



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

ENVIRONMENT - Donors and recipients can now track climate-change aid pledges and projects on a new United Nations-backed website. Wealthy countries promised at the Copenhagen climate summit to provide developing countries with \$30 billion in aid between 2010 and 2012 to help mitigate the effects of climate change. UN officials expressed hope the site and public accounting of which countries are following through on pledges will help build trust before the next international summit in December.

DESERTIFICATION of the mountain grasslands on the Tibetan plateau - a landmass a third of the size of the US - is increasingly problematic for the Tibetan nomadic herdsman who depend upon the grasses for their survival.

■AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA - South African researchers have designed an inexpensive filter that can purify water directly from a bottle. A tea-bag-sized filter fits inside a tube that can be placed atop a water bottle, providing drinkers with filtered water every time they pour a cup. Researchers hope the new system can significantly affect the lives of 1.2 billion people worldwide without access to clean drinking water.

SUDAN - Food security in many parts of Southern Sudan is set to improve after good rains, according to recent crop and precipitation assessments.

SWAZILAND has yet to act on a 2006 World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation to alleviate health worker shortages through task-shifting and according to the Ministry of Health, the failure to do so is compromising scale-up of the antiretroviral (ARV) programme.

■ASIA

INDIA - The deaths of four infants during a recent vaccination drive in Lucknow, capital of northern Uttar Pradesh state, has raised questions about the Indian government's plan to introduce five-in-one vaccines in a countrywide immunisation programme.

PHILIPPINES - The Philippine government has said it will not be able to halve poverty levels by 2015 as pledged under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). One of the key MDG targets, set in 2000 at a UN summit, is to halve the number of people living on a dollar a day. In 2000 it was estimated that 25 per cent of the Filipino population lived below the poverty line.

■MIDDLE EAST

OPT - With power cuts up to 16 hours to full days, a soaring heat wave and unbearable humidity, the Israeli-led siege on Gaza is but one of many factors leaving Ramadan miserable for the majority of Palestinians in Gaza.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

LAC Region - Experts from 13 Latin American countries called for a shift in counter-drug policies from a punitive to a public health-based approach for users, in order to reduce drug-related violence, on the argument that the current "war on drugs" has been lost in the region.

PERU - The Amazon river has dropped to its lowest level in 40 years in northeastern Peru, according to officials. Many towns in Peru's rainforest region do not have roads and so depend on the river for transport. The drop in the water level has meant larger boats cannot transport goods on the river.

WFWO's Communications Team