

OUTPUT DOCUMENT

9th East Asia Summit (EAS) High-level Seminar on Sustainable Cities *(formerly the 'High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities')*

– Sustainable Cities: Sustainability and means of implementation for successful initiative –

The 9th EAS High-Level Seminar on Sustainable Cities (HLS-SC) was organised by the Government of Cambodia, Government of Japan, the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AWGESC) and the ASEAN Secretariat in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 8-10 March 2018 under the framework of the EAS Environment Ministers' Meeting (EAS EMM) with more than 250 participants comprising representatives of 10¹ national governments, 38² local authorities and 14³ supporting organisations, including international/regional organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), research institutions/academia, private companies and others. The key messages here will be reported to EAS Environment Ministers and at relevant ASEAN meetings.

With global agreements and goals such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement of Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in place, and A Framework for Action on the Complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the United Nations 2030 Agenda finalised, further cooperative efforts in the region can support and enhance the critical role of cities to achieve these goals. Policies and actions on SDGs should vary from city to city, and localisation of SDGs is a key element to promote local sustainability. Aligned with the set of six SDGs⁴ to be reviewed at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July in 2018, New York, the 9th HLS-SC will share practical experiences and discuss how to promote local sustainable actions related to the six goals by ASEAN cities, national governments, development partners, and private companies in their efforts to achieve sustainable cities in Asia.

¹ China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

² Cambodia – Kep, Pursat, Phnom Penh, Siem Reap ...; Indonesia – Tangerang; Japan – Kitakyushu and Yokohama; Lao PDR – Luang Prabang; Malaysia – Shah Alam; Philippines – San Carlos, Negros Occidental; Thailand – Ban Sang Municipality, Chaman Municipality, Taklee Municipality, Udon Thani Municipality, Vieng Thoeng Municipality; and Viet Nam – Da Lat.

³ The ASEAN Secretariat, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Rajahmangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi (Thailand), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UN-Habitat. Private sector organisations were Phnom Penh Special Economic Zone, Japan Sanitation Consortium, Metawater Co Ltd., GOMI Recycle110, Kobelco Eco-SOLUTIONS Co., Ltd., PEMS Technologies, Inc., Pafon next step consultants and Toppan Forms Co., Ltd.

⁴ These goals are Goal 6 Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 7 Affordable and Clean Energy, Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, Goal 12, Responsible Consumption and Production, Goal 15 Life on Land, and Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals.

Over two days, a series of Plenary and Thematic discussions were held to enable active knowledge exchange and frank discussion among key stakeholders.

As a result, participants noted and agreed to take actions on the following key messages which were drawn from Plenary/Thematic sessions:

Based on the above, the seminar participants achieved the following:

- Reaffirmed that the region, especially cities in the region, plays a key role in achievement of the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that HLS-SC has been an important platform to encourage and strengthen city actions to contribute to the achievement of the goals by sharing lessons and experiences with participation of various stakeholders in the region;
- Acknowledged that sustainable and resilient society is an indispensable element for economic growth, and it cannot be promoted by technological advancement alone but also through improved institutional arrangements including improved policies, system, and human resource development through inclusive and participatory approaches, Recognised that some cities already incorporated SDGs in action, and that regional sustainability can be promoted by encouraging more cities to incorporate SDGs into their development goals through partnership and by sharing experiences of leading cities. SDGs is not only a goal to be achieved but also a tool to guide local governments to develop policies aiming to enhance social sustainability and resilience and also to facilitate partnership with relevant stakeholders;
- Recognised the importance of climate change mitigation and adaptation actions at the city level and acknowledged that some cities have taken important steps to mitigate climate change and also made progress on adaptation actions. Nonetheless, more needs to be done to enhance regional sustainability, and thus national and international support to promote such actions should be further promoted. City-to-city collaboration can be a driver to promote such city actions through mutual learning and encouragement;
- Noted the ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Cities (ESC) Model Cities Programme Years 1 - 3, among other initiatives, contributed to the support and promotion of such local actions for sustainability;
- Welcomed the ASEAN SDGs Frontrunner Cities (FC) Programme, a successor of the ESC Model Cities Programme that will serve as a driver to support selected local governments in ASEAN Member States to plan and implement SDGs in collaboration with local stakeholders and also as an important mechanism to foster good local actions aligning with SDGs that can become regional good practices to be shared with the rest of world;

- Welcomed the increasing efforts to promote partnership amongst national governments, supporting organisations, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders to support cities' actions and recognised such efforts should be further promoted for sustainable development at local level. Networking of relevant stakeholders such as national governments, cities, civil society groups, research institutes and the private sector is also important for knowledge sharing and creation; and
- Expected the key findings and messages of HLS-SC together with the ASEAN SDGs FC Programme will be shared with the international community as a voice of cities in the region through collaboration and arrangement with international organisations such as UNESCAP and UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

Based on the above, the seminar participants agreed to recommend to the EAS Environment Ministers the following practical actions:

- a) Support the implementation of the ASEAN SDGs FC Programme that will start in 2018 which catalyses new and innovative policies and action plans of the frontrunner cities and enhances actions and capacity of the ESC model cities; and support national focal points to take necessary actions to promote the programme.
- b) Support relevant on-going ASEAN sustainable cities initiatives, such as the ASEAN Smart Cities Network, and the Study to Advance Sustainable Urbanisation in ASEAN under the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025.
- c) Continue to support HLS-SC as a platform to share and monitor continued progress by local governments with its implementation of SDGs on the ground including the ASEAN SDGs Frontrunner Cities Programme.
- d) Provide support to HLS-SC as a platform of city voices of the region to contribute to the regional and global advancement to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda including the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.
- e) Support ASEAN Secretariat and IGES as the Secretariat of 9th HLS-SC to take necessary actions and report the key findings and messages at key regional and international meetings on sustainable development such as the Fifth Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development to be organised in March 2018 in Bangkok and the High Level Political Forum in July 2018 in New York.
- f) Provide full support and active inputs to help organise the 10th HLS-SC, tentatively to be hosted by the Government of Indonesia in early 2019.

The seminar also requested the ASEAN Secretariat and IGES to report the main outputs and outcomes of the 9th HLS-SC to upcoming relevant ASEAN meetings including:

- a) 15th Meeting of the AWGESC, in the 1st week of May 2018, Balikpapan, Indonesia ;

- b) 29th Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN), in August 2018, Singapore;
- c) EAS Senior Officials Meeting (EAS-OM), in August 2018, Singapore.

Annexes:

- 1. Concept Note & Programme
- 2. Participants List
- 3. Key Points and Messages from the Sessions