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The Pyeongchang Roadmap to Destruction

Simone Lovera, Global Forest Coalition,

Today is the day when the Ministers will arrive, having wasted a significant amount of CO₂, time and jetlag to join us busy biodiversity bees here in The Big Fridge. Of course they are welcome, but it is a bit unclear what these high-level people are actually going to do in Pyeongchang, except for listening to yet another select group of Friends of the Secretariat who will tell them how to conserve biodiversity. They will not make statements, which seems like a helpful innovation as 95% of us tends to fall asleep during Ministerial statements (especially when we come from another time zone...). But one should not forget how Ministerial statements at COPs can help holding Ministers accountable for biodiversity-related commitments at home. Meanwhile, the Ministers have not come to negotiate or even think about biodiversity either, as everything they could negotiate seems to have been cooked up for them by our kind Korean hosts; The Gangwon Ministerial Declaration and the Pyeongchang Roadmap have already been carefully negotiated behind closed doors by Friends of the Host Country.

Sadly, the Korean kitchen famously includes some rather cold dishes that do not exactly heat you up unless you put a lot of spice to it, and the proposed Gangwon declaration and Pyeongchang Roadmap taste a bit like Bibimbap without hot sauce in this respect. There are few things wrong with them, but they lack the spice of the great outcomes this COP will hopefully produce. These include, hopefully, a groundbreaking Plan of Action on Customary Use, a firm Gender Mainstreaming decision (which will this time hopefully even be complied with by the men in the Secretariat), and a set of Milestones for the badly needed reform of perverse incentives which forms the cornerstone of the Strategic Plan as biodiversity will not be conserved as long as most public funding supports activities and sectors that destroy it, like bioenergy, unsustainable livestock

production and fossil fuels. COP outcomes will hopefully also include an important decision on poverty eradication, a proposed methodology to finally value the indispensable contribution of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and collective action in general to biodiversity conservation, a decision to use 21st century terminology like indigenous peoples and, maybe, even a firm decision to comply with Article 20 and 21 of the Convention and provide the new ODA needed for the Strategic Plan. Yet, almost all these great achievements of hard-working negotiators have been ignored in the proposed outcomes of COP12's High Level Segment!

And then there is the question whether we would want to name such an important roadmap after a place that might become a symbol of destruction. For unless something changes radically, the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympic Games will become yet another symbol for the massive biodiversity loss triggered by major sports events. To facilitate 3 days of skiing, the Games threaten a 500 year old forest on nearby Mount Gariwang. This precious biodiversity site is already being logged for the construction of a ski slope, despite the existence of clear alternatives that fall under Olympic rules. The Pyeongchang Games also show the perversities of 'biodiversity offsets' as it has been proposed to compensate for the destruction of this site of great biological and cultural importance to the Korean people by planting a few saplings.

We strongly call upon the Korean government and other Parties to include a firm commitment in the Pyeongchang Roadmap that the 2018 Olympic Games, and sports events in general, will be organized in compliance with the zero deforestation aspiration of the Aichi Targets. Now that would at least add some spice to the Bibimbap!

India's Delegation of Two Reflects Home Reality

Ashish Kothari

One of the world's mega-biodiverse countries, and the outgoing President of the CBD Conference of Parties, has sent only two delegates to COP12. Its much smaller neighbours have sent more, in one case six times more. What ails India?

India's pitifully small (and therefore seriously overworked) delegation reflects the mood of things back home: biodiversity does not matter. In the race to rapid economic growth, GDP percentage points have become an end in themselves, disregarding the ecological unsustainability of such growth, and the fact that it makes the lives of several hundred million ecosystem-based people even more insecure. The new party in power, trying to outdo its predecessor, is further weakening laws relating to environment, land, labour and welfare, that civil society and sensitive officials have fought hard to get over the last few decades. All indications are that the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (and other environmental and human rights commitments) have been sent off with India's Mars Orbiter, to circle around that planet forever rather than come back to remind India of its responsibilities.

A number of changes have already been made, or are proposed, to laws or procedures relating to forests, wildlife, and environment:

There is active discussion to dilute the Forest Rights Act (which enables communities to overturn a colonial heritage of top-down governance and reclaim collective title), including to do away with procedures requiring community permission for using forest land for 'development' projects.

So too the Land Acquisition Act, making it easier for industry to take land away from farmers.

A report commissioned by the previous government, with strong recommendations to grant tribal (indigenous) peoples greater rights and democratic voice, has not been released or acted upon.

A brazen attempt to set up a puppet National Wildlife Board, a body that reviews proposals for mining and other projects inside protected areas, is on hold only because a citizen filed a court case against it.

A recent government report suggests that 90% of the country's coal-bearing forest lands can be mined, with only 10% important for biodiversity!

A 'High-Level Committee' has been set up, with little environmental expertise, to review 5 environmental laws within two months. Its mandate is "recommend specific amendments ... to bring (the Acts) in line with current requirements to meet objectives". What 'current requirements' and 'objectives': strengthening regulatory mechanisms, or making things easier for industrial and commercial investments from all over the world?

Field trials for several GMOs, that have been on hold for some years, may be cleared soon if the relevant ministry has its way.

All of this on top of actions by the previous government resulting in the diversion of several hundred thousand hectares of forest for 'development' purposes in the last few years, and fast-tracking of approvals for hundreds of other such projects by the current government. And corporations are being promised even faster, easier approvals for investment proposals. The Indian Prime Minister's recent tour to the US involved meetings with some of the biggest corporations, urging them to invest in India (the slogan: "Make in India"). In the face of such priorities, biodiversity and biodiversity-dependent communities will inevitably suffer. India continues to take some progressive positions in international circles, for which it has justifiably been appreciated by civil society at several COPs, but at home, its record is far short of what would be expected of a country with immense biological and cultural diversity.

Fortunately, even in the face of the neoliberal growth onslaught, there are hundreds of community-led or civil society (and some governmental) initiatives at integrating biodiversity, livelihoods, diverse knowledge systems, rights, gender, and cultures. These provide real hope.

The opinions, commentaries, and articles printed in ECO are the sole opinion of the individual authors or organizations, unless otherwise expressed.

Submissions are welcome from all civil society groups.

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Invasive alien species problem in Japan

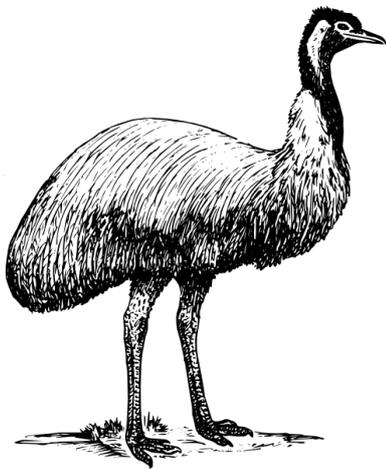
Mariko Abe, Nature Conservation Society of Japan
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Invasive alien species in Japan is a serious issue. One example is a project to reclaim 160 ha of land in the area of Henokoin northern Okinawa Island. The area is one of the most biodiversity rich coral reef ecosystem with many endangered species, where Ministry of Environment of Japan chose as one of the marine important areas of Japan. 17 million m³ of soils and rocks will be transported from several different sites in mainland Japan for the reclamation.

Okinawa is located in a remote sub-tropical zone. The transportation of such a large quantity of soil and rock across different climate and geographical zones would certainly lead to the introduction and spread of alien species. Specific concern has been raised for the possible introduction of the Argentine ant, *Linepithema humile*. It has been confirmed and has become a serious problem in the areas of some of the proposed sites from which soil and rock is to be transported.

At the same time in Tohoku, northern part of Japan, construction of giant sea walls are proceeding, whose length is over 370 km in total, requires soils. On the other hand, the large construction project for the maglev train is taking place in the central part of Japan. It is estimated that 56.8 million of soils and rocks would be expelled in near future.

These construction works are unnecessary. Once introduced, elimination of introductive alien species is difficult. Our common recognition is to be careful of 'pathway'. This Japan's attitude, moving large amount of soils and rocks for unnecessary construction works would lead to make unnecessary pathways for invasive alien species. This is hard to understand for a country who intends to attain Aichi biological diversity targets would do. To promote these constructions would lead fail in attaining Aichi target 9, 10, and 12.



Emu

It is the largest bird native to Australia and can sprint at a speed of 50 km/h. The subspecies Tasmanian emu and King Island emu became extinct after the European settlement in Australia (1788).
(Global Youth Biodiversity Network)

TODAY'S DODO AWARD NOMINEE IS.....

SWITZERLAND



Switzerland demands that the target for Resource Mobilisation is moved from 2015 to 2020 - so that it fits with Swiss budgeting rules.



SIDE EVENT!

Hall D, room 3, 18:15- 19:45

This side event will inform about the work of youth on protecting the oceans and to the Aichi targets related to that topic. Furthermore, it gives a platform to discuss how youth can contribute on marine issues.

Song for ICCA Pongso no Tao

Created by Syaman Kacivah, elder from Iratay tribe
translation by Sutej Hugu

akokay o pongso tara no tao
Our Dearest homeland of the Tao People

Pongso no Tao, our small volcanic home island, is full of bliss to be endowed with tropical rain forests, coral reefs, and the migratory fishes in the Kuroshio Current large scale marine ecosystem. Clearly, we live in the biological hotspot of Taiwan.



sínazovaz no Tao do malaod
When You are humiliated by the invaders

Since 1950s, we have gone through so many environmental, ecological, and cultural disasters, including nuclear waste dumps, replacing of primary forest to enhance economic value of logging subsidized by FAO, torn down of traditional houses to accelerate forced assimilation, cultural wipe-off policy in elementary education for children, etc. We've deeply suffered from the modernization syndromes of construction as destruction, development as catastrophe, and colonial government as community anomaly.



jícyalígan a jícya méi pacígí
Never be defeated, never be crushed

This wonderful ICCA for millenniums are under the multiple sieges of state apparatus and grabbing capitalism with comprehensive global market and consumerist society. That's our challenge to adapt and innovate our own post-traditional and post-modern way to break through the jungle of the 'civilized' malevolence. The ICCAs would be a realistic and visionary alternative to the current mainstream conservation practices and theories dominated by the governments and academics who are promoting to maintain an ineffective protected areas system besides and along with the unlimited destruction of nature at the same time!

ta zayígen kano mazngan a vowawan
We shall support You with power of our treasures

Rooted in our traditional knowledge and bound with a governance institution embedded in our original eco-calendar and cautiously observed taboo norms, choosing to be an autonomous ICCA could be the only way and last hope to achieve the restoration of this island and a

revival of this people. With their pluralistic traditional knowledge and governance institution committed to the well-being of all beings around us as a multidimensional and holistic community, they take care of and take care by the biological diversity resources and ecosystem cycles on this island for millennium. It will demand a total research paradigm shift and wholehearted conversion of ethics.

kano malikned a zízisayín
With our farming fields and fishing grounds

It is the way of our ancestors: a community sustainable livelihood supporting system with direct and deepest link with local biodiversity resources and ecosystem cycles. With an inter-species agreement between the ancestors of flying fishes and the ancestors of Tao people, we follow up our original eco-calendar to keep our seasonal exchange of migratory fishing and coral reef fishing with lowest stress to those biological resources. With permaculture farming in wet fields and rotational farming in dry fields, we keep the high agro-biodiversity in this small island with lowest impact to environment and ecosystem cycles. We have intentionally left along more than 70% of our land in a wilderness condition.

kano kalíwalawai no lag no tao na
With all our children of future generations

What will make a difference will be what are on our 'balance sheet.' While for current mainstream business management and national account systems, you just can't find the environmental cost/value, ecological cost/value, social cost/value, cultural cost/value, even humanity cost/value being ever counted into their accounting models. That's why we should need to bring up our own brave new tribal entrepreneurs for the management of commons and cooperative production and trading, tribal politicians for negotiating the tribal sovereignty with the state government.



vatokad no píntek mwa kano ngílin
Let You always bear up our life and luck as a whole

Our wellbeing and good fortune is based solely and totally on our home island. While indigenous peoples may take a leading role in seeking for the way out of this human and habitat predicament from the light of the ICCA movement.