

Terms of Reference

SAVING EARTH'S INTEGRAL LIFE SYSTEM: Can Asian-African Visions Rescue Biodiversity from the West-born Globalization?

PROBLEMATICS

The 21st century has been projected as the 'Era of Ecological Catastrophe.' The Environment group of ECOLOGY challenges this unfortunate reality by linking the four pillar notions of 55 BANDUNG 55 – **Diversity, Globalization, Asia-Africa, and Sustainability.**

The Environment group's 'Diversity' in focus is '**Biodiversity,**' meaning the number and relative abundance of distinct species in a given area/habitat including Planet Earth. Various species (plants, animals, micro-organisms, etc.), through interactions among themselves and with their abiotic surroundings, comprise numerous levels of ecosystems, among which the largest is the biosphere. Ecosystems make Earth our habitat by providing such services as oxygen to breathe, clean water to drink, soil in which to grow crops, and moderated and regulated climate patterns. Yet, **Biodiversity** is in an unprecedented status as reported lately: "*the world is now in the midst of the fastest mass extinction of living species in the 4.5-billion-year history of the planet.*" Not surprisingly, this rapid decline of the Planet's life system has led experts to warn against the rapid decline of the ecosphere **Sustainability** and dramatic suffering of the human species, among whom hundreds of millions, mostly in Africa and Asia, are projected to experience thirst, hunger, and premature deaths in the near future.

A factor central to this ecological catastrophe has been the profit-driven, multifaceted, and explosive phenomenon called '**Globalization.**' While much definitional dispute exists, scholars agree that Globalization embodies 1) spatial expansion of flows transcending nation-states and continents, 2) intensification of such inter-connections, 3) acceleration of the speed of system transformation, 4) deepening social consequences that are often unequal/unfair, etc. **Globalization** is a key explanatory variable to the fast disappearing **Biodiversity** especially through four processes called 'HIPPO': *H*abitat destruction (of forests, coral reefs), *I*nvasive species (from overseas), *P*ollution (of atmosphere, sea, land), human *P*opulation explosion, and *O*ver-harvesting (by excessive cultivation, water exploitation, hunting/fishing). Hence, the rise of **Globalization**, decline of **Biodiversity** and ecological **Sustainability**, and projected human suffering (in Asia and Africa) are all causally entangled phenomena.

While seeking updated information from 'hard science,' the Environment group also explores '**Paradigms,**' or "*overarching models of the world that shape our worldviews and guide our interpretation of how things are.*" Reportedly, over 99% of human generations survived with a holistic-and-balanced Paradigm of gatherer-hunters, who did *not* radically separate the 1) material vs. spiritual, 2) present vs. future, 3) human vs. non-human, 4) male vs. female, etc. Yet, the last millennia saw the rise of a dualistic Paradigm in which the Material, Present, Human, Male, etc., have been made in opposition to, and placed above, their counterparts. To the extent that **Globalization** emerged from the materialistic, tempo-centric, anthropocentric, and masculine aspects of the modern Western Paradigm, it may be essential to counter it.

Thus the Environment group explores beyond the material levels of **Biodiversity** and **Globalization** into the socio-political, psycho-cultural, religio-philosophical domains in search for ecological **Sustainability** and human well-being. Contributions drawn from

Africa-Asia are especially encouraged, not only because the event's subtitle reads "The Role of Africa and Asia," but because these regions are rich in Biodiversity, projected to become the major victims of its decline, and are well-qualified to provide an alternative to the prevailing Paradigm of Globalization.

SPECIAL ATTENTION

In accordance with the theme of 55 BANDUNG 55, which is "DIVERSITY IN GLOBALISED SOCIETY: The Role of Africa and Asia for a Sustainable World", special attention will be paid to diversity issues, especially cultural, economical, political and religious ones, which can be sources of well-being, but also sources of conflicts.

GENERAL RULE OF PRESENTATION

Paper is to be sent by e-mail to secretariat@bandungspirit.org by respecting the following rule of presentation.

Paper size: A4 (kwarto)

Margins: 3 cm from all the borders (top, bottom, left, right)

Interline: double space

Typography: Times New Roman, 12 points

Article size: around 2500 words

Language: English, British style, article to be checked by a competent person in language editing before submission

For the paragraph, alignment, heading, sub-heading, and other details, see the CODESRIA Guide for Authors in the attached file.

AGENDA

Date of publication: end of April 2012

Deadline of submission of the final manuscript: January 31, 2012

Deadline of submission of the abstract: December 31, 2011