

3rd Science Film Festival addresses Climate Change Issues

Cambodia is celebrating the 3rd Science Film Festival 2011 spotlighting on climate change issues so as to encourage youngsters to think of scientific innovations to help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The theme of this year's festival is 'forests' which reflects the designation by the UN of the year 2011 as the year of the Forest, while Protecting Nature, Motivating Young People, Science for a Better Life, which were encrypted as a slogan in Cambodia.

15 movies selected from four countries (12 European movies and three Asian's) addressing ecology systems and biodiversity are being showcased from 15-31 November, 2011 in 11 provinces-cities including Battambang, Ratanakiri, Pursat, Kompong Chhnang, Siem Reap, Otdor Meanchey, Kompong Thom, Kompong Cham, Sihanouk Ville, Svay Rieng, and then Phnom Penh, said Soum Kalyan, Youth Focal Point, Khmer Youth For Social De-

velopment (KYSD), organizer of the festival this year.

"As in previous years, the festival is primarily aimed at children and teenagers; this project is to awaken young people whose interest in science may be incentivized and to offer them new avenues into the exploration of scientific topics," said H.E. Dr. Mok Mareth, Minister of Environment at the film opening ceremony on November 15, adding that, "The government has put a strong focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation such as the carbon emission policy and climate change adaptation policy."

Lately at the 19th ASEAN Summit, Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen appealed for the immediate establishment of the ASEAN climate change mechanism, while the region as a whole is hurting from more unpredictable natural hazards, especially floods.

The 3rd Science film Festival celebrated in Cambodia this year is an adjunct to the 6th International Science Film Festival hosting in many coun-

tries (from October to November annually since 2005), and the movies for this year's festival are produced from Europe and Asia that are on screen and translated into languages of all the attending nations of the festival, said Horst Triller, First Secretary and deputy Head of Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany in Cambodia.

"Children and students are the target audiences, hopefully bringing them a better awareness on how science could help improve life while the world is suffering from climate change," Triller added.

"In Cambodia, proper forest management can contribute to reducing poverty and helping the government to achieve one of the main Cambodia Millennium Development Goals, which is to maintain 60 percent forest cover," Triller believed.

This festival was launched under the scientific cooperation between France and Cambodia, and it reflects daily concerning topics of students of the Institute of Technology of Cambodia or for

Cambodia-France research framework of Pastier Institute, according to Dominique Mas, First Counselor of France Embassy.

Amid the increasing impact of climate change and the loss of biodiversity, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2011 as the International year of Forests to raise awareness on sustainable forest management. This topic is of particular relevance in Cambodia, whose forest cover is currently estimated to be at 57 percent, which is among the highest in the region.

Since 2010, the science film festival has been held in six ASEAN countries. Besides Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam also hosts this festival. This has been made possible through the dedication, organizational skills and hard work of many international and national partners, who share the conviction that the issues facing our world in the future can be addressed if the future generations have access to necessary information and education. *(By Tim Vutha)*