

2nd High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities

Under the framework of the
East Asia Summit Environment Ministers Meeting

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The 2nd High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (HLS ESC), organised by the Governments of Japan, Australia, Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand, was held in Kitakyushu City, Japan on 15 – 16 March 2011 and chaired by Prof. Hironori Hamanaka, Chair, Board of Directors, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Japan.

The Seminar brought together about 140 participants consisting of representatives from 12 national governments, 19 local governments and 18 organisations for information exchange, knowledge sharing and frank discussion on the agenda of sustainable city development through a number of Plenary and Thematic Sessions.

One minute of silence was observed prior to the Opening Session, dedicated to the victims of the earthquake and tsunami that struck the Tohoku region in Japan on 11 March 2011.

Thereupon, the Seminar agreed to adopt this Chair's Summary as a record of the meeting's outcomes.

Recalling the Chair's Summary of the 1st HLS ESC held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 2 – 4 March 2010, where five activities for promoting ESC were recommended for further elaboration at future meetings: i) East Asia 'Model Cities' Initiative; ii) A clearinghouse for ESC-related knowledge management; iii) ESC Public-Private Sector Forum; iv) ESC capacity building; and v) ESC Awards;

Reaffirming the renewed commitment to ESC as a priority area for EAS regional collaboration as expressed by the Ministers during the 2nd East Asia Summit Environmental Ministers Meeting held on 15 October 2010 in Brunei Darussalam;

Building upon the achievements of the past and existing ESC-related initiatives by all members of the global development community;

Recognising the need for all stakeholders to continue to move forward in a collaborative and concerted manner towards achieving visible impacts and progress on the development of ESC, the participants hereby:

1) Noted the main messages of the keynote presentation of Mr. Hikaru Kobayashi, Senior Counsellor (former Vice Minister), Ministry of the Environment, Japan:

- National governments are encouraged to design appropriate policies, legal frameworks and financial mechanisms to provide incentives that support investment in low-carbon technology and infrastructure, especially in building, transport and energy systems.
- With the support of national governments and other stakeholders, local governments are encouraged to incorporate CO₂ emission reduction measures in overall city planning in line with the concept of 'compact cities' characterised by efficient public transport and transit-oriented development.

2) Welcomed the signing of an agreement on building a Strategic Environmental Partnership between City of Kitakyushu, Japan and City of Surabaya, Indonesia.

3) Acknowledged and commended the notable progress achieved so far by stakeholders since the 1st HLS ESC, in particular:

- On realising the five practical activities recommended by the Chair's Summary of the 1st HLS ESC:
 - Participants welcomed and looked forward to the implementation of the 'ESC Model Cities Programme' proposed by ASEAN through the ASEAN Working Group on ESC and supported by the 2nd East Asia Summit Environment Ministers Meeting, as an overarching initiative to foster the four other recommended activities.
 - In relation to that, participants noted the various actions taken and reported by several national governments (Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Lao PDR and Singapore) to promote ESC in their respective countries. (Appendix C)

- On the achievement of environmental improvement in cities (Appendix D):
 - Participants noted that local governments of Bago (Philippines), Balikpapan (Indonesia), Kitakyushu (Japan), Kathmandu (Nepal), Minamata (Japan), Nagoya (Japan), Sibul (Malaysia) and Surabaya (Indonesia) have successfully delivered notable progress on previous environmental commitments expressed a year ago during the 1st HLS ESC and the Fifth Network Meeting of the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment.
 - Participants also welcomed and expressed support for the environmental commitments presented by the local governments of Cagayan de Oro (Philippines), Iloilo (Philippines), Luang Prabang (Lao PDR), North Kuching (Malaysia), Phnom Penh (Cambodia), Shimla (India) and Yangon (Myanmar).

- On the supporting role of development partners (Appendix E):
 - Participants appreciated the proposals and suggestions made by the following organisations:
 - i. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP): will continue its collaboration with the HLS ESC, on the basis of its experience in implementing the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment from 2000 to 2010. Its particular contribution will include the development and dissemination of innovative policy options, including in particular the Regional Green Growth/Low Carbon Road Map, as well as supports to capacity building at different levels and regional networking
 - ii. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA): provision of support to the proposed Model Cities programme in terms of capacity building and financial support, including a new training programme on low-carbon city development
 - iii. United States Agency for International Development (USAID): training and twinning partnerships on water and sanitation, as well as collaboration opportunities on a new low-carbon emissions and adaptation programmes
 - iv. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP): provision of support to the proposed ESC Model Cities Programmes, and collaboration on green economy initiatives in cities in Asia and the Pacific.
 - v. CITYNET (the Regional Network of Local Authorities for the Management of Human Settlements): urban development training

- programmes through the Kuala Lumpur Regional Training Centre, regular water supply programme with Yokohama city and Seoul Centre on Sustainable Transportation, city-to-city technical assistance and a new programme on climate change adaptation and septic management
- vi. Clean Air Initiative for Asian Cities (CAI-Asia): providing the online database - CitiesACT - with city air quality, transport and energy data; overview of City Tools in the Clean Air Portal (www.cleanairinitiative.org) (e.g., CAI-Asia Clean Air Scorecard Walkability Survey, city GHG estimation tools); and facilitating discussions among City Networks through the "Network of City Networks" to share successful replication mechanisms (e.g., C2C of CITYNET, twinning partnerships of USAID, CIVITAS of Europe)
 - vii. ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability: the importance of sharing commitments and achievements of local climate actions, as well as inviting all cities to join its new project, the Carbon Cities Climate Registry (cCCR)
 - viii. Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES): dedicated research centre on urban issues in Kitakyushu

4) Noted the best practices and initiatives presented in the Thematic Sessions and agreed to explore the possibility of replicating and scaling up these practices with support from all relevant stakeholders (Appendix F):

- **Thematic Session A** highlighted solid waste management as one of the most serious environmental challenges confronting urban areas in Asia. The importance of an integrated solid waste management approach with participation from the private sector was recognized. Supportive policy frameworks by national governments and economic incentives are essential for proper enforcement. Awareness-raising is critical, but the presence of an experienced facilitator on the ground and a sharp focus on target groups are essential. Baseline data on material flows is needed for project evaluation, cost-benefit analysis, and for measuring contributions to GHG emission reductions. To realize ESC in Asia, it is essential for cities to set locally relevant and practical standards based on the experiences and lessons learned through existing good practices. This know-how can be facilitated through city-to-city networks, regional and global partnerships.
- **Thematic Session B** focused on the theme of 'Urban Air Quality Management'. Presentations were given by two megacities (Bangkok and Singapore) and two smaller

cities (Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro). To achieve urban air quality management, cities must work with several national departments. Development of action plans for clean air in a city is important, but it should be developed based on scientific data (e.g., emissions inventory of air pollution sources, air quality monitoring data). CAI-Asia's presentation emphasized the importance of partnerships in replicating or scaling up air quality management efforts in more cities. The task of reaching the estimated 2,500 cities is too challenging for one organisation to take on alone.

- **Thematic Session C** focused on 'Sustainable Planning towards a Liveable City.' Presentations and discussions touched upon a wide variety of issues including different goals, variety of approaches, and different policy measures subject to gaps and challenges each city faces. Session participants expressed differing interpretations of 'eco' or 'sustainable' cities. The session reaffirmed the key role of local governments in the context of sustainable planning towards liveable cities. Local governments, by nature, are close to citizens and therefore are well-positioned to address the needs of citizens in a holistic manner.
- **Thematic Session D** highlighted several key points including the need to have integrated policies, programmes and plans; to improve data and methodologies for analysis; to understand the roles of stakeholders and develop collaboration and partnerships; to build capacity of relevant stakeholders; and to promote replication and scaling up of best practices.

5) Requested the Secretariat to report the outcomes of the 2nd HLS ESC to the upcoming Annual Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on ESC which is planned to be held on 4 – 5 May 2011 in Yangon, Myanmar, as well as the 3rd East Asia Summit Environment Ministers Meeting.

6) Noted the wishes of Indonesia, as Chair of ASEAN and host of the East Asia Summit in November 2011, to report the progress of ESC to, and ask for further directions from, the Leaders on ESC implementation.

7) Reaffirmed the benefits provided by an occasion like the HLS ESC as a broad platform for knowledge sharing, networking and mutual learning among all relevant stakeholders, with the anticipation of the organising of the 3rd HLS ESC in 2012, and noted the offer of Cambodia to host the 3rd HLS ESC, subject to national clearance.

APPENDIX

- A. Concept Note and Programme
- B. List of Participants
- C. Summary of Actions Taken by National Governments to Promote ESC
- D. Summary of Environmental Commitments of Local Governments
- E. Proposals and Suggestions Expressed by Supporting Organisations
- F. Summary of Thematic Sessions A, B, C and D

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