

Dear Reader,

Happy New Year - again - we hope you had nice and relaxing Songkran holidays in spite of the current crisis. In the first quarter of 2009 the new German Climate Initiative in Thailand has resumed full speed. The discussions around climate change have shown clearly again, that economic & environmental efficiencies go very well together, in fact are dependent from one another - and that social responsibility pays off finally. This matches very well with the experiences we have gained within the SME promotion programme.

Among the many events in last months the presentation of the conclusions on "Bangkok 21" clearly stood out. Not mainly because of its subject of mass transport and living conditions in a metropolis, but more because of the approach of how to look into the possible development of a city or a country, i.e. to look into the possible futures by creating different comparable scenarios. How do SMEs in e.g. agro-industry, environmental protection etc. in Thailand will look like in 20 years? We hope that the Thai-German efforts will make small contributions to promising alternatives.

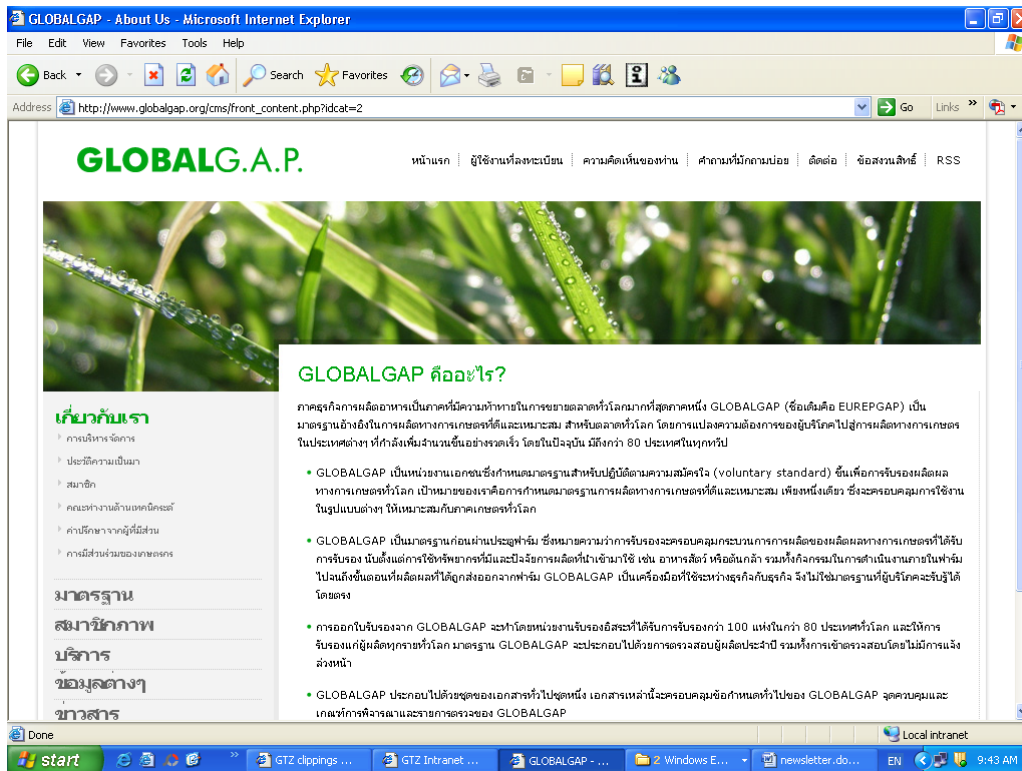
With best regards!

Your Newsletter Team

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## Thailand is the first Asian Country to Receive Approval of National Interpretation Guideline



### by GLOBALGAP

The ThaiGAP initiative arose from the inspiration of a private/public partnership to improve the quality infrastructure in Thai agricultural and food sector. Support for the initiative comes from The Board of Trade of Thailand, Thai Fruit and Vegetable Producers Association, Kasetsart University, PTB (National Metrology Institute Germany) and GTZ, the National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards (ACFS) and the Department of Agriculture (DOA).

The aim of the project is to develop food safety and quality standards for Thai agricultural products that are internationally recognized as equivalent to GLOBALGAP standards, thus enabling the country's small farmers to access higher value markets worldwide, as well as to increase farmers' income and ensure long-term sustainability in Thailand's agricultural sector.

PTB and GTZ have facilitated the project through The Board of Trade of Thailand (BOTT) and the Thai Fruit and Vegetable Producer Association (TFVPA) in providing advice and support for the benchmarking process. It examined the scope of ThaiGAP and made recommendations on its governance structure, liaised with GLOBALGAP to draw up a road map, supported the National Technical Working Group on the interpretation of GLOBALGAP for Thai conditions.

Furthermore the project worked on the draft, approval and implementation

of an "Approved Modified Checklist" which is an interim step leading to the benchmarking of ThaiGAP with the international GLOBALGAP standard.

The National Technical Working Group (NTWG) was established by 9 volunteer members from both public and private organizations i.e. ACFS, DOA, Kasetsart University, Management and System Certification Institute for ISOStandard (MASCI), the Thai Fruit and Vegetable Producer Association, and exporters. These agencies have worked together on drafting the National Interpretation Guideline (NIG) which provides guidance on the implementation of GLOBALGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria suitable for Thai conditions.

This National Interpretation Guideline (NIG) in the Thai language was approved by GLOBALGAP on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and is the first of its kind in an Asian country. The guideline is now posted in GLOBALGAP website: [http://www.globalgap.org/cms/front\\_content.php?idart=147&idcat=48&lang=1&client=1](http://www.globalgap.org/cms/front_content.php?idart=147&idcat=48&lang=1&client=1).

All certification bodies operating in Thailand must include the guideline in their certification procedure

within 3 months after publication. This guideline will facilitate GLOBALGAP implementation, since it is adapted to relevant national circumstances, legal

### Senior German Officials Visit Saa Paper and Organic Longan Project in Chiang Mai



On February 21-22, 2009, Dr. Josef Füllenbach, Head of Southeast Asia Unit, Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) visited Thailand to observe projects under the Thai-German Programme for Enterprise Competitiveness (TG-PEC) supported by BMZ. Dr. Füllenbach observed demonstrations of environmentally friendly saa paper production, cultivation of organic longan, energy-efficient longan drying process, pruning and farm management. The projects are implemented jointly by GTZ and relevant private and public agencies to provide technology transfer and improve the production process, aiming to strengthen the competitiveness of Thai SMEs.

In the saa paper industry, GTZ collaborated with the Department of Environment and Quality Promotion (DEQP) to develop environmentally friendly saa paper standards, including raw materials, dyes, chemicals and water. To minimize environmental impact, GTZ and Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research (TISTR) conducted a simple, clean technology transfer, replacing sodium hydroxide in the traditional saa bark cooking process with potassium hydroxide. This process eliminates waste water which

regulations, and makes the standard more accessible and understandable for Thai farmers.

is harmful to the environment. Regarding the longan subsector, the project promotes efficient farm management by disseminating pruning and orchard management technologies to improve product quality, particularly during off season production. The new pruning technique results in significantly higher yields of premium grades (A and AA) and reducing harvesting costs. In addition, GTZ and its partners has focused on improving product processing and quality, introducing a new drying technique and a new modified energy-efficient longan drying machine. This has improved the quality of dried whole longan, reduced production costs and increased the quantity per production lot.



Apart from visiting these projects, Dr. Füllenbach had the opportunity to meet and discuss with Mr. Chumporn Saengmanee, Deputy Governor of Chiang Mai to share viewpoints and experiences of Thai and German collaborative programmes to benefit future joint implementation on climate change mitigation and the Chiang Mai mass transit system.

### Environmental Bio-Plastics Policy Study to Promote Investment and Market Development in Thailand



The bio-plastics policy study to promote investment and market development in Thailand is one of four interventions under the project "Enhancing the Thai Programme for the Promotion of Bio-plastics", jointly implemented by the National Innovation Agency (NIA) and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ). This intervention aims to analyze global and domestic bio-plastic market and framework conditions for promoting use and production of bio-plastics in Thailand and to recommend policy instruments for decision makers. The study is in line with the goals of the national road map of bio-plastics, one of Thailand's designated "New Wave Industries" for the future.

The national road map and budget of THB 1,800 million for implementation were approved in principle by the cabinet on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. In implementing the road map, a sub-committee for the development of the bio-plastic industry, consisting of several government agencies involved in the value chain of bio-plastic industry from the upstream process to the downstream process, was set up on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 to undertake activities identified under four strategies which were designed to lead to the establishment of bio-plastic industry in Thailand. These strategies are as follows:

- 1) development of biomass raw materials feeding the bio-plastics industry (budget of THB 100 million);
- 2) acceleration and creation of bio-plastics technology (budget of THB 1,000 million);
- 3) development of industry and business innovation (budget of THB 475 million); and
- 4) development of basic infrastructure (budget of THB 225 million).

The environmental policy study on bio-plastics will serve the strategy 4.

Looking at the overall value chain of the sector, policy is considered as an essential instrument in successfully driving the industry and promoting use of bio-plastics in the country. Therefore GTZ plans to commission independent research at international and local institutes, recognized for their research excellence in the field of bio-plastics market and policy research as well as applications and end-of-life options for bio-plastics. The research will include a policy study on bio-plastics in Thailand.

The study is based upon the outcome of extensive discussions between senior officials of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Industry and German and Thai experts on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. This provided first hand information concerning the policy framework, measures, and mechanisms that will create demand for using bio-plastic products.



Also, a stakeholder workshop, attended by government agencies, the Thai Chamber of Commerce, universities, members of the Thai Bio-plastics Industry Association, the plastics industry, consumer associations, and mass media, was convened on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to obtain framework and operational guidelines for drafting a policy that can promote and support the production and use of bio-plastics and bio-based materials in the country. As a result of brainstorming at the workshop, the following issues raised by the participants will be taken into consideration when forming the environmental policy on bio-plastics:

Differentiation between specific types of bio-plastic products and how to promote them,

- Consumer attitudes, including pricing and marketing mechanisms, motivation in buying green product/demand creation,
- regulations and law enforcement,
- economic tools and instruments,
- lead government agency to draft policy,
- Government support for the upstream industry
- phasing out of conventional plastics in favour of bio-plastics.

It is expected that this study will take around 5-6 months to complete.

## GTZ and Maejo University Conducts Joint Training Course on Longan Pruning Techniques

Longan is Northern Thailand's most important economic crop. Thai longan is well-known for its quality, thus, there is a demand for Thai longan in international markets, particularly China, which is Thailand's largest export market. Due to longan's status as one of the country's top agricultural export earners, an initiative to promote certified high quality longan that meets market requirements was launched in order to add value to the produce. GTZ and Maejo University jointly implemented a programme to improve yields and fruit quality in order to strengthen competitiveness of Thai longan growers. They established a Farm Management Service (FMS) to disseminate appropriate orchard management technology (most notably, an improved pruning technique) to longan farmers. Most farmers do not



prune their trees, particularly during the flowering stage, because they expect higher yields from a higher number of flower panicles. However, research has shown that on the contrary, proper pruning will improve fruit quality because the trees are more vigorous, resulting in more efficient use of fertilizers. Moreover, pruning reduces fruit harvesting costs by 16% and the cost of support poles by 5-8%. Overall, proper pruning can reduce production costs by up to 20-40%, whilst also significantly enhancing color and fruit size. The proportion of the harvest that meets export market requirements has thus considerably increased.

The style and pruning technique developed by Maejo University's research and development team have been well accepted by farmers. However, the Maejo FMS extension service, set up with GTZ support to provide a pruning service to longan farmers, has limited staff, and its resources are insufficient to service all interested growers. Therefore, a concept was developed to train farmers in longan farm management, enabling farmers themselves to provide professional pruning services.

They can apply lessons-learned to generate additional income and develop a network of pruning service providers in the future.

In 2008, a training program for 50 farmers provided both lectures and hands-on practices. A study trip to observe longan pruning and business services was also arranged. After completion of the training, participants received certificates for being professional pruning service providers. They were able to provide services to more than 192 hectares of longan orchard.

Further training courses in Chiang Mai and Lamphun, aim to develop about 120 pruning service providers to meet the growing demand. This intervention forms part of the Business Service Development initiative, aiming to promote commercial application of technologies developed by local researchers. It has indirectly contributed to innovation in the agricultural sector, with proper planning, investment and monitoring to achieve planned objectives.

## GTZ, KMITL and SIEMENS Report Study Results at Joint Bangkok-21 Seminar



On 1 April, 2009 GTZ, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL) and SIEMENS (Thailand) Co. Ltd. jointly held the Bangkok-21 Exhibition and Seminar. The Bangkok-21 project was initiated to identify approaches to develop Bangkok into a world-class metropolis by 2050. It benchmarked Bangkok against other top cities e.g. Berlin, Paris, London, New York. H.E. General Surayud Chulanont, Privy Council and Chancellor of KMITL's Council graciously delivered the opening remarks, and was followed by H.E. Dr. Hanns Heinrich Schumacher, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Thailand. Project stakeholders both from Thailand and Germany then briefed participants on the project, and presented the study's results. Dr. Christoph Beier, GTZ

Germany's Director General for Asia/Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean regions, gave a presentation on "GTZ: Partner in Thailand's Sustainable Development" which was followed by a presentation on "Bangkok 21 Project Findings and Recommendations" by Dr. Gregor Wessels, Executive Director, ITS Consultancy Group Ltd. Assoc. On the Thai side, Prof. Dr. Suchatchawi Suwansawas, KMITL, presented the "Underground Construction for Bangkok in the Future" followed by a lecture on "Sustainable Urban Transport" by Dr. Jittichai Rudjanakanoknad, Chulalongkorn University. The seminar was a venue to share key information and know-how from the study for future application in Bangkok's development with focus on mass transport.

In parallel with the seminar, an exhibit provided relevant information and technology. An award announcement for the student contest on the topic of "Chaophraya: Lifeline of Bangkok" also took place. The contest was open to undergraduate students and graduate students alike. Their challenge was to formulate a development plan and design transport system for the vicinity of the Chao Phraya River, considering passengers' convenience and safety, with the ultimate aim of developing Bangkok into a world-class metropolis by 2050.

Bangkok-21 is a Public-Private Partnerships Project by GTZ and SIEMENS (Thailand) Co. Ltd. to improve environmental conditions in Bangkok, and position it as a strong contender for being the metropolis of the 21st century, providing better quality of life, economic and social standards for Bangkok's residents.

## 13<sup>th</sup> Eastern Chantaburi Shrimp Fair Held by Chantaburi Shrimp Farmers Group



On January 17-18, 2009, the Chantaburi Shrimp Farmers Group held the 13<sup>th</sup> Eastern Chantaburi Shrimp Fair under the theme “Approaches to Survival...Amid the Crisis of the Century”. Dr. Somying Piumsomboon, Director General of the Department of Fisheries, along with representatives from both the public and private sectors, participated in the seminar and lectures to share knowledge and experiences.

Mr. David Oberhuber, GTZ Thailand Country Director, gave a presentation on “Strengthening the Competitiveness of Thai Shrimp under the Thai-

German Programme for Enterprise Competitiveness” Interventions under the project include the promotion of organic shrimp farm to increase product value and to protect the environment, promotion of the image of Thai shrimps in European markets, shrimp pond soil treatment to reduce feed costs and increase shrimp survival rate and energy efficiency. The latter has been achieved by replacing inefficient motors with standardized modern motors. Apart from the presentations, GTZ and its partner set up an exhibition booth to demonstrate the use of efficient prime movers for aerators (motor and gear-motor), as the key to energy optimization. Results of the study showed can be reduced by 30-40%.



## Public and Private Agencies Jointly Develop Thai Organic Longan for the International Organic Market

Chiang Mai University, GTZ, the Department of Industrial Promotion, Thai-German Chamber of Commerce and the Integrated Supply Chain Management of Exotic Fruits from the ASEAN Region have jointly introduced dry organic longan and organic longan tea produced for the international market.

The Northern Organic Longan Group and Prom Kang Wan Limited Partnership participated in the BioFach 2009 international exhibition and trade show held in Nuremburg, Germany during February 19-22, 2009. BioFach is the globally recognized annual international natural food and organic trade fair. Only products certified by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) can be displayed at BioFach. In 2009, many high quality new products were introduced in order to meet the increasing needs of the global organic market. More than 47,000 visitors participated, including producers, retailers, importers and exporters. The Thai organic longan booth received an overwhelming response from international visitors, particularly China. Several Chinese importers asked for samples of organic longan tea for market trials in China.

Following the Biofach event, GTZ led Thai delegates to visit Neumarkter Lammsbräu factory to observe the production of organic beer and share knowledge on raw material management, production, quality control, and marketing of organic beer. Lessons learned can be applied to benefit the promotion and development of organic products, in terms of both production and marketing in the future.



## Roundtable meeting to discuss Biodiesel and Sustainable Palm Oil Production

More than 60 representatives from local public and private sector participated in a roundtable meeting to discuss issues on biodiesel policy, standards and technologies. The meeting was held on March 26-27, 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand, and was co-organized by GTZ and the Ministry of Energy. The event provided a platform for key players in the biodiesel community, including the Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and the palm oil industry, to discuss and formulate strategies for sustainable palm oil production and use of biodiesel.

In his welcoming remarks Mr. Prapon Wongtarue, Director of the Biofuel Division of the Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency (DEDE), Ministry of Energy, stressed the importance of gaining inputs from stakeholders and international experts to shape the direction of biodiesel planning in Thailand. Information on EU biodiesel policy and standards were presented by German experts, Dr. Jens Haupt of the Biodiesel Quality Management Working Group Association and Dr. Thomas Wilharm of

Analytics Service Co Ltd from Germany. During the meeting, biodiesel export opportunities and European standards and policies were discussed by major Thai palm oil industry and oil companies. The meeting concluded with agreements to collaborate on standards and testing between Thai and German organizations as well as Thai palm oil stakeholders. All participating organizations pledged their full support to the aims and goals of the Sustainable Palm Oil Production Project.



## Phitsanulok Municipality Welcomes DASTA to Its Community Based Solid Waste Management Programme



On February 2-3, 2009 delegates from GTZ and the Designated Area for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) conducted a field visit to Phitsanulok Municipality to learn about its approach on community-based solid

waste management. The city's system is based on the now-completed Thai-German collaborative solid waste management programme for Phitsanulok. Phitsanulok Municipality and GTZ jointly managed the landfill efficiently by employing a mechanical-biological waste treatment (MBT) system, constructing a biogas system for waste water from the municipality's abattoir, and establishing a community-based waste management (CBM) system. The programme was very well received by stakeholders, and has attracted numerous delegations from both private and public agencies who have visited Phitsanulok in order to apply lessons learned to other cities and locations around the country.

For example, the rapid recent expansion of tourism in the designated area of Koh Chang and adjacent areas in Trat Province, has resulted in a major waste

management problem on these pristine islands. Since inappropriate and inefficient waste treatment will lead to excessive greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to global warming, the Climate Protection in Tourism Project aims to develop and implement urgently-needed solutions which are required to preserve these fragile environments.

The Phitsanulok field trip is an intervention aimed at developing a common understanding between GTZ and DASTA of the importance of community-based waste management. The Phitsanulok Municipality team, led by Dr. Suthee Huntrakul and Ms Piangpen, graciously provided the briefing and introduced the discussion with Wat Nong Bua and Sra Song Hong Communities, two communities within the municipality. As a result, DASTA is planning to conduct another field trip to Phitsanulok Municipality for delegates of the local administrative offices in the Koh Chang designated clusters in Trat. GTZ will also facilitate a training programme on community-based management, focusing on waste management, to be conducted by Dr. Suthee and his team for community leaders and members of the local administrative offices in the Koh Chang designated clusters in Trat in May and June 2009.

## GTZ led Thai Delegates on a Field Trip to Munich to Participate in the Sustainable Tourism Fair

### Climate Issues in Tourism – a joint Thai-German Project

within the Framework of the Project "Distribution of Experiences with the Implementation of Climate Protection Policy in Nature-related Tourism"



Excursion to Germany  
February/ March 2009



gtz

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From 27 February to 3 March, 2009, GTZ led a group of Thai delegates comprising officials from the Designated Area for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA), Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Chief of Koh Chang Marine National Park, exports from Burapha University and the Chairperson of Koh Mak Tambon Administration Organization to participate in the ReisePavillon, the sustainable tourism fair held in Munich. GTZ headquarters organized a tourism and development forum on "Sustainable Tourism Approaches and International Cooperation" to discuss and share experience in tourist area management from different country in the fair.

Delegates from different countries presented a diverse range of approaches and activities promoting sustainable tourism and awareness of climate change. GTZ staff and DASTA officials participated in the discussion and presented the interventions of the Climate Protection in Tourism Project, under which the Thai and German governments commissioned GTZ and DASTA to jointly develop and advocate the integration of climate change issues into the tourist area

development plan. The project's pilot area is located in the Koh Chang Archipelago in Trat Province. A large number of fair visitors showed interest in the project and inquired about the possibility to get involved, both in the marketing of social and environmentally responsible tourist attractions and in capacity building in the area of tourist area management and service. By participating in the forum, GTZ and DASTA also and promote further collaboration between relevant Thai and German agencies.

Besides participating in the ReisePavillon, GTZ and the Thai delegation attended a briefing and conducted a field trip to visit tour operators and executives of natural tourist attractions in Bavaria, including TUI, a reputable tourism company with a global network. The company gives high priority to social and environmentally responsible tourism because this is increasingly important to most European tourists. Despite the economic recession, this group of clients continues to grow rapidly. TUI select certified tour operators and tourist attractions, and constantly monitor, assess and give recommendations to improve their services. Results from clients' behavioural survey indicated that tourists are most impressed with nature and



biodiversity. Hence, TUI places a high value on natural tourist attractions and companies that are committed to social and environmental responsibility. The company has received financial support from Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) to develop a project on "Business and Biodiversity", and the results of this project's implementation are to be presented at the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Japan.



The EUROPARC Foundation was established to promote sustainable tourism in national parks. The foundation focuses on engaging local communities in the development of tourism management plans, enabling them to benefit from tourism activities in national parks. Currently 58 national parks from 7 countries in the European Union have joined the Foundation. To raise the standard of the tourist area management by communities, EUOPARC experts regularly visit member national parks and work with park staff and local communities to develop marketing strategies for sustainable tourism in the area.

Alpine Pearls is a network of over 21 small environmentally friendly municipalities in the Alps. Members of Alpine Pearls have promoted several environmentally friendly tourism initiatives, including increasing the frequency of bus routes between town centres and train stations to facilitate easy access for tourists, thus helping to reduce travel costs and private car usage. Member municipalities must comply with agreed environmental standards and engage community members, tourist associations and local administrators in the process. To maintain the network's standards, the municipalities are regularly audited by both internal and external auditors.

Kings Hotel has been awarded the Euro Flower Environmentally Friendly Standard and the International Ecotourism Standard. Due to its strong commitment, the hotel has become recognized as a model green hotel. Since 2000, it has introduced and implemented state-of-the-art eco-friendly building design and management e.g. wastewater treatment and recycling system, use of renewable energy and more efficient energy use. Despite the high investment, the benefits gained have outweighed the costs - the hotel has been able to reduce its water costs by 40% (water and water

treatment cost in Munich is very expensive). Moreover, the hotel uses mainly local products, including organic produce. All the hotel's suppliers must keep traceability records on their production processes.

Altmühltal Nature Park is a nature reserve focusing on preserving the area's ecological, economic and cultural heritage harmoniously. This nature park encompasses 30 communities of 290,000 inhabitants, most of whom are environmentally friendly farmers. The park's information centre and management office in a town centre has interesting exhibits on local nature, history and culture. The park conducts programmes to promote awareness on the environment and local culture for students, children and the general public year-round. Besides park staff, key partners in park management are tourism associations in the communities. They are actively involved in the formulation of the park management plan and budget. Key tasks of park staff are to coordinate with both public and private utility service providers to ensure that the services meet the set standards, e.g. development of a water trail and a bicycle trail of about 900 km. in length, connecting the whole nature park. Moreover, the nature park is responsible for the marketing of tourism in the area, staging and maintaining exhibits and maintaining a website to provide information and reservation service for private operators of the in communities. The establishment of the nature park has clearly benefited the communities in terms of knowledge, tourism management and marketing.

Nature Park Bayerischer Wald. The Information Centre stages exhibits on the nature, culture and ecosystems of Bavaria. The exhibits are designed to be scriptless, communicating to visitors through illustrations, to overcome the language barrier for tourists from around the world. The information centre is open year-round, and was built as a model of the principles of green design, using only environmentally friendly materials and energy-efficient systems. Solar power provides lighting and water heating system for the building. When compared with buildings with a similar usable area, the information centre can save an estimated 3,000 Euro in annual heating costs (assuming fossil fuel as the energy source). But perhaps the building's most remarkable feature is the wood used in both the interior and exterior – all of it was harvested locally, from nearby sustainably-managed forests.

National Park Bayerischer Wald is Germany's first National Park, encompassing an area of 242 sq. km. Adjoining to the Šumava National Park of the Czech Republic, the forest complex is the largest in central Europe (about 900 sq. km.) Upon the expansion of the park, the local government requested the Federal Government to establish an investment fund for ecotourism promotion. A special budget was allocated for the construction of the information centre, complete with educational exhibits and modern audiovisual equipments. This national park also implements collaborative projects with other countries to promote cultural exchanges, and to strengthen the capacities of the park's own staff.

Canopy Walk Trail A walking trail developed by the private sector in an innovative community. The investment has proven to be a new tourist attraction for the community. Besides enjoying beautiful scenery, tourists are able to gain knowledge on the ecology, ornithology, geology and local culture from nature interpretation stations designed to quiz walkers, providing knowledge and entertainment at the same time.

From this field trip, the Thai delegates have gained insights into diverse models of sustainable tourist area management in the Bavaria and have expressed interest in continuing with the implementation of the joint Thai-German initiatives under the Climate Protection in Tourism Project, implemented by GTZ and DASTA, as well as other schemes.

## Thailand Ready to Lead Climate Protection in the Region?



Following are the essences of the discussions between Thai and German decision makers during a visit of a German delegation lead by Mr. Michael Müller, Parliamentary State Secretary of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) in February this year. Among the Thai side were H.E. Deputy Prime Minister Sanan Kachornprasart and H.E. Mr. Suwit Khunkitti, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) as well as representatives of other ministries and non-governmental organizations.

**International must-do:** The speed of climate change has been underestimated, i.e. the impacts will be much faster and more severe than expected. International cooperation and speeding up of counter measurements are a very urgent matter.

**Chance in the crisis:** The worldwide financial and economic crisis should be not seen as an obstacle, rather a chance for new development concepts and better ways of production and consumption - by tackling climate change problems. The greening of industries creates new jobs, especially in the fields of renewable energy and eco- and energy efficiency, promotes technological and methodological innovations, reduces production costs and helps to avoid immense aftermath costs. Climate change is an overall complex which will streamline our economies towards increasing economic, environmental and social competitiveness.

**Beyond Kyoto and climate change:** Although Germany has already fulfilled its obligation of emission reduction of the Kyoto Protocol for 2012 already in 2008, it sees further potential in the increase of use of renewable energy and higher energy and resource

efficiency. The benefits go clearly beyond the climate change issue. Germany has launched in 2008 a worldwide support program for international cooperation to reduce emissions and to develop climate change adaptation strategies. In January this year Germany has initiated the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the first international organization to focus exclusively on the promotion of renewable energy worldwide.

**Thailand to lead the region:** Thailand has been participating in the international process of fighting climate change since more than a decade. After his visit to Thailand Mr. Müller acknowledged the sincerity and strong commitment of the Thai Government to tackle climate change and environmental problems and therefore Thailand could be a leader in environmental protection in the region. It can serve as a model for the region, e.g. in climate friendly tourism, biomass/waste-to-energy, eco-efficient sufficiency economy, conservation of natural resources/ biodiversity/ carbon sinks, sustainable consumption and production, i.e. a regional hub for best practice and technology transfer.



**A matter of everyone:** Not only internationally, but also within Thailand on all levels, the issue of climate change and environment will need all to join force, as H.E. Mr. Suwit Khunkitti have been quoted in the kick-off conference of the Thai-German Climate Change Initiative: "This is not a matter of one or few ministries only, but we all, public, private as well as the communities, the people, need to create a movement throughout our country together."

Furthermore, on a side event during the visit the Thai PBS TV station has approached Mr. Müller on his opinion on the necessity of nuclear power. In his view, Germany could within the next 20-30 years cover its energy consumption without nuclear power, if it wants to, due to the large potential of energy efficiency and

renewable energy. These are the more sustainable concepts as there is no satisfactory solution yet for getting the remaining risks of nuclear power plants under control – especially the problem of the final storage of nuclear waste.

## Planning Workshops for Sustainable Palm Oil Production Project



Two planning workshops of the Sustainable Palm Oil Project were held on March 18-20, 2009 in Bangkok and on March 25-26, 2009 in Krabi. More than 50 stakeholders

participated. The workshops were jointly organized by GTZ and the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE). Stakeholders from various Ministries, as well as from the private sector, farmer organizations and representatives from local authorities participated in the workshops. The workshops aimed to create a mutual understanding between all stakeholders and plan for concrete activities in 2009.

Mr. Montol Jeamchareon, Deputy Secretary General of the Office of Agricultural Economics, opened the workshop in Bangkok and stressed the importance of this project in order to improve Thailand's palm oil industry. Both workshops planned concrete activities for 2009 and defined responsibilities. On the national level the national interpretation of the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) will be finalized by the end of the year to set a framework for RSPO sustainability certification. At the provincial levels 4 pilot mills and their surrounding smallholders will be supported to develop a showcase of sustainability certification. These are promising steps taken to achieve the project's goal ("Sustainable certified palm oil which is accepted by the European Union is available at the market") by the end of 2011.

## Around the World: Redevelopment of the Old City in Sibiu: New Car Park System

In 2004, the European Union's 25 ministers of culture designated Sibiu in Transylvania, Romania, the 2007 European Capital of Culture. An impressive achievement, particularly when you take a closer look at Sibiu's recent history. Only ten years ago, its old city was by no means in a condition to make Sibiu a contender for the capital of culture. Many buildings had moisture problems and were unstable. Inadequate repairs and reconstruction work not in keeping with the city's architectural style took their toll on the cityscape. The picturesque squares in the old city were constantly full of parked cars, and many drivers took shortcuts through the city centre's narrow streets.

On behalf of BMZ, GTZ has been supporting the city in its efforts to redevelop its old city since the end of the 1990s. For example, the project team advises residents on how they can keep their homes from deteriorating. However, there is more to redevelopment than just beautiful façades. The public space in its entirety, including streets, squares, shops and the public transport system were all part of the project.

The latest accomplishment is the car park management system that was recently introduced. GTZ worked on the concept together with the city council since 2003, with the city taking ownership of the project. The city centre was divided into various park zones based on the principle that the closer a zone is to the centre, the more expensive it is. Long-term and resident parking is now very inexpensive. In contrast, short-term parking is

more expensive and thus less attractive. Parking your car for 30 minutes in the historic city centre costs as much as it does for an entire day outside the centre.

The success of the system could be seen after only two years. The number of cars in the historic old city had dropped drastically, while there are now over 1,000 new parking spaces outside the city centre. With the parking fees, the city government has already covered half of the original costs, and in a few years the system will have paid for itself. In November 2008, the initiative was awarded the European Commission's ELTIS prize for local transport.

Of course, Sibiu's residents also benefit from the new parking system, as fewer vehicles in the city centre also means less traffic noise and exhaust pollution. Additional steps to improve local public transport should further reduce exhaust emissions and relieve the burden on residents and the environment.



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Pictures are taken by members of the programme.

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