

Statement by Ms. Gwi-Yeop Son
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at

The Launch of the MDG Carbon Facility

28 September 2007, 09.00-12.00 hrs.

Rajdamnoen Hall, Royal Princess Larnluang Hotel

Distinguished Delegates,

Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to speak at the launch of the MDG Carbon Facility in Thailand, in partnership with the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning.

Climate change is one of the most important issues facing the global community. It poses a serious challenge to countries around the world, no matter what their stage of development. The effects, however, will be felt most strongly by poor people in developing countries who rely on the natural environment for their livelihoods.

As a development agency, UNDP is particularly concerned with the impact of the environment on poverty reduction and the ability of countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs, as you probably know, are eight goals that respond to basic human development challenges, which countries around the world have agreed to try to reach by 2015.

In Thailand, UNDP works closely with the government as well as our civil society and private sector partners, to not only reach the MDGs, but to go beyond them, and to help Thailand meet the challenges it faces as a result of globalization and rapid development.

One of the most complex of these challenges, of course, is climate change, which threatens to have a major impact on Thailand, especially its flood-prone coastal areas and the low-lying central region, which is also the most fertile area of the country. Through the support of the Global Environment Facility, UNDP is already

involved in five climate mitigation projects in Thailand worth approximately US\$ 14 million.

The launch of the MDG Carbon Facility in Thailand will allow the Thai private sector and Thai entrepreneurs to play a direct role in this important work. Conservation technologies and alternative energy are now some of the highest-profile areas of “green business” around the world. Through the Carbon Facility, both private enterprises and public institutions can access resources to invest in technologies that cut carbon emissions.

The global carbon market has grown rapidly, through such instruments as the Clean Development Mechanism that was created as part of the Kyoto Protocol. However, international support for investment in this area has so far been unevenly distributed. UNDP’s MDG Carbon Facility Initiative was set up to broaden access to carbon financing, while promoting emission reduction projects which contribute to the achievement of the MDGs.

Such projects could include reforestation, development of renewable energy such as solar or biomass, or implementation of energy-efficient technologies. In Thailand, these projects will not only improve the overall environment, they also pay a “development dividend” in terms of contribution to the MDGs. At the same time, rather than providing grants, the programme will offer opportunities for Thai entrepreneurs to access financial instruments and to open new channels to the carbon market.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning; especially for the kind support of Secretary General Kasemsan in providing us with advice on how the Clean Development Mechanism has been developed in Thailand and on which sectors we should focus on first.

The launch today marks the commencement of a new facet of UNDP’s work in Thailand. We look forward to working with many new partners on this important challenge, which will have such a great impact on people in Thailand as well as around the world.

Thank you.