

## Environmental issues gaining media prominence across Asia

*Surge in AEJA 2014 submissions; Winners picked from 150 entries across 21 countries*

**Singapore, 30 Oct 2014** – The consequences of human development on the environment are gaining more attention by news reporters and organisations, going by the number of submissions for this year's Asian Environmental Journalism Awards (AEJA). This was shared by the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) as they announced today the winners of the AEJA 2014.

"Environmental issues transcend national boundaries. Raising awareness and sharing of best practices of how communities in Asia are coping with climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, conservation of forests and animals, and other challenges will help individuals, businesses and governments understand the urgent need to come together to implement changes to improve the state of our environment. Journalists are doing just that and the AEJA serves not just to recognise them for their excellent work but also bring to the fore stories that alert, inspire and educate" said Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed, Chairman of the AEJA 2014 Judging Panel.

The SEC, organizer of the annual AEJA, received 150 submissions this year, a 78% increase from 2013. And with submissions featuring environmental news reports from 21 countries compared to 14 last year, "the depth and breadth of the stories and photos submitted for this year's AEJA are a reflection of how environmental issues are gaining greater attention in many parts of Asia, where environmental degradation is proceeding at unprecedented levels as many countries pursue economic growth. Through their stories, journalists across Asia are leading the fight to protect our environment", said Ms Gill McLaren, General Manager from Coca-Cola Singapore, which sponsored the Environmental Story of the Year.

Agreeing with Ms McLaren was Ms Esther An, Chief Sustainability Officer of City Developments Limited (CDL), which sponsored the Environmental Journalist of the Year: "The media has played a key role in shaping the world by influencing views and behaviour. Through AEJA, more journalists across Asia will create top-of-mind awareness for environmental issues and promote better understanding of the impact human activities have on the environment. I am heartened that the number of submissions to the SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the Year Award has not only gone up but the quality of entries have also improved." The SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the year saw 38 submissions in 2014, more than the 20 submissions in 2013.

To encourage more young journalists to report on the environment, the SEC Young Environmental Journalist of the Year was introduced this year, garnering 10 submissions from professionals age 18 to 27.

"We want to nurture, inspire and encourage young environmental journalists to produce high-quality coverage of environmental issues in Asia, in advancing the cause of environmental protection. This is important particularly in Singapore, where many may view issues on the environment as problems beyond our shores. It aligns with the SEC's ENVision campaign which will be launched in November where we hope to drive home the message of Care, Ownership and Responsibility to our home, community and city," said Jose Raymond, Chief Executive Officer of the SEC.

The ENVision campaign included a series of dialogues by the SEC with Singaporeans from all walks of life in the first quarter of 2014, and key findings will be a part of the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint review which is slated to be made public by the end of this year.

Individuals who made themselves heard through new media were also recognised with the SEC-Sky Creation Design Environmental Blogger of the Year, in which 17 entries were received. "Journalism is constantly evolving, and the AEJA's outreach to environmental bloggers not only ensures holistic coverage on what is happening to our environment on non-mainstream media channels, but ensures the issues and stories reach out to a wider audience, in particular youths and those on social media" said Dr Sky Tan, CEO of Sky Creation.

Beyond articles and stories, Mr Richard Loo, General Manager, South East Asia, CITIC Telecom International, believes that the SEC-CITIC Telecom International Environmental Photograph of the Year award is an acknowledgement of the skills and courage of individuals to bring to light through images, issues on the environment that we should all care and be concerned about. "Nothing tells a story better than an expertly captured photo that makes a deep impression. It brings to life the real environmental issues that many communities in Asia face, and can shock and inspire people into taking the actions necessary to preserve our environment for future generations".

Rounding off the category of awards is the SEC-Lee Foundation Excellence in Environmental Reporting by a Media Organisation, which recognises media organisations for consistently providing high quality coverage of environmental issues in Asia.

Ms Grace Fu, Minister, Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, presented the awards to winners of the six AEJA categories at a ceremony at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel this afternoon. Please refer to [Annex A](#) for the list of award winners; [Annex B](#) for prizes awarded; and [Annex C](#) for Panel of Judges for AEJA 2014.

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## ABOUT THE ASIAN ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM AWARDS

The Asian Environmental Journalism Awards (AEJA) was launched in 2012, with the aim of recognising and rewarding excellence in environmental journalism.

By bringing environmental stories to the forefront of public perception, journalists play several key roles – through reports on environmentally harmful practices, they serve as the watchdogs of our environment; through features on environmental champions, emerging environmental technologies and business practices, they bring inspiration and fresh ideas on environmental protection to the public. They also enrich public understanding of the environment by presenting complex scientific, technical, ecological and cultural facts about a complex issue in a simple, accessible format.



**Singapore  
Environment  
Council**

## ABOUT THE SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL


Established in 1995, the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) is an independently managed, non-profit and non-government organisation (NGO). We influence thinking on sustainability issues and coordinate environmental efforts in Singapore. We are also an approved charity and offer tax exemption to donors.

SEC continuously engages all sectors of the community by formulating and executing a range of holistic programmes, such as the Singapore Environmental Achievement Awards, Asian Environmental Journalism Awards, School Green Awards, Green Champions, Singapore Green Labelling Scheme, Project: Eco-Office, Project: Eco-Shop and Project: F&B. In addition, we build a pool of committed volunteers under our Earth Helpers programme.

The SEC has also incorporated a new Training & Education arm to provide the people, public and private sectors with the opportunity to develop awareness, knowledge, skills and tools in order to protect and improve our environment for a sustainable future.

Strong partnerships with corporations, government agencies and other NGOs are valued by us. These partnerships are vital for sustaining our programmes, leading to positive action and change. Over the years, SEC has given strength and direction to the environmental movement in Singapore.

 [@SECSingapore](https://twitter.com/SECSingapore)

 [SingaporeEnvironmentCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/SingaporeEnvironmentCouncil)

 [SECSingapore](https://www.youtube.com/SECSingapore)

## Annex A

### Asian Environmental Journalism Awards (AEJA) 2014 Winners

<b>Category</b>	<b>Awards</b>
SEC Young Environmental Journalist of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Denise Hruby, Cambodia (Winner)</li><li>• Liu Hongqiao, China (Merit)</li><li>• Patricia Ranada, Philippines (Merit)</li></ul>
SEC Coca-Cola Environmental Story of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fernando Garcia Sepe, Jr., Philippines (Winner)</li><li>• Akshai Jain, India (Merit)</li><li>• Zsombor Peter, Cambodia (Merit)</li></ul>
SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tan Cheng Li, Malaysia (Winner)</li><li>• Amantha Perera, Sri Lanka (Merit)</li><li>• Ananda Banerjee, India (Merit)</li></ul>
SEC-Lee Foundation Excellence in Environmental Reporting by a Media Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Channel NewsAsia, MediaCorp Pte Ltd (Winner)</li><li>• Caixin Media (Merit)</li><li>• South China Morning Post (Merit)</li></ul>
SEC-Sky Creation Design Environmental Blogger of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stella Paul, India (Winner)</li><li>• Neo Mei Lin, Singapore (Merit)</li><li>• Anthony Quek San Huat, Singapore (Merit)</li></ul>
SEC-CITIC Telecom International Environmental Photograph of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eli Ritchie B. Tongo, Philippines (Winner)</li><li>• Chaideer Mahyuddin, Indonesia (Merit)</li><li>• Douglas Ho Kah Joon, Singapore (Merit)</li></ul>

For more information about the AEJA, please visit [www.sec.org.sg/aeja](http://www.sec.org.sg/aeja)

**Asian Environmental Journalism Awards (AEJA) 2014 Prizes**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Awards</b>
SEC Young Environmental Journalist of the Year	Winner receives AEJA trophy & SGD\$3,000 Cash Prize
SEC Coca-Cola Environmental Story of the Year	Winner receives AEJA trophy & SGD\$3,000 Cash Prize
SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the Year	Winner receives AEJA trophy & SGD\$3,000 Cash Prize
SEC-Lee Foundation Excellence in Environmental Reporting by a Media Organisation	Winner receives AEJA Trophy
SEC-Sky Creation Design Environmental Blogger of the Year	Winner receives AEJA trophy & SGD\$3,000 Cash Prize
SEC-CITIC Telecom International Environmental Photograph of the Year	Winner receives AEJA trophy & SGD\$3,000 Cash Prize

For more information about the AEJA, please visit [www.sec.org.sg/aeja](http://www.sec.org.sg/aeja)

**Asian Environmental Journalism Awards (AEJA) 2014 Panel of Judges**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation &amp; Company</b>
1	Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed (Chairman)	Former Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; Singapore's Ambassador to Kuwait and the Foreign Minister's Special Envoy to the Middle East
2	Ms Hazel Han	Vice President, Nature Photographic Society (Singapore)
3	Ms Laura Davidson	Strategic Communications Manager, Coca-Cola Singapore & Malaysia
4	Ms Esther An	Chief Sustainability Officer, City Developments Limited (CDL)
5	Mr Richard Loo	General Manager, CITIC Telecom International
6	Mr Jose Raymond	Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Environment Council
7	Ms Satwant Kaur	Regional Information Officer, United Nations Environment Programme

For more information about the AEJA, please visit [www.sec.org.sg/aeja](http://www.sec.org.sg/aeja)