

NTS Bulletin July 2013

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NTS VIEWPOINT

Alternative opportunities to cut through the haze

By Sofiah Jamil

The intensity of the recent haze came as a shock to many in Singapore, as the pollutant standards index (PSI) went beyond the level considered hazardous. The economic and health impacts from this episode could turn out to be the most acute ever seen. Poor visibility impeded trade and tourism, and the productivity of workers declined in tandem with rising health concerns. Outdoor businesses such as cafes also experienced reduced economic activity.

The haze in 1997–1998 was said to have cost Singapore approximately USD300 million, and the whole of Southeast Asia USD9 billion. The economic losses for Singapore could be even greater this year, particularly with the potential for the haze to recur during major events such as the Formula One Grand Prix in September.

Despite the haze's adverse effects, there are perhaps two positive developments. The first is that Singaporeans, who are normally accustomed to a disaster-free environment, gained a better understanding of their country's vulnerability to environmental disasters. While some have resorted to being social media 'keyboard warriors' with their incessant criticism of the lack of action by governments to address the issue, others have taken the opportunity to raise awareness of the socioeconomic, political and cultural challenges surrounding the haze, bringing to the fore problems that have existed for the past 30 years.

Secondly, the incident has opened up avenues for Singaporeans to formulate solutions to fill in the gaps left by government policies. Aside from solutions that focus on bilateral or trilateral efforts between Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia at the governmental level, there is the potential to explore solutions through direct people-to-people interaction.

Singapore's existing skills in technical capacity building and humanitarian efforts can be a stepping stone to this end. Singapore has a growing research and development sector, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Mercy Relief and Lien Aid are active in rendering on-the-ground assistance to other Southeast Asian countries.

The strengths of these stakeholders in combination with financial support from the private sector or foundations could be harnessed to provide new and affordable technologies or improve forestry management to the benefit of poor communities, who are both the victims and the deemed culprits of the forest fires in Sumatra.

That said however, building trust with local communities is an involved and time-consuming process. There must, for example, be efforts to assess the long-term effectiveness of technical capacity building programmes, which conventionally would not be included in short-term project funding. Moreover, there is a need to be aware of the different needs and expectations of local communities, NGOs and governments. In this regard, becoming well-versed on how local communities operate and interact with one another is essential.

The haze is a long-term problem that requires multi-pronged approaches. Heightening the level of people-to-people contact across borders is not only a way of facilitating efforts to address the haze, but could help increase the level of understanding and inter-community trust and bonds, which could in turn be crucial in alleviating tensions that may occur between countries in the future.

Sofiah Jamil is Adjunct Research Associate with the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) and a PhD candidate at the Australian National University.

Additional Info:

- “Putting a dollar value on haze” can help Singapore’, *The Straits Times*, 24 June 2013.
- ‘Southeast Asia haze crisis eases as rain douses fires’, *Channel NewsAsia*, 26 June 2013.
- ‘Foreign ministers of Singapore, Malaysia & Indonesia meet in Brunei over haze’, *Channel NewsAsia*, 29 June 2013.
- Sembiring, Margareth, ‘The intricate conundrum of Indonesia-originated haze’, *IPA Voices*, 2 July 2013.
- Ismail, Saifulbahri, ‘Lessons learnt from recent haze episode’, *Channel NewsAsia*, 7 July 2013.

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CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- ‘Java residents protest iron mine’, *IRIN*, 18 April 2013.
- Thin, Lei Win, ‘Private sector and disaster risk reduction: Bedfellows after all?’, *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, 7 June 2013.
- Muryanto, Bambang and Slamet Susanto, ‘Experts meet to promote disaster risk reduction’, *The Jakarta Post*, 14 June 2013.
- Thakur, Pradeep, ‘Many PPP projects under disaster risk shadow: UN’, *The Times of India*, 24 June 2013.
- ‘Bolstering disaster risk reduction in Timor-Leste’, *IRIN*, 25 June 2013.
- ‘Australia’s “practical” experience can help region reduce disaster risk: UN’, *ABC Radio Australia*, 27 June 2013.
- Gunawan, Apriadi, ‘Isolated Aceh earthquake victims still wait for assistance’, *The Jakarta Post*, 6 July 2013.

Selected Publications

- Macqueen, Duncan, 2013, ‘Landscapes for public goods: Multifunctional mosaics are fairer by far’, IIED Briefing, June.

This paper makes the case for ‘multifunctional mosaics’ of smallholder forest-farm enterprises that offer both local and distant public goods, noting that such an approach could potentially ensure that the various publics receive a share of all public goods. Looking at the example of the international Forest Connect alliance, smallholders generally favour multi-functional mosaics because they balance long- and short-term risks and returns.

- Sierra, Katherine, Timmons Roberts, Michele de Nevers et al., 2013, *First steps toward a quality of climate finance scorecard (QUODA-CF): Creating a comparative index to assess international climate finance contributions*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution and Center for Global Development.

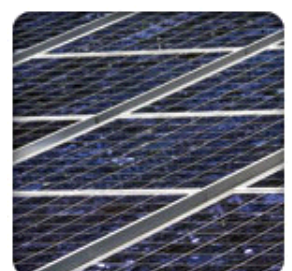
This report seeks to advance the development of common definitions and metrics to better understand the quality of climate finance. The availability of comparisons of best practices across funding institutions in the climate sector could encourage performance benchmarking, foster learning across institutions and drive improvements when incorporated in the internal evaluation protocols of those institutions.

Events & Announcements

- ‘Job vacancy: International Land Coalition (ILC) Asia Regional Facilitator’, Deadline: 20 July 2013.
- ‘International Symposium on Sustainable Cities: Empowering Local Governments through Capacity Building’, 26–28 September 2013, Incheon, South Korea.
- ‘Fourth ASEAN Heritage Parks Conference’, 1–4 October 2013, Cagayan de Oro, Philippines.

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ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- ‘Infographic: Sustainable energy for all – What will it take?’, *World Bank*, 28 May 2013.
- ‘Energy sector critical to Myanmar’s transformation – Report’, *Asian Development Bank (ADB)*, 6 June 2013.
- ‘US oil output soaring on shale boom’, *Channel NewsAsia*, 13 June 2013.
- Siahaan, Tito Summa, ‘Indonesia coal, oil may be depleted in 10 years’, *Jakarta Globe*, 14 June 2013.
- Brennan, Elliot and Silvia Pastorelli, ‘India’s shale gas boom: Dream or reality?’, *The Diplomat*, 18 June 2013.

- Wulandari, Fitri, 'Indonesia allocates \$302 million to back geothermal exploration', *Jakarta Globe*, 18 June 2013.
- Siahaan, Tito Summa, 'Shale gas still a distant ambition for Indonesia', *Jakarta Globe*, 20 June 2013.
- 'Renewable energy use gaining worldwide: IEA', *Channel NewsAsia*, 26 June 2013.
- Waterman, Toni, 'World energy system adapting to changing global dynamics: Report', *Channel NewsAsia*, 26 June 2013.
- Azwar, Amahl S., 'RI's geothermal dream may never be a reality', *The Jakarta Post*, 1 July 2013.

Selected Publications

- Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2013, *Same energy, more power: Accelerating energy efficiency in Asia*, Manila.

This report argues that energy efficiency is the most cost-competitive means of providing energy service in Asia. As such, the ADB has made significant investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy development through the Clean Energy Program. It also supports regional and country-specific thematic energy-efficiency programmes, utility-sponsored performance-based energy-efficiency resource programmes and initiatives aimed at raising energy-efficiency standards.

- Asia Sustainable and Alternative Energy Program (ASTAE), 2013, *Indonesia: Toward universal access to clean cooking*, Washington, DC: World Bank.

According to this report, 40 per cent of Indonesian households rely on traditional biomass fuels. Health hazards arising from the use of traditional stoves necessitate a shift to clean cookstoves. To facilitate this, supply chain players would have to be equipped with knowledge about better stove models and their benefits. A large-scale public health campaign would also be needed to encourage higher demand for clean stoves.

Events & Announcements

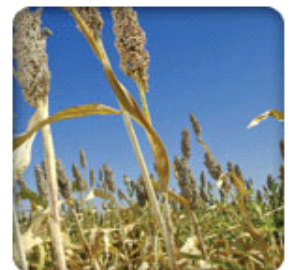
- 'Renewable Energy Storage Symposium', 13–14 August 2013, Boston, MA, USA.
- 'Solar Energy for World Peace', 17–19 August 2013, Istanbul, Turkey.

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FOOD SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- 'Smallholder farmers key to lifting over one billion people out of poverty', *UN Environment Programme (UNEP)*, 4 June 2013.
- Hookway, James and Sameer Mohindru, 'Thailand's credibility risks beating over rice dispute', *The Wall Street Journal*, 7 June 2013.
- Renton, Alex, 'How lack of food security is failing a starving world', *The Observer*, 8 June 2013.
- 'Timor-Leste farmers need support', *IRIN*, 10 June 2013.
- 'Rice research investment delivers sixfold return', *International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)*, 11 June 2013.
- 'India considers special parliament session on food security bill', *BBC*, 13 June 2013.
- 'Hunger about more than food production, FAO conference hears', *Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)*, 15 June 2013.
- Harvey, Fiona, 'Growth in crop yields inadequate to feed the world by 2050 – Research', *Guardian*, 20 June 2013.
- 'Laos farmers struggle with erratic weather', *IRIN*, 20 June 2013.
- Sabato, Giovanni, 'Project aims to get firms' seed tech to smallholders', *SciDev.Net*, 20 June 2013.
- Sipahutar, Tassia, 'Beef self-sufficiency unlikely', *The Jakarta Post*, 26 June 2013.



Selected Publications

- Smith, Pete, 2013, 'Delivering food security without increasing pressure on land', *Global Food Security*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 18–23.

This article looks at the challenge of feeding the world's population of 9 to 10 billion people by 2050. The author examines the concept of 'sustainable intensification' which pertains to the production of safe and nutritious food while maintaining the balance of the ecosystem.

- Huang, Jikun, Xiaobing Wang and Scott Rozelle, 2013, 'The subsidization of farming households in China's agriculture', *Food Policy*, Vol. 41, pp. 124–32.

The authors examine the historic turnaround in the policy of the Chinese government towards its farming households. Specifically, they

look at the effects of grain, input, seed and machinery subsidy programmes as well as the evolving dynamics between the state and the farmers.

Events & Announcements

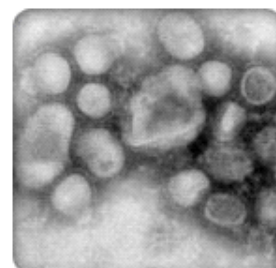
- 'First International Conference on Global Food Security', 29 September – 2 October 2013, Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands.

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HEALTH SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- 'MIT researchers study pandemic potential of H5N1 & H7N9 virus', *Asian Scientist*, 17 June 2013.
- 'Growing HIV/AIDS awareness in Indonesia's Papua region', *IRIN*, 18 June 2013.
- 'Vital software simulates and provides critical data to public health policy makers', *Science World Report*, 20 June 2013.
- 'Space-age technology to reduce maternal deaths', *IRIN*, 21 June 2013.
- 'Public health officials agree on priority actions to control MERS-CoV', *Xinhua*, 22 June 2013.
- 'Scientists warn against complacency on deadly H7N9 bird flu', *Reuters*, 25 June 2013.
- I Made Sentana, 'Indonesia's anti-tobacco message lost in all the smoke', *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 June 2013.
- Grady, Denise, 'Solving a viral mystery: Experts scramble to trace the emergence of MERS', *The New York Times*, 1 July 2013.
- 'UN urges Asia to ditch punitive laws to fight AIDS', *AP*, 1 July 2013.



Selected Publications

- Kutzin, Joseph, 2013, 'Health financing for universal coverage and health system performance: Concepts and implications for policy', *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, June.

This article defines how health system goals can be met through universal health coverage (UHC) and how health financing reforms can influence such objectives. It looks at reforms in collection, pooling, purchasing and benefit design to improve specific and measurable objectives at the level of the entire population.

- Balabanova, Dina, Anne Mills, Lesong Conteh et al., 2013, 'Good health at low cost 25 years on: Lessons for the future of health systems strengthening', *The Lancet*, Vol. 381, No. 9883, pp. 2118–33.

Using multi-year comparative case studies, the authors look at how and why countries achieved improvements in health with relatively few resources. Their analysis shows that both health and non-health system factors defined low-cost but well-functioning health systems. Non-health system factors included good governance and political commitment, effective bureaucracies and institutions, as well as innovation and resilience in the health system.

Events & Announcements

- 'World Hepatitis Day', 28 July 2013.
- '27th International Population Conference', 26–31 August 2013, Busan, South Korea.

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INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT

News & Commentaries

- Ahmad, Reaz, 'Hunger halved well before MDG time: UN to recognise Bangladesh's feat', *The Daily Star*, 14 June 2013.
- 'The Philippines: Dismantling rebel groups', *International Crisis Group*, 19 June 2013.
- 'UN spotlights plight of refugees as number of globally displaced hits 18-year high', *UN News Centre*, 20 June 2013.
- Zhao, Yanrong, 'UN chief hails China's peacekeepers', *China Daily*, 20 June 2013.
- Buckley, Chris, '27 die in rioting in western China', *The New York Times*, 26 June 2013.
- Fuller, Thomas, 'Myanmar's Muslim minority confronts fear and mistrust', *The New York Times*, 2 July 2013.
- MacLean, Dana, 'Analysis: Myanmar's Rakhine state – Where aid can do harm', *IRIN*, 3 July 2013.



- Siegel, Matt, 'Australian premier seeks to slow tide of refugees', *The New York Times*, 3 July 2013.

Selected Publications

- Gong, Lina, 2013, 'Transitional justice in South and Southeast Asia: Integrating judicial and non-judicial measures', *NTS Insight*, No. IN13-04, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.

This article examines the transitional justice processes in Aceh, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Timor-Leste. It identifies three factors key to effective efforts to redress legacies of past gross violations of human rights – the capacity and political will of the government concerned, participation of local communities and civil society, and international involvement.

- Albuja, Sebastian, Emilie Arnaud, Fran Beytrison et al., 2013, *Global overview 2012: People internally displaced by conflict and violence*, Geneva: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Norwegian Refugee Council.

This report provides up-to-date information on conflict-induced internal displacement in different regions of the world. It reviews the efforts taken by humanitarian actors to respond to large-scale humanitarian crises in 2012 and seeks durable solutions for the crises.

Events & Announcements

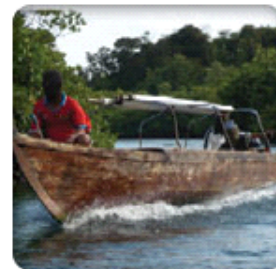
- 'Call for abstract: International Humanitarian Conference 2013', Deadline: 31 July 2013.
- 'Call for papers: Human Security: Humanitarian Perspectives and Responses Conference', Deadline: 1 September 2013.

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TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

News & Commentaries

- Zhou, Laura, 'Chinese government watchdogs issue tips on detecting fake food following scandals', *South China Morning Post*, 2 June 2013.
- Goodenough, Patrick, 'Human trafficking: U.S. demotes China, Russia to bottom tier', *CNS News*, 20 June 2013.
- Willis, Andrew, 'Gold beats cocaine as Colombia rebel money maker: Police', *Bloomberg*, 22 June 2013.
- 'Singapore Inter-Agency Taskforce's official statement in response to the 2013 US State Department's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report', *Ministry of Manpower*, 24 June 2013.
- Castle, Stephen and Doreen Carvajal, 'Counterfeit food more widespread than suspected', *The New York Times*, 26 June 2013.
- 'IACAT: 118 human traffickers convicted as of June 2013', *GMA News*, 2 July 2013.
- Bachelard, Michael, 'People smuggler back in action in Indonesia', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 July 2013.
- Cota, Isabella, 'Central America's drug cartels turn their attention to trafficking people', *Guardian*, 4 July 2013.
- Roughneen, Simon, 'From black market to stock market: Changing times for money changers and tourists in Rangoon', *The Irrawaddy*, 5 July 2013.



Selected Publications

- African Development Bank (AfDB) and Global Financial Integrity (GFI), 2013, *Illicit financial flows and the problem of net resource transfers from Africa: 1980–2009*, Tunis and Washington, DC.

This report found that between 1980 and 2009, the African economies lost between USD597 billion and USD1.4 trillion in net resource transfers away from the continent. These transfers include both licit flows, such as investment, foreign aid, debt relief and remittances moving into and out of the country, and illicit flows, such as the proceeds of crime, corruption and tax evasion moving out of the continent.

- US Department of State, 2013, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2013*, Washington, DC.

This annual report ranks 187 governments on their progress in the fight against human trafficking. This year finds 30 countries on the Tier 1 list (32 in 2012); 92 countries under Tier 2 (94 in 2012); 44 countries on the Tier 2 Watch List (41 in 2012); and 21 countries under Tier 3 (17 in 2012).

- UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2013, *World Drug Report 2013*, Vienna.

This report highlights that new psychoactive substances (NPS) – the so-called legal highs – have become a growing public health

concern in recent years with significant increases globally in both supply and demand. The market for these drugs is extremely dynamic, and their increasing availability, especially over the internet, has radically changed the nature of the drug scene.

Events & Announcements

- 'Human Trafficking Conference', 10–12 October 2013, Lincoln, NE, USA.
- 'Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States', 28 August – 4 September 2014, Apia, Samoa.

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WATER SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Kotwani, Monica, 'Underground reservoirs could be S'pore's "fifth tap"', *Channel NewsAsia*, 24 May 2013.
- 'Ethiopian parliament votes to strip Egypt of rights to majority of Nile water', *Guardian*, 13 June 2013.
- 'Rivers threatened as China, Kazakhstan water pact remains elusive', *Radio Free Asia*, 24 June 2013.
- 'Researchers explore "inner space" to predict our water future', *Phys.org*, 25 June 2013.
- Trandem, Ame, 'Continued work towards the Don Sahong Dam threatens havoc for Mekong fisheries', *International Rivers*, 25 June 2013.
- Rucinski, Tracy, 'Spanish town goes green by turning sewage into clean energy', *Reuters*, 26 June 2013.
- 'Water buy-backs better for taxpayers, study finds', *ABC*, 26 June 2013.
- Butler, Kristen, "'Water chip" can desalinate seawater with electrical field', *UPI*, 1 July 2013.
- Jiao, Li, 'China gears up to tackle tainted water', *Nature*, 3 July 2013.



Selected Publications

- UN Development Programme (UNDP), 2013, *Human Development Report 2013 – The rise of the South: Human progress in a diverse world*, New York.

This report examines the profound shift in global dynamics driven by the fast-rising new powers of the developing world, and the long-term implications for human development. It identifies more than 40 countries in the developing world that have done better than expected in human development terms in recent decades, with their progress accelerating markedly over the last 10 years.

- Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2013, *Asian Water Development Outlook 2013: Measuring water security in Asia and the Pacific*, Manila.

This report surveyed 49 countries and found 37 facing serious water crises. Among the reasons for their plight are rising populations, urbanisation, lack of government investment and outdated policies and institutions. The report notes that the region needs USD59 billion in investments in water supply and USD71 billion in improved sanitation.

Events & Announcements

- 'High-level International Conference on Water Cooperation', 20–21 August 2013, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.
- 'Viridis Africa – Investment in Clean Technology', 15–16 October 2013, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 'International Conference on Climate Change, Water Resources and Disasters in Mountainous Areas', 27–29 November 2013, Kathmandu, Nepal.

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About the Centre:

The Centre for NTS Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields

of Climate Change, Food Security, Energy Security, Health Security, as well as Internal and Cross Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

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 the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts.