advocacy from the UN Secretariat for greater attention and resources for issues under the NTS umbrella.

Regional efforts to institutionalise NTS thinking are also readily apparent, with ASEAN – and the track-two dialogues of the ASEAN-Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) – explicitly including expansionary security concerns in their deliberations and policy recommendations for regional policy communities.

At the state level, the past decade has seen Indonesia, Singapore and other Southeast Asian nations paying even greater attention to NTS issues, while Japan locates human security as a key pillar of its foreign policy. China, meanwhile, readily and publicly accepts that issues such as air and water pollution, pandemics and food and energy demands represent security challenges to the state. Many sub-state actors such as provincial and local governments and non-state actors from civil society likewise call for the primacy of NTS issues in policy formulation and resource allocation.

Despite these strides, NTS still faces conceptual and practical challenges that warrant further attention. Since the influential post-Cold War security expansions, there have been critical voices arguing that broadening security concepts erodes their conceptual coherence and applicability for policymaking. If security can

cover so many issues, the thinking goes: ‘what does it *not* include, and how can policymakers find value in its principles?’ Other challenges arise from what resources are brought to bear in the face of security threats. If issues in environmental, food or health sectors become securitised, for example, does that automatically compel or necessitate that security (and

in many cases military) bodies become involved? If so, this risks dedicating inappropriate resources to critical problems. Finally, there are questions about how such issues come to be under the umbrella of security in the first place, who or what put them there and why. If the intentions of securitising actors are problematic, it is often the case that so too will be the results.

## Conclusion

Despite these critiques, mainstreaming NTS remains appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century because it responds to emergent realities that are backed up by increasingly disquieting evidence. Challenges in the food, energy, environmental and health sectors, among others, threaten the lives of countless vulnerable communities and the future progress upon which societies across

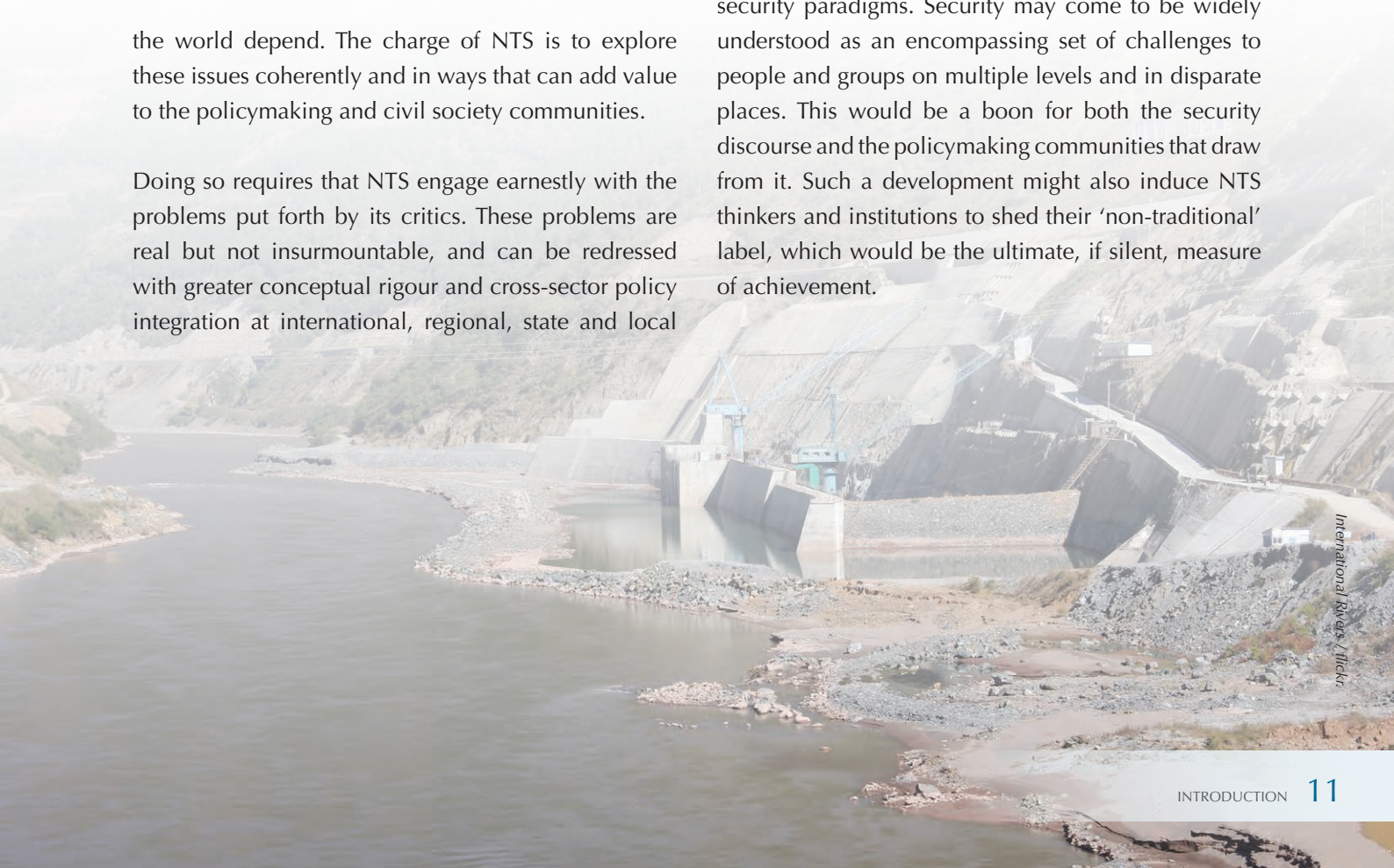
### The fundamental goal of NTS should be to overcome the dichotomy between traditional and non-traditional security paradigms.

the world depend. The charge of NTS is to explore these issues coherently and in ways that can add value to the policymaking and civil society communities.

Doing so requires that NTS engage earnestly with the problems put forth by its critics. These problems are real but not insurmountable, and can be redressed with greater conceptual rigour and cross-sector policy integration at international, regional, state and local

levels. The military elements of security, moreover, will not fade into obscurity, as the geopolitical rivalries and military posturing in the Asia-Pacific in 2012 have shown. However, addressing the critical challenges facing individuals, communities and societies require policy and resource prioritisation past what they often receive today. Such prioritisation may have to come, in some cases, at the expense of resources and policy focus given to traditional military issues. In other cases, it will necessitate that militaries broaden their agendas to contribute in areas such as disaster relief and aid distribution.

The fundamental goal of NTS should be to overcome the dichotomy between traditional and non-traditional security paradigms. Security may come to be widely understood as an encompassing set of challenges to people and groups on multiple levels and in disparate places. This would be a boon for both the security discourse and the policymaking communities that draw from it. Such a development might also induce NTS thinkers and institutions to shed their ‘non-traditional’ label, which would be the ultimate, if silent, measure of achievement.



# Watershed Year for Myanmar, but What Next?

Mely Caballero-Anthony

What a difference a year makes! 2012 will long be remembered as a watershed in Myanmar's modern history. The April parliamentary elections saw the revival of Myanmar's opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), and the return of its leader, democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi, to politics after years of forced isolation. 2012 also witnessed sweeping political reforms, from the release of political prisoners and the establishment of a national human rights body, to the easing of press censorship and the introduction of laws allowing public demonstrations and labour union strikes. The economic reforms were equally impressive, the most recent and significant of which was a foreign direct investment (FDI) code removing the country's restrictions on foreign ownership of joint ventures.

The reforms were much welcomed by the international community, and a number of Western countries lifted sanctions that had been imposed on the country



Htoo Tay Zar / Wikimedia Commons.

*Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to supporters during the 2012 by-election campaign.*

because of its poor human rights record. Perhaps the strongest endorsement of Myanmar's reforms was the state visit of newly re-elected US President Barack Obama in November en route to the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summit in neighbouring Cambodia – 'the first ever sitting US President to set foot in the long-time pariah [state]'.

## The Roadmap to Democracy

The breath-taking pace of Myanmar's reforms took even its neighbours – the member states of ASEAN – by surprise. It was just a few years ago, in 2007, that ASEAN had made the decision to defer Myanmar's Chairmanship of the grouping, scheduled to have taken place in 2008. The decision was prompted by a series of violent demonstrations in the country that year that came to be known as the Saffron Revolution. In late 2011, however, ASEAN finally decided to give the Chairmanship for 2014 to Myanmar. This endorsement came only after the grouping's members were satisfied that its member state was making progress in implementing the reforms promised in Myanmar's Roadmap to Democracy.

The seven-step Roadmap to Democracy was first unveiled in 2003 by the country's then military-led government. Among the steps were a national referendum to approve the country's new constitution, the election of a democratically elected government and the convening of a parliament. Many in the international community were highly sceptical of the Roadmap when it was first announced, and their doubts soon turned to strident criticisms after the 2007 demonstrations. However, by the time Myanmar held its national elections in 2010, the seven stages had effectively been implemented. Myanmar's military regime had given way to a civilian-led government, U Thein Sein had been elected President and Aung San Suu Kyi had been released from house arrest. The rest soon became history.

With the country emerging from its decades-long political and economic isolation, it is now a key focus of many actors in the international community – from foreign governments and international organisations to multinational corporations – all attracted by the promise of a richly endowed country, Asia's potential rising star. However, amid the euphoria, voices of caution remain, with Aung San Suu Kyi's perhaps the

most prominent among them. When she met with President Obama, she remarked that the international community should not be 'lured by [the] mirage of success', and that 'the most difficult time in any transition is when we think that success is in sight'. Thus, as we look into 2013 and beyond, what are the key challenges facing the country?

## Consolidating Democratic Reforms

Topping the list of concerns are the pace and sustainability of Myanmar's political reforms. After almost five decades of military rule, questions abound as to whether the civilian government headed by President Thein Sein would be able to consolidate its power. Since taking the reins in 2011, Thein Sein has moved quickly to undertake a series of political and economic reforms, including freeing Aung San Suu Kyi from house detention and allowing the NLD to participate in the 2012 parliamentary elections. The party subsequently won 43 out of the 45 contested seats.

While having the NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi in parliament strengthens the legitimacy of the government, doubts persist as to the extent to which the military would embrace the democratic reforms given that the reforms could significantly undermine their own interests. The military imprint across the country is still extensive. Military appointees make up 25 per cent of Myanmar's parliament; the ruling



UN Photo / Mark Garten.

*UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon meets with President Thein Sein in Myanmar in April 2012.*

Union Solidarity and Development Party is known to be closely linked to the military; and military interests in the country's economy are pervasive. There are also questions about possible simmering tensions within the ruling party, between reformers whose aim is to consolidate power and conservatives who prefer a slower pace of reform.

## Strengthening Institutions for Governance

Another challenge is to build and strengthen institutions for governing the country. Current priorities include establishing the rule of law across the three branches of government – executive, legislative and judicial. This is particularly crucial given the rapid shift from military to civilian authority. A recent report by the US Center for Strategic and International Studies noted that while the reforms undertaken by Thein Sein are real and

have the support of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the process of implementing and institutionalising the changes 'remains fragile and is not irreversible'. The rule of law becomes more critical as the country rapidly opens its economy to foreign investment. International investors need to feel confident that their interests are protected and the rules of the game are clear and above board.

UN Photo / Mark Garten.

## Driving Economic Development

It has not taken long for Myanmar's economic reforms to bear fruit. The opening up of the economy has attracted new investment in the finance, telecommunications and aviation sectors. New entrants include Korean Air and Qatar Airways; the Hong Kong-based companies, PCCW and Hutchison Global Communications; and Singapore-based NTT Communications. The rapid rise in foreign investment is likely to increase the cost of doing business for local enterprises in the immediate

and medium term. For example, property rental in downtown Yangon has increased significantly over the past year. The people will also be affected, as food and housing costs trend upwards without a corresponding rise in wages. Prices are set to continue increasing, and unless the government finds a way to manage this drastic change, the people of Myanmar may find themselves squeezed out of the economy.

## Developing Human Capital

After decades of neglect, the country's education system is severely inadequate. It has only one functional university for example. The result is chronic youth unemployment. Importantly, the lack of a well-trained workforce also fuels concerns about the absorptive capacity of the state, both to capitalise on foreign assistance and to meet the needs of business interests. The government urgently needs to improve academic and vocational/technical training, and it is cognisant of this. Since the opening up of its economy, the government has initiated cooperation projects with the UK, France, India and Korea in the area of higher education.

In addition, given that it takes time to train its people, the government has started to actively reach out to its nationals overseas in an effort to close the gap between



AusAID / flickr

*Schools will need to be improved if Myanmar is to meet the needs of its growing economy.*

the demand for a skilled and educated workforce and the available talent at home. If successful, the strategy could go a long way towards building the human capital to push the economic reforms forward. The Burmese diaspora could also provide and raise funds for much-needed initiatives in the country.

## Managing Ethnic Tensions

Since its independence in 1948, Myanmar has seen long-running conflicts involving its ethnic groups, the more prominent of which are the Kachins, Chins and Shans. The country recently signed 10 ceasefire agreements with rebel groups. However, an agreement with the Kachins, the largest armed rebel group, remains elusive. Thein Sein has begun to work on peace talks with the Kachins and he has outlined a three-point policy to resolve the conflict. Concluding a peace agreement is expected to be a drawn-out

process however; and in the face of reports of sporadic military attacks, more than sincerity will be needed. Peace would be possible only if the government is able to ensure that the military follows ceasefire orders.

In Rakhine state, the plight of the Rohingyas takes the spotlight. The residency status of the Rohingyas – a Muslim ethnic minority who have long settled on Myanmar territory – remains unresolved. The current crisis in the state, however, was triggered by

the alleged rape and murder of a Buddhist woman by Muslim men. This led to widespread violence between Rakhine Buddhists and Muslim Rohingyas that saw many killed, hundreds of houses burnt, and more than 100,000 displaced, most of them Rohingyas. The mounting communal tensions in Rakhine state

represent a serious risk for a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country like Myanmar; and it is imperative that the government finds a way to manage the situation quickly before it threatens to rupture inter-communal relations, and before it not only derails the country's political reforms but also destabilises the country.

## Can Myanmar Traverse the Transition?

Myanmar has come very far indeed, and it is easy to get caught up in the wave of optimism. However, the challenges ahead remain many and multifaceted. Success in consolidating the political reforms and in managing the interests of the various stakeholders in the political sphere could well be key. Economic growing pains could also be a threat to the well-being of the country's people, who will face increasing costs

and structural employment issues. If the country is to move from the 'mirage of success' to an oasis of sustainable growth, there is a need for more than just decisive government action. The nature of the challenges facing the country requires no less than the engagement of stakeholders within the country as well as outside – and the government will have to actively facilitate such a process.

### Reforms in Myanmar

- 2007 • Military announces drafting of Constitution in a first step towards Myanmar's Roadmap to Democracy.
- 2008 • Constitutional referendum held during relief operations for Cyclone Nargis.
- 2009 • Heavy fighting in border regions amid heightened tensions between the majority Bamar population and various ethnic groups.
- 2010 • Transition from military to civilian rule. Multi-party elections held with participation from over 43 political parties.
- Pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, released from house arrest; engaged in a series of dialogues with Thein Sein, then Prime Minister.
- Election law amended to allow ex-prisoners to become members of registered political parties.
- 2011 • Thein Sein elected President.
- National Human Rights Commission established.
- Amnesty granted to more than 300 political prisoners.
- New laws to allow labour unions and strikes introduced.
- Press and internet censorship laws relaxed.
- ASEAN agreed to Myanmar's bid for Chairmanship in 2014.
- 2012 • By-elections held in April; opposition party National League for Democracy (NLD) won 43 out of 45 contested seats.
- Significant Cabinet reshuffles in July and August to reinforce reform agenda.
- Ceasefire agreements with armed ethnic groups with the exception of the Kachins.

#### Economic Liberalisation

- Private banks enter foreign exchange market; Qatar Airways, All Nippon Airways (ANA) and Korean Air enter aviation industry; telecommunications licences issued to NTT Communications and Hutchison Global Communications.
- Foreign investment law allows overseas firms to fully own ventures and offers tax breaks and lengthy land leases.
- Regulation of currency practices, easing of import restrictions and abolishment of export taxes.

# Valuing and Evaluating the Future We Want

2012 signalled a time to take stock of multilateral environmental efforts, with the UN Earth Summit in its 20<sup>th</sup> year, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process seeing the end of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, a global agreement on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

This year's Earth Summit – known as Rio+20, or more formally, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) – featured the tagline 'The Future We Want', a clear attempt at encapsulating an idealised collective vision of sustainable development. There is however no clear agreement on how to achieve that vision. Meanwhile, an examination of multilateral environmental negotiations shows two trends consolidating over the course of the year – a greater tendency to place a monetary value on the environment and an increase in tangible efforts to include more stakeholders.

## Monetisation of the Environment

Despite assertions emphasising the intrinsic value of the environment, it appears that catalysing necessary political action requires an accounting of the costs of environmental changes and their impacts. 2012 saw the release of several in-depth studies on the short- and long-term financial burdens on governments as a result of climate hazards. They include Maplecroft's Natural Hazards Risk Atlas, which warns that the most important growth cities are also at greatest risk financially from the threat of natural hazards due to their exposure to events such as flooding, earthquakes and tropical cyclones; the Coastal City Flood Vulnerability Index, which identifies Shanghai as the city most vulnerable to flooding; and the World Disasters Report 2012, which highlights the links between disasters, development and forced migration.

Institutions are also paying greater attention to the valuation of climate change impacts. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), for instance, noted that countries in the Asia-Pacific will require an investment of about USD40 billion annually till 2050 to neutralise the impacts of climate change. This requires a shift in funding emphasis, from reactive post-disaster reconstruction and recovery, to proactive pre-disaster risk reduction and adaptation as well as innovative disaster financing.



Africa Renewal / flickr

*Rio+20 featured the tagline 'The Future We Want'.*

The value of existing ecosystems is also increasingly seen as a vital issue. At the first Southeast Asia Regional Policy Dialogue on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity in January, policymakers were encouraged to internalise the costs of the impact of unsustainable export activities on ecosystems. According to one study, the loss of ecosystem services globally would amount to around USD2 trillion to USD4.5 trillion over a 50-year period, if no policy action is taken to address the environmental degradation. Accounting for such loss is critical for Southeast Asian countries, and particularly for rural and coastal communities whose livelihoods – farming, animal husbandry, forestry and fishing – are intimately linked to the survival of existing ecosystems.

For these segments of the population, growth in gross domestic product (GDP) would not necessarily translate to better income or welfare.

The plight of these communities that depend directly on natural environments is being addressed to a certain extent by international climate institutions. The UNFCCC's Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Plus (REDD+) programme, a major payment for ecological services scheme, has the potential to benefit forest communities (although the pace of negotiations on REDD+ financing has been

slow and incremental). Another significant UNFCCC initiative that could benefit vulnerable communities is the National Economic, Environment and Development Study (NEEDS) for Climate Change, which assesses the financial needs of developing countries with respect to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Ten countries are participating in the initial pilot phase. The socioeconomic needs of affected communities were also raised in the run-up to Rio+20, with voices criticising the sustainable development concept for ignoring the vulnerabilities faced by such communities while over-emphasising environmental issues.

## Negotiating the Future We Want

*'As with the rest of Southeast Asia, climate change has disrupted monsoon patterns in Myanmar. I believe that **climate change will hinder the government's goal of poverty alleviation** and as such should be urgently addressed.'*

**Dr Tun Lwin**

Former delegate to the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Assistance; and current CEO of Myanmar Climate Change Watch.



Evangelos Petratos / EU ECHO.

*'Like all negotiations, there will be some countries that feel the text could be more ambitious. Or, others who feel their own proposals could be better reflected, while still others might prefer to have their own language. But, **let's be clear: multilateral negotiations require give and take.**'*

**Sha Zukang**

Secretary-General of Rio+20, commenting on the Rio+20 Outcome Document.



UN Photo / Jean-Marc Ferré.

*'We are moving in the right direction – toward a global low carbon economy, toward the desired tipping point – **but we are not moving at the speed and scale demanded by science.**'*

**Christiana Figueres**

Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, speaking at the RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture in Singapore.



RSIS

## Valuing Stakeholders?



*Advocates for women's rights at Rio+20.*

In a bid to address the socioeconomic concerns of communities and developing countries, diverse categories of stakeholders were invited to contribute to the initial draft of the Rio+20 outcome document. Seventy-three per cent of the 677 submissions to the 'zero draft', as it was termed, came from non-state actors, including the business community, children and youth, farmers, indigenous peoples, local authorities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the scientific community, women, workers and trade unions. Several common themes emerged from the process: concepts and initiatives related to poverty alleviation and health or well-being were top priorities, followed by participation and natural resource management.

This inclusive, participatory process has, however, proven to be a double-edged sword. The strong consensus on the need to implement initiatives that address short- to medium-term issues has had the effect of de-emphasising long-term environmental issues. For instance, with stakeholders expressing a preference for adaptation, climate change mitigation was relegated down the list of priorities, with the result that science was given little emphasis in the final Rio+20 outcome document. This inevitably attracted strong criticisms from the research and scientific community. Such concerns may bring back to the spotlight the physical impacts of climate change on the environment, and

spur greater urgency in UNFCCC negotiations on climate change mitigation, which had stalled over the last two years due to countries prioritising their own strategic economic concerns. However, the interest in adaptation that emerged from the inclusive, multi-stakeholder process at Rio+20 could just as easily be used as an excuse to continue to delay action on mitigation.

The widening of stakeholders has also meant a greater focus on a deeper role for the private sector. However, the green economy proposal, one of the key themes at Rio+20, remains highly problematic despite having been debated extensively for over a year. For example, at Rio+20, many developing countries supported terms that would facilitate better access to technology. Developed countries, however, did not want obligatory terms to be attached to the technology transfer, arguing that such terms impede competitiveness and could deter the private sector from investing in research and development.

More can be done to understand the concerns of the private sector as important stakeholders. Prime areas for private sector involvement include socioeconomic development, early warning and global climate observation systems, technology transfer, insurance and reinsurance, and bilateral aid. However, at present, private firms will be more likely to engage in areas with lower risks in the short- and medium-term – which explains their current interest in, for example, disaster insurance at both international (UN) and regional (ASEAN) forums. This is compounded by the fact that only a small fraction of the private sector has conducted risk assessments, let alone considered adaptation options due to the lack of incentives to do so.

## Evaluating Existing Institutional Efforts

The increasing focus on socioeconomic concerns at Rio+20 has facilitated efforts to sustain the momentum of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

through the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are set to take over from the MDGs after 2015. However, the SDG formulation process still

has a long way to go. Proposals were submitted late to Rio+20, and issues such as definitions and what to include as SDGs still lack consensus.

The proposed SDGs could potentially motivate and guide the UNFCCC process. With the first phase of the Kyoto Protocol ending in December 2012, there will be a review and possible revamp of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), a market-based mechanism for incentivising reduction of GHG emissions. This would include assessing the effectiveness of existing CDM projects, thus providing greater clarity on the scope of projects that should be considered for the next CDM phase. The review could also reduce overlaps with funding mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (established in Durban in 2011) and the Adaptation Fund (established in Cancun in 2010), particularly given the greater interest seen in developing mitigation-adaptation (MitAd)

initiatives, that is, projects that integrate mitigation and adaptation strategies.

The commitment of developed countries – or more specifically, Annex 1 countries in UNFCCC terms – to the second period of the Kyoto Protocol is another critical area that would have to be addressed. As of the recently concluded Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP18) in Doha, 37 industrialised countries including Australia and the member states of the European Union have signed up to the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period. This however accounts for only 15 per cent of global GHGs, as it still excludes countries such as Russia, Japan, Canada and the US. More ambitious targets also need to be adopted by non-Annex 1 industrialising states which are responsible for increasingly significant amounts of the world's GHG emissions, such as China. On a more positive note, European countries pledged USD6 billion for climate finance.



*COP18 concluded with the Doha Climate Gateway, an outcome document that included the official launch of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.*

While the difficulty in consolidating countries' diverging positions in climate negotiations is a given, this was exacerbated by the Qatari hosts' lack of effective chairmanship and a poorly worded outcome document known as the Doha Climate Gateway. Some observers noted that the seeming lack of urgency by the COP18 President and the drawn-out negotiations were in stark contrast to the emotions of the Philippine lead negotiator as he related the destruction wrought by Typhoon Bopha in the south of his country.

## Prospects for 2013

While putting monetary values on environmental systems will facilitate more certainty, and subsequently action, particularly from policymakers and the private sector, there should not be an over-reliance on it. Ensuring equitable access within sustainable development efforts must feature squarely in all aspects of negotiations. Recent weather disasters, such as Typhoon Bopha in the Philippines and Hurricane Sandy in the Caribbean and the East Coast of the US, not only suggest the need for short- to medium-term solutions to assist communities to better adapt to the effects of weather hazards, but also the critical need

for long-term commitments to mitigate the increasing frequency and intensity of weather events, as well as narrow the socioeconomic inequalities that persist in the conventional route of development. While it has been relatively easier for countries to agree on short- to medium-term commitments and measures, it is ultimately the slow incremental pace of negotiations in addressing long-term environmental concerns that are likely to make or break the future that the collective 'we' – including communities and civil society – want.

*Contributed by Sofiah Jamil.*

# Facilitating Nuclear and Hydroelectric Energy Safety

In July 2012, India was hit by a massive blackout that affected half its territory. The impacts were wide-ranging, encompassing services such as transport and hospitals, and economic activities such as factories. The episode illustrates the difficulties of coping with rising energy demand in Asia. In 2011, the Asia-Pacific accounted for 83 per cent of the increase in global energy consumption, a pattern which is expected to continue in the near to medium term. Ensuring energy security thus remained a priority for Asia in 2012. The region's policymakers persisted in pursuing diversification strategies, recognising the vulnerabilities and issues associated with dependence on fossil fuels. However, that task was made more complicated by the fallout from the Fukushima nuclear crisis the previous year. That incident brought to the foreground concerns over the safety of energy facilities such as nuclear power plants and hydroelectric dams, and highlighted the need for the region's energy security agenda to include issues of safety.

## Energy Consumption in the Asia-Pacific, 2011

|                                                         | Oil    | Natural Gas | Coal   | Nuclear Energy | Hydro-electricity | Other renewables | Total (all energy sources) |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------|--------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Consumption, in million tonnes of oil equivalent</b> | 1316.1 | 531.5       | 2553.2 | 108.0          | 248.1             | 46.4             | 4803.3                     |
| <b>Change in consumption (2011 vs 2010), in %</b>       |        |             |        |                |                   |                  |                            |
| - Asia-Pacific                                          | 2.7    | 5.9         | 8.4    | -18.0          | -0.6              | 22.4             | 5.1                        |
| - World                                                 | 0.7    | 2.2         | 5.4    | -4.3           | 1.6               | 17.7             | 2.4                        |
| <b>Share in the region's energy mix, in %</b>           | 27.4   | 11.1        | 53.2   | 2.3            | 5.2               | 1.0              | NA                         |

Source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2012.

## Fossil Fuels

Indonesia has natural gas reserves amounting to 1.4 per cent of the world's total, Brunei has 0.9 per cent of the world's oil reserves and China is the world's biggest coal producer. However, energy production within the region itself is not sufficient to meet the surging demand. In 2011, the production of oil and gas in the Asia-Pacific decreased slightly; and while production of coal grew, the rise cannot keep pace with demand. Hence, the region will increasingly rely on imports from other regions, becoming the primary market for fossil fuels in coming decades. The International Energy Agency estimates that India will become the biggest coal importer by 2020, and Asia will account for 85 per cent of the growth of

global oil demand. The trade in natural gas is also shifting towards Asia. Asia's dependence on fossil fuel imports is accompanied by significant vulnerabilities. Geopolitical factors as well as domestic developments in oil-exporting countries and regions could lead to supply disruptions. The US sanctions on Iran, for example, have forced many countries to look to other sources for their oil and gas. The massive consumption of fossil fuels also raises environmental concerns: carbon dioxide emissions from fossil-fuel use could accelerate the process of climate change. To sustain the region's economic and social development, it is thus essential to reduce the dominance of fossil fuels in the energy mix.

## Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is regarded as a promising alternative to fossil fuels. Renewables include sources such as wind and solar power; tidal and geothermal energy; and biofuels. Such energy sources could help the region meet its energy needs without having to compromise on climate change commitments. The past year has witnessed encouraging developments in renewable energy. China, the world's largest energy consumer, has placed greater emphasis on the development and utilisation of renewables and leads investment in this area. The region as a whole saw use of renewables increasing at a much higher rate than use of any other source of energy.

In absolute terms, however, renewable energy (excluding hydroelectricity) still occupies a minor position. It accounted for only 1 per cent of total energy consumption in the Asia-Pacific in 2011. Experts note that generating electricity from renewables continues to be more expensive than generating it from fossil fuels. Moreover, countries lack incentives to promote the use of renewables when they have cheaper sources such as coal. Hence, renewable energy could potentially help to ensure energy security in the long term, but it is not likely to alleviate the region's dependence on fossil fuels in the near future.

## Nuclear Energy and Hydroelectricity

Compared to renewables, nuclear energy and hydropower have a longer history and larger scale of utilisation, making them the more reasonable alternative to fossil fuels. Moreover, hydropower is an affordable option for areas such as the Mekong River Basin and other parts of Asia with an abundance of water resources. Nuclear energy and hydroelectricity are already important components of Asia's energy mix, accounting for 7.5 per cent of its total energy

consumption. Their role in electricity generation is even more significant. In 2009, nuclear energy and hydroelectricity combined supplied over 15 per cent of the electricity demand in the developing parts of the Asia-Pacific.

However, safety issues related to nuclear energy and hydropower have come into greater focus following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear crisis. Nuclear energy

consumption in the Asia-Pacific declined a considerable 18 per cent in 2011. The biggest drop came from Japan, which closed all its nuclear reactors for several months. Nuclear energy use in Japan declined by 40 per cent, a consequential drop given that, prior to Fukushima, the country generated nearly 30 per cent of its electricity from nuclear energy. The Fukushima crisis seriously weakened people's confidence in nuclear energy. It triggered strong opposition and revived calls for a nuclear-free Japan. In the immediate aftermath, China also suspended approvals of new nuclear projects. Southeast Asia, which had seen a fledgling nuclear renaissance in recent years, became more cautious towards nuclear energy.

Hydropower has also attracted its fair share of controversy. The 2008 Wenchuan Earthquake in China drew attention to the fact that many of the dams in China's south-western provinces are located in earthquake-prone zones. Countries along the Mekong River thus worry over the possibility of serious flooding resulting from earthquake-related damage to those dams. Potential seismic impacts have also been cited as a reason for Bangladesh's opposition to



Dazhong / flickr

*Three Gorges Dam, China.*

the construction of the Tipaimukh dam in India. The environmental and social impacts of dams are another cause of strains between upper and lower riparian countries. For instance, the Xayaburi dam under construction in Lao PDR has attracted complaints from lower riparian countries, who point to the negative ramifications for the local environment, and on fishing and water supply.

## Prospects for 2013

In the near term, fossil fuels will remain the primary source of energy in the region. The demand for natural gas will rise considerably as countries seek less polluting fossil fuels to reduce the impact on climate change. Japan, which has had to reduce its nuclear energy use, is particularly likely to increase its natural gas use.

Despite the safety concerns associated with them, nuclear energy and hydroelectricity will remain important sources of energy for the region, at least in the short and medium term, due to their affordability and due also to the need to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. Moving away from these two energy sources would inevitably increase the share of other types of energy, particularly fossil fuels. This could in turn intensify competition for fossil fuels and add to difficulties in achieving emissions reduction. Thus,

it comes as no surprise that Japan quickly backed off from the goal of phasing out nuclear energy by 2040 shortly after announcing it in September 2012. China also began to again approve nuclear projects in October, after a one-year suspension.

Given that the region will continue to pursue nuclear energy and hydropower, improving the safety of nuclear and hydro facilities will be essential. Institutions at the national, regional and international level have a role in supervising and monitoring the formulation and implementation of safety measures at nuclear power plants (see box on p. 23).

The safety and security risks of hydropower dams built across transboundary rivers would also need to be addressed. It would be necessary to strengthen coordination between and among countries concerned

to enhance mutual understanding and accommodation. Regional institutions and arrangements such as the Mekong River Commission and the Greater Mekong Subregion's Regional Power Trade Coordination Committee provide platforms for dialogue and consultation. However, because these institutions are focused on development and lack jurisdiction over the political decisions of member states, their role in

resolving disputes remains limited at the current time. Ensuring energy security would therefore require that institutional capacity be enhanced. Such efforts are essential if the region is to secure adequate energy at acceptable social and environmental costs.

*Contributed by Lina Gong.*

## Addressing Institutional Weaknesses in Nuclear Energy Oversight

A recent safety review of nuclear reactors in the European Union revealed that most have problems. A report on the Fukushima nuclear crisis likewise noted the presence of safety issues. It concluded that, with safety procedures properly implemented, the effects of the earthquake could have been mitigated and the worst elements of the crisis prevented. These show that concerns over nuclear safety are justified, and that there is a need for greater attention to energy safety at all levels of governance.

In the aftermath of Fukushima, Japan carried out institutional reform to strengthen the regulation of nuclear safety, replacing its Nuclear Safety Commission and its Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency with the Nuclear Regulation Authority in September 2012. At the regional level, member economies of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum adopted the St. Petersburg Declaration on energy in June 2012. The Declaration emphasised that enhancement of safety is essential when diversifying the region's energy sources. It further pointed out the importance of cooperation with international and regional nuclear agencies, particularly the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the need to learn from Japan's experience in energy safety.

As the most important international nuclear body, the IAEA can provide expertise and technical support to member states. After the Fukushima crisis, the IAEA performed a review of the accident and assessed the safety of the country's other nuclear facilities with the cooperation of the government of Japan. Some of Japan's experience has been shared through publicly available IAEA reports. Nuclear institutions thus play an essential role in improving states' capacity to ensure nuclear safety, and their roles should be supported and strengthened.

*Solar thermal test facility.*



# New Norms, New Challenges in Food Security

The 2012 State of Food Insecurity in the World, a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), shows that the number of undernourished globally continues to decline, with the figure currently at 870 million. Furthermore, it notes that the Millennium Development Goal target of halving the prevalence of undernourishment in developing countries is almost within reach. Nonetheless, progress in reducing hunger has slowed since the 2007–2008 food price crisis, and food remains a pressing issue for those vulnerable to high and volatile food prices. It is therefore critical that global resolve on food security issues continues to be strong, and 2012 provides positive signs that that remains the case.

## Food Security Governance

Food security has been high on the international agenda since the price volatility of 2007–2008; and the significant reform of the UN Committee on World Food Security in 2009 marked a major shift in effective governance of food security. 2012 saw further significant developments in international cooperation on food security. The Group of Twenty (G20) launched the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) to help address food price volatility, and the Group of Eight (G8) announced the establishment of a multi-billion dollar initiative in partnership with the private sector to improve food security in Africa.

At the regional level, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum placed strategic focus on food security and held the first meeting of the high-level Policy Partnership on Food Security. Also in Asia, food security moved to a higher position on the agenda of the World Economic Forum on East Asia; and the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) was launched. These commitments and institutions are increasingly relevant given that food price stability continues to come under pressure.

*Increasing attention is paid to food security at the international level. Here, a high-level panel on the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) meets at a 2012 World Bank meeting in Tokyo, Japan.*



Ryan Rayburn / World Bank.

## Food Price Volatility as the New Normal

Events in 2012 suggest that high and volatile food prices may be the new normal. In the first quarter, global food prices were lower than the 2011 record-high average but the FAO Food Price Index remained at historically high levels. Food prices fell steadily in the second quarter of 2012 but suddenly rose again in the third quarter, primarily due to the US drought and the significant damage caused to wheat and maize crops. This surge marked the third global food price spike since 2008. Prices stabilised moving into the fourth quarter of 2012, but remained high.

High food prices are a significant challenge for the poor, many of whom spend 60 to 80 per cent of their household income on food. Coping strategies such as reducing meal sizes, skipping meals and increasing employment hours compromise the health of families, while financial strategies such as the sale of assets worsen the long-term viability of households. Furthermore, high food prices often do not benefit smallholder farmers, many of whom are net buyers



Jim Holmes / World Food Programme

*Rising food prices affect humanitarian organisations, which have to pay more to procure food from the open market.*

of food. Volatile food prices are problematic for both poor consumers and farmers, with the latter likely to experience greater difficulties in planning crop production levels. Therefore, effective initiatives to address high and volatile food prices are imperative.

## Transparency through Information Systems

Improving market transparency could increase food security as it reduces extreme trading behaviour and its impact on food prices, according to a 2011 report for the G20 by a group of institutions including the FAO, the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The G20's AMIS, launched in response to that recommendation, aims to improve transparency in international agricultural markets and encourage policy action in times of market uncertainty. The market monitoring component consolidates data on the production, trade and stocks of four staple grains – wheat, maize, rice and soybean. The information is obtained from the US Department of Agriculture, the International Grains Council and the FAO. The system also provides analysis and statistics as well as capacity

building and policy guidance in relation to price movements.

The International Food Policy Research Institute's (IFPRI) Food Security Portal, launched in 2011 with significant support from key international organisations and donor governments, provides market information and other aggregated data on food security. Data is provided by the FAO, the IMF, the World Bank, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the International Labor Organization (ILO), with country-level statistical support provided by governments. Among a range of food security indicators, the portal presents data on current prices of food and agricultural commodities at the global, national and local level.

The most significant initiative in Southeast Asia is the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) launched in 2003. While there have been improvements

throughout the period of implementation, access to timely and accurate data is still an issue. Countries in the region do not have the capacity to gather the statistics required by AFSIS. Lack of transparency in the region's rice sector is another contributory factor.

## Policy Dialogue on Price Volatility

Alongside the development of information systems, international groupings have sought to quell panic in times of market uncertainty by providing responsive platforms for policy dialogue. The 2012 session of the UN Committee on World Food Security facilitated multisectoral dialogue on policy, trade and governance in relation to volatile food prices. The Rapid Response Forum (RRF) under the G20's AMIS is another mechanism. The RRF is made up of senior officials from the G20 and seven other major producing countries. Together, they represent 80–90 per cent of the world's agricultural output. The RRF did not convene following the price surge in mid-2012. Some analysts saw this decision as weak and question whether the G20 has the will to put its plans into action.

In what was a significant development for food security in the Asia-Pacific, member economies recognised at the 2012 APEC Leaders' Meeting that price volatility may be caused by bans and other restrictions on the export of food, and pledged to avoid such protectionist measures. It remains to be seen whether their commitment to this pledge will

As another year ends with continued uncertainty on food prices, it is timely for ASEAN members to renew their commitment to AFSIS in 2013 and move towards greater transparency in the rice sector.



Mahieu Schouteten / flickr

*Southeast Asian governments endorsed the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) in 2012.*

hold, particularly in the case of Russia, the 2012 APEC host country, whose domestic production is currently under strain due to drought.

In Southeast Asia, there is scope to strengthen cooperation on avoiding rice trading bans, and dialogue along this vein continues. The doubling of commitments to APTERR in 2012, which represents an effort to prevent panic should local or regional supply shortfalls occur, may also indirectly prevent extreme trading behaviour.

## Prospects for 2013

Despite the complexity of factors in food price formation, there is significant potential for enhancing food price stability through international cooperation. It is too soon to ascertain what impact the recent improvements in transparency in the global market and price information may have had on food prices in 2011–2012. It can only be speculated as to whether or not the stabilisation of prices soon after the surge in mid-2012 was in part due to the increased availability

of up-to-date and accurate data (provided by AMIS). In any case, with price volatility expected to continue well into 2013 alongside unstable weather and low grain stocks, it is essential that governments fully utilise platforms established for policy dialogue on food prices to prevent panic in international markets.

*Contributed by Sally Trethewie.*

## Record Droughts and Low Stocks: A Cause for Concern in 2013

In 2012, serious droughts struck major food producing countries. Record-breaking drought affected more than 55 per cent of the US land mass, resulting in devastating losses of wheat and maize crops. Russia, Ukraine, India, China, Brazil and several other food producing countries also suffered extensive drought, leaving global stocks of staple grains at critically low levels. Drought also worsened food insecurity in North Korea, where one in three people is dependent on food aid.

The phenomenon of both the US and Russia experiencing drought to this extent is rare, and is likely a factor of the transition from a strong, two-year La Niña to a weak El Niño, which will continue to cause weather instability in key growing regions over the next several years.

The impact on Asia of droughts and subsequent crop failures across the world has predominantly manifested through rising prices for wheat, maize, soybean and animal feed. Asia's reliance on rice as a dietary staple has buffered it from the price hikes of 2012, given that rice prices have remained relatively stable. Rice production has been strong and there are predictions of record-high rice stocks in 2013. Analysts warn, however, that with rice prices increasingly linked to movements in the other staple grains, 2013 may yet see a rise in rice prices in spite of strong availability.



Thomas / flickr

# Revitalising Global Health Governance

The global health governance landscape saw significant shifts in 2012. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) were back in focus after being relegated to the background for much of the last decade as the world dealt with the pandemic threat; and institutional reform was a priority for the World Health Organization (WHO). Social determinants of health (SDOH), which introduces considerations of social equity into the international health agenda, also made an impact. At the same time, the health policy community continued to pursue action on pandemic preparedness. In reviewing these developments, two themes emerge. Funding issues represent one strand, with the WHO already having to deal with budget cutbacks. The second is increasing recognition of the value of multisectoral approaches, as a solution to funding shortfalls, and as a way to enhance the effectiveness of various health initiatives.

## Global Target for Non-communicable Diseases

Interest in NCDs has seen a resurgence at the global and regional stage, propelled by an alarming projection of 55 million NCD deaths by 2030 and the World Economic Forum's warning that the sharp rise in NCDs represents a threat to economic development. The four main NCDs are cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease.

The move of NCDs up the international health agenda saw a milestone in 2012 when the 65<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly in May adopted a global target of a 25 per cent reduction in premature deaths from NCDs by 2025. By doing so, the Assembly took on the target-setting role that the UN General Assembly High-level Meeting on NCDs was not able to fill in 2011. The World Health Assembly also emphasised the urgency of developing a comprehensive global monitoring framework and of establishing indicators for NCD prevention and control.

The target of 2025 gives impetus to efforts to institutionalise the prevention of NCDs as part of health security – from the global level right down to the local level. With global health institutions slowly shifting focus from communicable diseases (with deaths attributed to such diseases expected to decline in the next two decades) to NCDs, there is a need to pay attention to better efficiency and equity in using public health resources. The WHO would need to look at how it allocates its funds. For 2012–2013, the WHO earmarked only USD114 million to preventing



WHO / Pierre Albouy.

*The 65<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly.*

premature deaths from NCDs, but allocated nearly USD1.28 billion to tackling communicable diseases. Such funding issues make it important that universal health coverage continues to be pursued, to ensure that the public has access to needed health services through further innovations in pooling financial resources to spread the risk across the population.

Since NCDs have been linked to lifestyle choices, programmes aimed at promoting healthy ways of living are vital. Nevertheless, healthy lifestyle initiatives are not yet considered an integral part of health policies, especially in developing countries. In Southeast Asia, the NCD issue was identified as a focal point for ASEAN's health security agenda at the 2012 ASEAN Health Ministers' Meeting (see box on p. 31), which suggests that there is hope for greater adoption of such preventive health strategies in the future.

## WHO Reform and Social Determinants of Health

The WHO is facing severe funding challenges. Currently, a large part of its budget – 76 per cent of the nearly USD4 billion for 2012–2013 – is financed through voluntary contributions. However, with donor countries dealing with global financial instabilities, such contributions are likely to fall. Already, the WHO is facing a USD741 million cut in its budget for its base programmes (compared to the allocation for 2010–2011). Such funding challenges have led to renewed fervour to reform the organisation. The WHO would have to find the middle ground between donor-driven programmes and national health agendas. Reforming under such financial constraints will be a test of the WHO's institutional resilience.

As part of its reform process, the WHO has determined that its priorities lie with the following: communicable diseases; NCDs; health through the life course; health systems; and preparedness, surveillance and response. In addition, this year's World Health Assembly also saw the adoption of a resolution specifying that SDOH be implemented across programmes. The WHO defines SDOH as 'the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system', and it links those circumstances to health inequities within and between countries. The resolution highlights the importance of strengthening global governance and collaboration on SDOH.

The cross-cutting, equity-driven and rights-based nature of SDOH requires improved multisectoral collaboration on all levels. In fact, the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders on specific problem-based commitments is



UN Women Asia and the Pacific / flickr.

*The state of people's working environment influences health systems and health inequities.*

desired in any health initiative (not just those related to SDOH) and at any level of implementation, as it injects dynamism and flexibility into programmes. Multisectoral approaches have thus become more widely adopted and implemented.

## Pandemic Preparedness and Multisectoral Approaches

In a recent report on the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework, the WHO emphasised the importance of preparation in enhancing the effectiveness of response measures. Thus, as part of its recommendations for 2012 to 2016, it suggested allocating more resources to preparedness measures (70 per cent) with the rest going to response activities.

The WHO's continued ability to exercise effective governance over cross-border health threats is however threatened by its funding issues. Capacity building in support of the International Health Regulations (2005), a legally binding agreement that addresses health risks from the international spread of disease, would have to be phased out if voluntary contributions do not increase

to cover a USD83 million deficit in funding for technical assistance. This is where private sector investment must come in and the WHO must be able to provide a platform for stakeholders from various sectors to play a role.

As new strains of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)-like coronavirus are discovered, the global health community would need to strengthen multisectoral involvement in developing vaccines for emerging pandemic threats as well as in building national capacity for disease surveillance and response. In the Asia-Pacific, the October 2012 Bali Consultation Meeting convened by the WHO Health Security and Environment Cluster agreed to establish a regional information-sharing platform to promote multisectoral preparedness for public health risks. This initiative is strongly supported by the WHO, the private sector and development agencies.

While the benefits of multisectoral efforts are evident, the problem is that such initiatives are financed through voluntary contributions. They are thus subject to the impulses of the donor agenda, with the concomitant risk



US Marine Corps / Timothy Childers.

*Pandemic preparedness through vaccinations in a remote village in Timor Leste.*

that health initiatives would no longer be determined by stakeholders at the grassroots level but driven by donor strategies. The integrity and sustainability of multisectoral health initiatives have also come under fire with the cancellation of the 11<sup>th</sup> round of funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria due to lack of donations. This and other challenges impede the achievement of health security, and suggest the need for more effective health governance at all levels.

## Prospects for 2013

With the region facing increased vulnerability due to climate change, the health sector's role in controlling the spread of communicable diseases prevalent in humanitarian emergencies will be critical for regional health security. Moreover, though annual infectious disease deaths are projected to decline in the next 20 years, communicable diseases such as malaria, HIV and tuberculosis still matter in the national health agendas of developing countries, and most especially in those of the least developed countries. The rise of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis in Asia – alarmingly, this has been seen in the two most populous countries in the world, China and India – must be considered in identifying priorities for the prevention and treatment of communicable diseases.

Overcoming funding challenges will be key to transforming global health governance over the long term. The move to reverse the prevalence of NCDs also



itupictures / flickr.

*The launch of the joint ITU-WHO mHealth initiative.*

needs to be supported beyond 2012. The 2013 World Health Assembly must be able to give direction to the global NCD framework, assuming that the framework and its indicators are finalised by the time the Assembly convenes in May. The year ahead will also reveal

whether the innovations introduced by health governing bodies can provide the foundation for long-term health security goals. An example is the 4-year mHealth project jointly implemented by the WHO and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). Aimed at the surveillance of NCDs and their risk factors, this will serve as a test of the WHO's capacity to further promote multisectoral health initiatives. Multisectoral involvement

could also help countries move forward on the goal of achieving equitable access to health services and creating environments conducive to greater physical activity. If that happens, then public health has the potential to become more than a public good – it will finally become a human right.

*Contributed by Gianna Gayle Amul.*

## ASEAN Institutionalises New Cooperative Mechanisms



*Athit Perawongmetha / World Bank.*

*Healthy ageing is one of the preventive strategies to tackle NCDs being promoted by ASEAN.*

The renewed focus on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) on the global stage has trickled down to the ASEAN level. The 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Health Ministers' Meeting held in July 2012 called for intensified efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, healthy ageing and universal health coverage. As with the rest of the world, these issues are not new to ASEAN – merely put on the backburner over the last decade as pandemics occupied the region's attention. The ASEAN Task Force on Non-communicable Diseases Work Plan (2011–2015) calls to mind the ASEAN Healthy Lifestyle programme of 2002.

Given that the NCD issue has a history of being side-lined, it would be pertinent to ask if that could happen again. Can the issue retain its primacy on the regional and international health agenda this time round, or will another health crisis cause the NCD challenge to be de-emphasised yet again? To fully integrate NCD targets into a global development agenda, all relevant stakeholders will have to be involved.

# Transboundary Rivers and the Cooperation Dilemma

Disputes among riparian countries over the use of transboundary rivers remained a major concern in 2012. More specifically, the drive to harness these rivers to meet growing demand for energy through the construction of large hydroelectric dams has become a potentially destabilising factor among riparian states. Although such disputes may not in and of themselves spark armed conflict, they could easily act as threat multipliers, exacerbating regional tensions and compounding already complex geopolitical problems. Such tensions are made still more critical by the absence or lack of institutions that could effectively bring together states with shared rivers.

## Southeast Asia

The current trends of growing population, economic development and urbanisation have led to increased demand for water and energy in Asia. One result of this is an upsurge in the construction of large hydroelectric dams in the region. In Southeast Asia, Lao PDR has declared it a national priority to catalyse the country's development through the construction of dams. The advocacy group International Rivers reported that the country plans to develop 55 large dams, 7 of which are under construction, with close to 15 more in advanced planning stages.

The extent and scale of its projects have raised concerns among its neighbours. The USD3.8 billion, 1,260 megawatt (MW) Xayaburi dam on the mainstream of the Mekong River is particularly controversial. The development goes against the 1995 Mekong Agreement which requires that any country

undertaking an international mainstream-river project get the agreement of affected countries.

Lower riparian countries such as Cambodia and Vietnam objected to the dam, arguing that more research is necessary to fully understand its potential environmental impact. Speaking at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Russia in September 2012, Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang warned of increasing tensions over water issues, noting that 'dam construction and stream adjustments by some countries in upstream rivers constitute a growing concern for many countries and implicitly impinge on relations between relevant countries'. Notwithstanding such criticisms, Lao PDR held a ceremony on 5 November 2012 to mark the start of the construction of the dam.

*Construction site of the Xayaburi dam in Lao PDR.*

The Xayaburi dam issue has become a symbol of the potential environmental risks posed by hydropower projects in the region, attracting international attention and research. A 2012 study by Princeton University researchers, for example, warned that massive hydropower development will block critical fish migration routes between the Mekong River's downstream floodplains and upstream tributaries. In the most extreme cases, about a quarter of the migratory fish in the Lower Mekong Basin could be lost as a result of hydropower development.

The Xayaburi issue also dealt a blow to the credibility of the Mekong River Commission, an inter-governmental institution formed by the governments of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam that focuses on joint water management and sustainable development. The failure of the Commission to halt the project or arrange a compromise acceptable to all parties could open the door to a dam-building spree, which could in turn lead to the degradation of the river's fragile ecology and affect associated fishing industries.

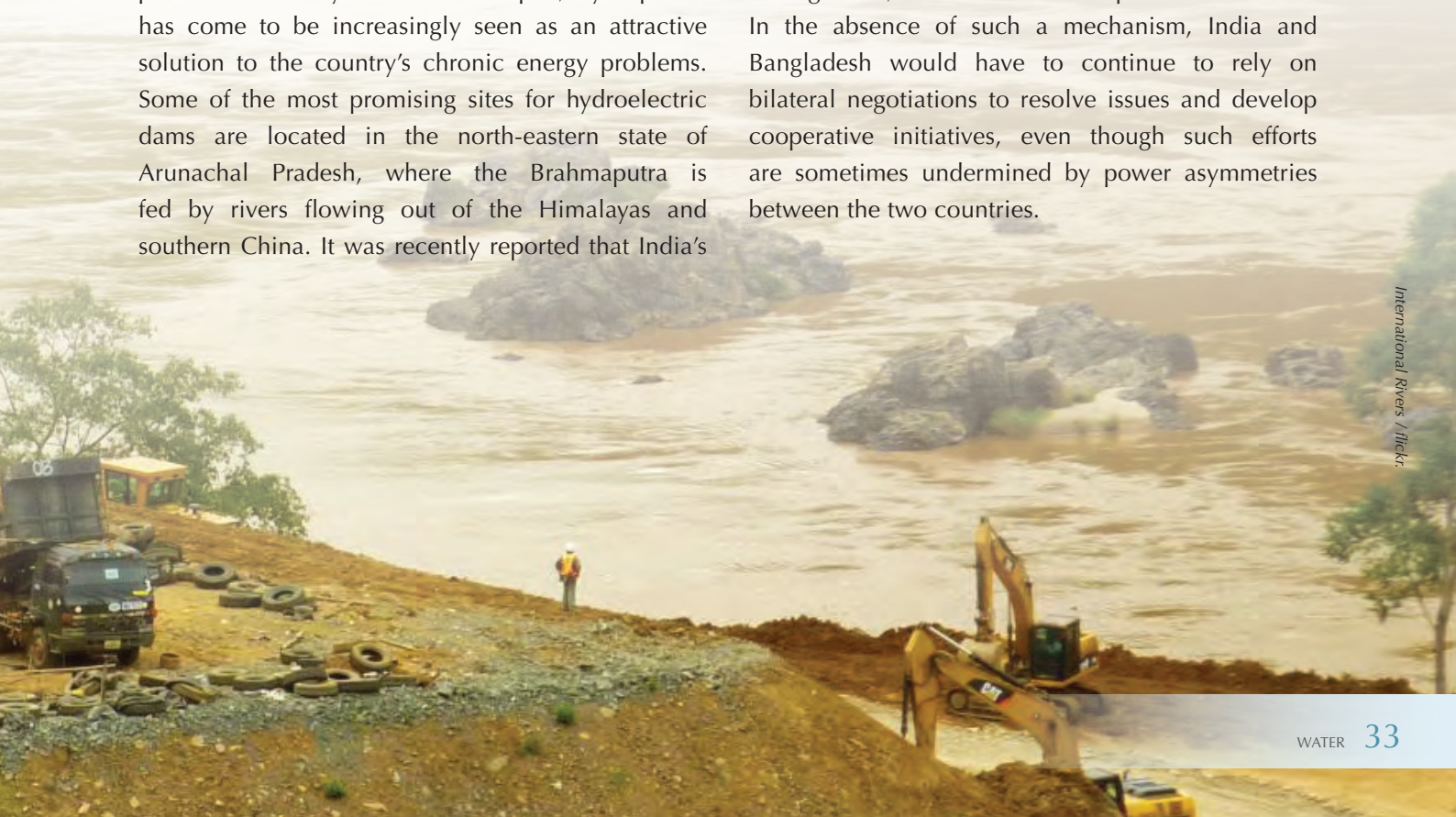
## South Asia

Renewed interest in hydroelectricity has also been observed in South Asia, most notably in India, where energy supply has struggled to keep pace with demand. The sheer magnitude of India's energy problems became evident in July 2012, when northern and eastern India suffered two consecutive days of power outages after a breakdown of three of the country's five electricity grids. In all, an estimated 710 million people in 20 of India's 28 states were affected.

India's hydroelectric potential is estimated to be 84,000 megawatts (MW). With approximately 70 per cent of that yet to be developed, hydropower has come to be increasingly seen as an attractive solution to the country's chronic energy problems. Some of the most promising sites for hydroelectric dams are located in the north-eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, where the Brahmaputra is fed by rivers flowing out of the Himalayas and southern China. It was recently reported that India's

government is pushing for 157 hydropower schemes with an installed capacity of 57,672MW in the northeast region. Bangladesh, located at the lower end of the Brahmaputra, is understandably worried about the social and environmental impacts of the planned dams.

With dissatisfaction over the transboundary impacts of dams set to rise, there appears to be a need for a platform for dialogue. However, South Asia does not as yet have any formal multilateral institution similar to the Mekong River Commission; it lacks an institution that is focused exclusively on transboundary water management, and that could help defuse tensions. In the absence of such a mechanism, India and Bangladesh would have to continue to rely on bilateral negotiations to resolve issues and develop cooperative initiatives, even though such efforts are sometimes undermined by power asymmetries between the two countries.



## China

China – as part of its plans to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and diversify its energy sources – intends to build a significant number of dams on the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra and the Mekong. It is estimated that the installed capacity of China's hydroelectric dams would increase from 213,000MW in 2010 to 430,000MW by 2020.

Quite a few of the new dams will be on the Yarlung-Tsangpo, which becomes the Brahmaputra once it enters India. The first project, at Zangmu, began construction in November 2010 and is expected to be operational in 2014. India has long worried about the potential negative impacts of such dams. Matters came to a head in March 2012 when a section of the Brahmaputra in the state of Arunachal Pradesh reportedly dried up. China however brushed aside India's contention that dam construction on the Yarlung-Tsangpo was responsible for the phenomenon. Its foreign ministry spokesman was quoted as saying that the projects on the Yarlung-Tsangpo have 'not affected the lower stream regions' and that China's overall utilisation of the river is 'very low'. Such comments do little to reassure India and it remains suspicious of China's activities on the Yarlung-Tsangpo.

Another major series of dams are found on the Lancang River, which flows into the Mekong. Five mega-dams – in Tibet and Qinghai – have been completed along that river. The largest among them, the Nuozhadu hydroelectric station, started operation in September

2012. A further eight projects are underway, and several more are in the planning stages.

There have been reports of impacts such as declining fisheries and changing water levels in downstream areas. The evidence is as yet inconclusive, but already lower riparian countries have expressed concerns, suggesting the need for platforms for dialogue and cooperation among affected countries. While China does not have formal agreements of any kind with the Mekong countries, it has engaged with them on water issues, possibly because it shares a certain level of trade and cultural ties with them. China became a dialogue partner of the Mekong River Commission in 1996, and it has signed an agreement with the Commission to provide hydrological information on the Lancang/Mekong River as well as water level data during the flood season.

China has also participated in the Asian Development Bank's Greater Mekong Subregion programme and ASEAN's Mekong Basin development programme. These programmes focus on regional economic development such as power development and transfers, and regional infrastructure network development including a regional highway and the opening up of the Mekong River to big commercial ships. While all these are encouraging, there is a need for even greater levels of cooperation, particularly with the prospect of more dams becoming operational over the next years.

## Prospects for 2013

The controversies over the Xayaburi dam has, as has been noted, led to doubts over the effectiveness of the Mekong River Commission. The Xayaburi dam issue did, however, have at least one positive outcome: countries along the Mekong became more aware of the need to better understand the connections between food, water and energy, and how those relationships shape development, economic growth, livelihoods and environmental sustainability. The

convening of the Mekong Forum on Water, Food and Energy in 2011 demonstrates this increasing recognition. The 2012 edition of the Forum focused on the technical and institutional innovations for sustainable hydropower development, and issues of equitable sharing of benefits from such development.

In South Asia, India's dams on the Brahmaputra and its tributaries are still at the concept stage. However,

given the critical nature of its energy situation, some of the proposals may reach an advanced planning phase by 2013. As India and Bangladesh have had a long history of cooperation on transboundary rivers, most notably on the Ganges, Teesta and Barak, the outlook is positive for the two countries to enter into dialogue aimed at conceptualising a framework for cooperation on the Brahmaputra.

China is likely to continue to strengthen and formalise its cooperation with Southeast Asian and South Asian countries on narrow areas such as sharing of hydrological data. However, the prospects of formal,

broad-based negotiations between China and its riparian neighbours remain slim. This is particularly so in the case of South Asia, where China's relations with countries such as India continue to be characterised by mistrust rooted in longstanding political and territorial disputes. Progress on cooperation on water issues between China and South Asia is also hindered by the lack of an effective mechanism – for example, a regional institution focused on joint water management – through which South Asian countries could collectively engage with China.

*Contributed by Pau Khan Khup Hangzo.*

## Urban Water Security: The Next Big Challenge

Although transboundary rivers continue to hog the limelight due to their potential to heighten tensions between states, urban water security deserves just as much attention. As of 2010, an estimated 3.5 billion people, or 50.5 per cent of the world's population, live in urban areas. By 2050, this will increase to 67 per cent. Such growth puts significant strain on urban water resources, particularly in the fast-growing cities of Asia.

In 2012, Jakarta suffered what was reported as 'unprecedented' water scarcity due to prolonged drought. New Delhi faced severe water shortages after the neighbouring state of Haryana reduced the amount of water it was supplying to the city. Haryana took that step as water demand within the state itself had increased. Compounding these water issues were factors such as growing demand in both domestic and non-domestic sectors, and poor management and inadequate infrastructure that led to water losses in distribution networks as a result of leakage and pilferage. The continued reliance of these cities on traditional sources of water such as rivers and groundwater – when rivers are highly vulnerable to seasonal drought and groundwater is fast depleting – was another contributory factor.

The cities of developing Asia thus have an urgent need to find solutions to their water challenges, and the experience of Singapore in water diversification and management could provide some useful lessons. In 1965, Singapore's water situation was critical: it had to import 80 per cent of its water requirements from Malaysia. Today, imported water makes up just 40 per cent of its water supply. This remarkable turnaround can be attributed to Singapore's success with alternative water technologies. Treated wastewater, named NEWater, now meets 30 per cent of its total freshwater demand. Desalinated sea water accounts for another 10 per cent. By 2060, these two water sources are projected to meet 80 per cent of Singapore's total freshwater needs.

Besides supply-side measures, demand management is also an integral part of Singapore's water management strategy. Demand-side measures include water conservation, water pricing and public education. Singapore's experience demonstrates that cities can resolve their water issues through diversification and a determined pursuit of an integrated approach that addresses both supply and demand as well as takes advantage of water technologies.

# Activities and Publications 2012

The RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies continues to lead research in the areas of (1) internal and cross-border conflict; (2) climate change, environmental security and natural disasters; (3) energy and human security; (4) food security; and (5) health and human security.

During the year, the Centre focused research efforts on projects funded by the MacArthur Foundation and the Australian Responsibility to Protect Fund. Efforts were also channelled to research on food security, which is supported by the National Security Coordination Centre (NSCC) Singapore, and to managing the outputs from the Ford Foundation-funded NTS-Asia 2011 Research Fellowship. Research from these projects were published externally as well as through the Centre's publications – *NTS Bulletin*, *NTS Alert*, *NTS Insight*, *NTS Perspectives*, *NTS Policy Brief*, *NTS Working Paper*

*Series*, *Asia Security Initiative Working Paper Series*, *NTS-Asia Research Paper Series*, NTS conference reports and the *NTS Blog Series*. These continue to be well-received in academic and policy circles.

The Centre also conducted 14 conferences and seminars in 2012. It initiated the region's first cross-sectoral dialogue on food wastage with an Expert Working Group Meeting on Food Wastage in Southeast Asia, held on 23–24 August 2012. Another first was the convening of an Expert Working Group Meeting on prospects for an Asian Rice Futures Market in March 2012. The Centre was also honoured to have organised an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture by UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres on 'Climate Change: Why We Need a Multilateral Solution?' on 18 October 2012.

## PUBLICATIONS

### BOOKS

Human Security and Climate Change in Southeast Asia: Managing Risk and Resilience  
*Lorraine Elliott and Mely Caballero-Anthony (eds)*  
Routledge, 2012

Nuclear Power and Energy Security in Asia  
*Rajesh Basrur and Koh Swee Lean Collin (eds)*  
Routledge, 2012

Energy and Non-Traditional Security (NTS) in Asia  
*Mely Caballero-Anthony, Youngho Chang and Nur Azha Putra (eds)*  
Springer, 2012

Rethinking Energy Security in Asia: A Non-Traditional View of Human Security  
*Mely Caballero-Anthony, Youngho Chang and Nur Azha Putra (eds)*  
Springer, 2012

Climate Change, Migration and Human Security in Southeast Asia  
*Lorraine Elliott (ed)*  
RSIS Monograph, 2012

### NTS BULLETIN: VIEWPOINT

India's Food Security Bill: A waste or win for the hungry?  
*Sally Trethewie*

Fights over land rights in Indonesia  
*Sofiah Jamil*

Myanmar's national reconciliation process: A positive for the region?  
*Lina Gong*

Enhancing GCC-ASEAN relations via non-traditional security  
*Sofiah Jamil*

NIMBY becoming the rule post-Fukushima?  
*Sofiah Jamil*

The G8 food security alliance: Passing big bucks or 'the' buck?  
*Sally Trethewie*

Managing water: From technological advances to political solutions  
*Pau Khan Khup Hangzo*

US drought another wake-up call for global resolve on food price stability  
*Sally Trethewie*

Disaster preparedness: Still lacking in ASEAN?  
*Gianna Gayle Amul*

Creating ripples with 'water diplomacy'  
*Pau Khan Khup Hangzo*

Nuclear and safety: Can the two ever meet?  
*Lina Gong*

## NTS ALERT

ENGOS' bitter pill: Adapting to incremental climate (governance) change  
*Sofiah Jamil*

Politics and distrust in the rice trade: Implications of the shift towards self-sufficiency in the Philippines and Indonesia  
*Sally Trethewie*

Regional implications of national reconciliation in Myanmar  
*Lina Gong*

Trafficking in persons: Singapore's evolving responses  
*Pau Khan Khup Hangzo and Alistair D.B. Cook*

Back to the future: Is Rio+20 a 1992 redux or is there cause for optimism?  
*J. Jackson Ewing*

Governance – Defusing or fuelling land disputes in China?  
*Lina Gong*

Environmental change and ripples for water security in Southern Asia  
*Dhanasree Jayaram*

Peace pipeline to pipe dream and back: How the TAPI could change South Asian regionalism  
*Tarun Gopalakrishnan*

Traditional security as a source of non-traditional insecurities – The case of Okinawa  
*Lina Gong*

Transboundary haze in Southeast Asia: Challenges and pathways forward  
*J. Jackson Ewing and Elizabeth McRae*

The Green Climate Fund: An opportunity to rationalise climate finance?  
*Gianna Gayle Amul*

## NTS INSIGHT

From Kyoto to Durban: The fits and starts of global climate change negotiations  
*J. Jackson Ewing*

The Domestic Workers Convention 2011: Implications for migrant domestic workers in Southeast Asia  
*Pau Khan Khup Hangzo and Alistair D.B. Cook*

Rio+20 Incorporated? Assessing diplomatic outcomes and private sector actions on sustainable development  
*J. Jackson Ewing and Tarun Gopalakrishnan*

Transboundary rivers in the Hindu Kush-Himalaya (HKH) region: Beyond the 'water as weapon' rhetoric  
*Pau Khan Khup Hangzo*

From water insecurity to niche water diplomacy: The Singapore experience  
*Mely Caballero-Anthony and Pau Khan Khup Hangzo*

## NTS PERSPECTIVES

Roadmap for the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) in Asia: Personalities, institutions and processes  
*Alistair D.B. Cook*

## NTS POLICY BRIEF

In search of food security: Addressing opacity and price volatility in ASEAN's rice sector  
*Sally Trethewie*

Would a Southeast Asian rice futures market be feasible, and what of food security?  
*Sally Trethewie*

Tackling urban and rural food wastage in Southeast Asia: Issues and interventions  
*Paul Teng and Sally Trethewie*

## NTS CONFERENCE REPORT

MacArthur Asia Security Initiative Dissemination Meeting on Non-Traditional Security (NTS) (21–22 November 2011)

Expert Working Group Meeting on an Asian Rice Futures Market (22–23 March 2012)

Policy Roundtable on Asian Non-Traditional Security (30–31 July 2012)

## ASI WORKING PAPER

Climate change and migration in Southeast Asia: Responding to a new human security challenge  
*Lorraine Elliott*

Security sector governance (SSG) and conflict management in Indonesia: The Aceh case  
*Rizal Sukma*

## NTS-ASIA RESEARCH PAPER

Dams, power and security in the Mekong: A non-traditional security assessment of hydro-development in the Mekong River Basin  
*Christopher G. Baker*

Burmese refugee women and the gendered politics of exile, reconstruction and human rights  
*Sheena Kumari*

The military along the security-development frontier: Implications for non-traditional security in the Philippines and Thailand  
*Aries A. Arugay*

## RSIS COMMENTARIES

Food security: Cities as part of the solution and not the problem  
*Paul Teng*

India's Food Security Bill: A waste or win for the hungry?  
*Sally Trethewie*

Reducing Indonesia's health risks: Filtering a smoke-free ASEAN?  
*Gianna Gayle Amul*

The Rio+20 summit and ASEAN: Towards a green economy  
*Paul Teng*

## AVAILABLE ONLINE



All publications listed here are available online. Do visit our searchable database at:

<http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nts/resources.asp>

## EVENTS

### **Official Launch of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership**

20 January 2012, Jakarta

### **Expert Working Group Meeting on an Asian Rice Futures Market**

22–23 March 2012, Singapore

### **Seminar on 'Lessons from Disaster – Risk Management and the Compound Crisis Presented by the Great East Japan Earthquake'**

4 May 2012, Singapore

### **Seminar on 'The Global Rice Information Gateway – Implications for Food Security'**

10 May 2012, Singapore

### **Policy Roundtable on Asian Non-Traditional Security**

30–31 July 2012, Beijing

*(In collaboration with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the Center for Non-Traditional Security and Peaceful Development at Zhejiang University)*

### **Expert Working Group Meeting on Food Wastage in Southeast Asia**

23–24 August 2012, Singapore

### **RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on 'Climate Change: Why We Need a Multilateral Solution?'**

18 October 2012, Singapore

### **Seminar on 'Peace Process in Southern Philippines: Re-assessing Prospects and Challenges?'**

19 October 2012, Singapore

### **Energy Security Seminar on 'Risk and Resilience: Securing Energy in Insecure Spaces'**

29–30 October 2012, Singapore

### **Seminar on 'Implementing the Responsibility to Protect: Challenges and Opportunities'**

2 November 2012, Singapore

### **Seminar on 'The International Politics of Disease Reporting: A Story of H5N1 Reporting in Asia'**

5 November 2012, Singapore

### **Roundtable Discussion on Managing Cross-Border Movements of People: Promoting Capacity and Response for Irregular Migration**

19–20 November 2012, Singapore

### **RSIS Seminar cum Book Launch on 'Sustainable Development and the Nexus between Energy Security and Climate Change'**

30 November 2012, Singapore

# About the RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies

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The **RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies** conducts research and produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

To fulfil this mission, the Centre aims to:

- Advance the understanding of NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific by highlighting gaps in knowledge and policy, and identifying best practices among state and non-state actors in responding to these challenges.
- Provide a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.
- Network with institutions and organisations worldwide to exchange information, insights and experiences in the area of NTS.
- Engage policymakers on the importance of NTS in guiding political responses to NTS emergencies and develop strategies to mitigate the risks to state and human security.
- Contribute to building the institutional capacity of governments, and regional and international organisations to respond to NTS challenges.

## Our Research

The key programmes at the **RSIS Centre for NTS Studies** include:

- **Internal and Cross-Border Conflict**
  - Dynamics of Internal Conflicts
  - Multi-level and Multilateral Approaches to Internal Conflict
  - Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) in Asia
  - Peacebuilding
- **Climate Change, Environmental Security and Natural Disasters**
  - Mitigation and Adaptation Policy Studies
  - The Politics and Diplomacy of Climate Change
- **Energy and Human Security**
  - Stability of Energy Markets
  - Energy Sustainability
  - Nuclear Energy and Security
  - Security and Safety of Energy Infrastructure
- **Food Security**
  - Regional Cooperation
  - Food Security Indicators
  - Food Production and Human Security
- **Health and Human Security**
  - Health and Human Security
  - Global Health Governance
  - Pandemic Preparedness and Global Response Networks

## Our Output

### Policy Relevant Publications

The **RSIS Centre for NTS Studies** produces a range of output such as research reports, books, monographs, policy briefs and conference proceedings.

### Training

Based in RSIS, which has an excellent record of post-graduate teaching, an international faculty, and an extensive network of policy institutes worldwide, the Centre is well-placed to develop robust research capabilities, conduct training courses and facilitate advanced education on NTS. These are aimed at, but not limited to, academics, analysts, policymakers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

### Networking and Outreach

The Centre serves as a networking hub for researchers, policy analysts, policymakers, NGOs and media from across Asia and farther afield interested in NTS issues and challenges.

The Centre is the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012–2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009–2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific. It is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia).

More information on our Centre is available at [www.rsis.edu.sg/nts](http://www.rsis.edu.sg/nts)

## About the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

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The **S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)** was inaugurated on 1 January 2007 as an autonomous School within **Nanyang Technological University (NTU)**, upgraded from its previous incarnation as the **Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)**, which was established in 1996.

The School exists to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of Asia-Pacific security studies and international affairs. Its three core functions are research, graduate teaching and networking activities in the Asia-Pacific region. It produces cutting-edge security related research in Asia-Pacific Security, Conflict and Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Area Studies.

The School's activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia-Pacific and their implications for Singapore.

For more information about RSIS, please visit [www.rsis.edu.sg](http://www.rsis.edu.sg).



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