

6th High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities

Under the framework of the
East Asia Summit Environment Ministers Meeting

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

The **6th High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (HLS ESC)**, organised by the **Governments of Malaysia, Japan, Cambodia, the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AWGESC) and the ASEAN Secretariat**, was held in **Johor Bahru, Malaysia** on **9 – 10 February 2015**. The Seminar was chaired by **Prof. Ryokichi Hirono (Professor Emeritus, Seikei University, Japan; President, Asia-Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA))** and co-chaired by **Datin Paduka Dr. Dahlia Rosly (Director General, Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government) and Dr. Vann Momyneath (Deputy Director General for Technical Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Government of Cambodia/Chairperson, AWGESC)**. It was back-to-back with the international 'FutureCity Initiative' Forum (8 February 2015; held for the first time outside of Japan) in Malaysia, jointly organised by the **Government of Japan, Government of Malaysia, Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA), Johor Bahru City Council (MBJB) and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia**.

The Seminar brought together about **250 participants** consisting of representatives from **12 national governments, 36 local authorities and 26 international organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs), research institutions, private companies** and others for information exchange, knowledge sharing and frank discussion on the agenda of environmentally sustainable city development through Plenary and Thematic Sessions (Appendix A, B and C).

The Seminar recalled the main outputs of the previous HLS ESC and the progress made as follows:

- **The 1st HLS ESC (2 – 4 March 2010, Jakarta, Indonesia)** recommended the following activities as practical means for promoting ESC development in the region:
 - i. An East Asian 'Model Cities' Initiative;
 - ii. A clearinghouse for ESC-related data and information;
 - iii. A Public and Private Sector Forum on ESC;

- iv. ESC Capacity Building Programme;
- v. EAS ESC Awards based on performance indicators.
- **The 2nd HLS ESC (5 – 6 March 2011, Kitakyushu, Japan)** welcomed the implementation of the proposed ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme, which was developed to follow up on the five recommended activities from the 1st HLS ESC. The programme was approved and commenced implementation a month later.
- **The 3rd HLS ESC (6 – 8 March 2012, Siem Reap, Cambodia)** reviewed the progress made in ESC across the region, showcased the achievements of Year 1 of the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme and warmly supported the continuation of the programme into its second year of implementation.
- **The 4th HLS ESC (21 – 22 March 2013, Ha Noi, Viet Nam)** presented the lessons learnt from the implementation of the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme (Year 1) and ideas for the programme's next phase. ASEAN Member States highlighted strategies and plans for initiating or enhancing country-based ESC Model Cities Programmes to serve as strategic 'building blocks' for the regional-level programme activities, while EAS participating countries and supporting organisations shared their ideas for collaborating with the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme.
- **The 5th HLS ESC (28 February – 1 March 2014, Surabaya, Indonesia)** announced the extension of the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme into Year 2 of implementation and highlighted the latest developments in national strategies for ESC promotion ASEAN and EAS countries. Specific recommendations were made to EAS Environment Ministers on how to accelerate the 'spread' and 'scale' of good ESC practices and policies.

The Seminar adopted this Chair's Summary as a record of the discussion and outcomes.

1) In the Opening Session:

- a) **Mr. Soichiro Seki (Vice Minister for Global Environmental Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan)** delivered the first Opening Speech. He reiterated the severity of Asia's urbanisation challenge and affirmed Japan's continued active commitment to regional ESC cooperation through various initiatives. These include the HLS ESC and the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme, as well as the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) for developing low-carbon societies. Japan will continue to help Asian cities avoid the energy-intensive and environmentally destructive development model, and to 'leapfrog' to 'low carbon' and sustainable cities while realising economic development.

- b) **YB. Datuk Halimah Mohd Sadique (Deputy Minister, Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Local Government and Housing, Government of Malaysia)** delivered the second Opening Speech. She reiterated the commitments from the Government of Malaysia, through the Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government to play a meaningful role in supporting sustainable development initiatives at the ASEAN region and to realise the implementation of sustainable development at the National, State and Local Levels. With Malaysia's position as the chair of ASEAN this year, Malaysia will improve its efforts to advocate issues and implementation of sustainable development and adaptation measures to climate change, especially in the region.
- c) **Datin Paduka Dr. Dahlia Rosly (Director General, Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government)** delivered the keynote presentation on 'Malaysia and ASEAN Community Beyond 2015: Moving Towards Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Communities'. She highlighted Malaysia's role in the Roadmap for ASEAN Community 2015 and post-2015 agenda particularly in sustainable development, supporting inclusive growth and further strengthening regional cooperation. She also reiterated findings in the Davos 2015 World Economic Forum whereby East Asia and Pacific countries have been identified to be the least prepared region for interstate conflict, man-made environmental catastrophes and coping with the failure of urban planning. As a response to the impending risk, Malaysia is stepping up the incorporation and implementation of sustainable development and risk reduction in plans, policies and planning guidelines. Local green initiatives from various Local Authority leaders were also highlighted including the National Low Carbon Initiatives such as the Green Neighbourhood Action Plan. Inclusive aspects have been implemented through My Beautiful Neighbourhood Programme and the Safe Cities Initiatives. She also shared the mechanism to evaluate and report the sustainability of cities through sustainable development indicators (MURNInets) developed by the Federal Department of Town and Country Planning and Malaysia's New Blue Ocean Strategy.
- 2) **From Plenary Session 1 'The ASEAN ESC Community: Beyond 2015'** (Appendix D), **the Seminar noted the following:**
- a) **Dr. Vann Monyneath (Chairperson, AWGESC)** summarised the achievements of the AWGESC since the Working Group's establishment in 2003. He presented the concept of an emerging 'ASEAN ESC Community' and proposed that the AWGESC draft a long-term Action Plan to realise this Community beyond 2015. It is hoped that the Action Plan will provide guidance to key ESC stakeholders to help scale up support and assistance to ASEAN cities

by 2025. This represents one of ASEAN's strategies to realise green, clean, low-carbon and resilient development at the local level as a tangible means to help realise both national and international sustainable development goals.

- b) **Mr. Sengdara Douangmyxay (Deputy Director, Urban Planning Division, Department of Housing and Urban Planning (DHUP), Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT))** presented Lao PDR's perspective on regional ESC cooperation. He explained that in Lao PDR, the responsibilities in ESC promotion falls under several ministries and some of the activities with the objectives to improve urban environment have been put in place since the last three decades but they have not been coordinated in a comprehensive and integrated approach. Laos Pilot Program for Narrowing the Development Gap towards ASEAN Integration (LPP) supported by JICA has been implemented since 2010 to assist the country in strengthening institutional and technical capacity of the national and local government, building community spirit and establishing national and local government links in realising future ESC vision.
- c) **Dr. Shamsaini Shamsuddin (Director, The National Land Use Information Division, Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government, Malaysia)** presented Malaysia's Green Neighbourhood Programme and its implementation to support the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme. She explained the Action Plan for Green Neighbourhood Development which the progress is reported to the Green Technology and Climate Change Council. Five green initiatives implemented from the action plan were also highlighted. These are local authorities' initiative to improve walkability, cycling, rain water harvesting, composting and urban gardening. The Green Neighbourhood Initiative Award is awarded annually to Local Authorities who have shown successful implementation of the green initiatives. .
- d) **Datuk Ismail Bin Ibrahim (Chief Executive, Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA))** shared the Iskandar Region's approach for low-carbon and sustainable city development. He highlighted IRDA's Low Carbon Society Blueprint and the Smart City Framework as the region's strategic environmental policy. He shared IRDA's realisation of its vision of a sustainable metropolis of international standing through implementation of 12 Action Plans to reduce GHG emissions by 50% by 2025, based on 2005 levels. IRDA has already implemented some programmes including the Mobility Management System for smart green transportation, the Green Economy Guidelines to guide companies, businesses and the public on how to go green in business operations, practices and transportation. Also important is to bring LCS to grassroots' level so that the local communities get deeply involved, such as projects under the Low Carbon Village Felda Taib Andak and Eco-Life Challenge learning for schools.
- e) **Mr. Suphot Tovichakchaikul (Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Natural**

Resources and Environment, Government of Thailand) presented Thailand's strategy to support sustainable development in cities. The Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP) has been actively supporting Thai cities and bottom-up innovations through various initiatives for more than a decade, particularly through its Local Agenda 21 (LA21) programme, which emphasises the participatory approach to sustainability. The national LA21 work has been linked to the regional level initiative (ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme), which aims to nurture Thai 'Model Cities' that meets the standards of ASEAN ESC Indicators as well as promote the dissemination and exchange of Thai ESC best practices with other ASEAN neighbours.

- f) **Dr. Do Nam Thang (Vice Director, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam)** shared Viet Nam's experience and national initiatives on ESC promotion. He stressed that 'top-down' national policies and goals cannot be realised unless local communities are also committed and cooperative. He also emphasised the value of enabling mutual learning among cities and effective coordination to meaningfully connect the diverse sectors and stakeholders involved in ESC projects.
 - g) **Ms. Natalia Derodofa (Senior Officer, Environment Division, ASEAN Secretariat)** provided an update on the ongoing process of developing the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, which will comprise central elements of being 'politically cohesive', 'economically integrated', 'socially responsible', 'people-oriented', 'people-centred' and a 'rules-based ASEAN'.
 - h) Other **ASEAN Member States and EAS participating countries** provided comments and shared recent developments and key ideas on national ESC promotion, including the National ESC Guidelines and Clean City Contest (Cambodia), paradigm of decoupling economic growth with environmental sustainability (Brunei Darussalam), and the approach of establishing 'regional training/learning hubs' for ESC (Philippines). Japan reiterated its intention to continue supporting ASEAN ESC cooperation and congratulated ASEAN Member States and ASEAN ESC Model Cities for their progress which were achieved by the leadership in city, enhanced through mutual learning and then promoted in cooperation with HLS stakeholders.
- 3) **In Thematic Sessions A, B and C, the following key messages were derived from presentations and discussion (Appendix E):**
- a) **Thematic Session A ('ASEAN ESC Model Cities: Part 1', chaired by Dr. Vann Monyneath, Chair of AWGESC and co-chaired by Ms. Natalia Derodofa, ASEAN Secretariat)**
 - i. ESC programmes in Indonesia and Thailand have been implemented with a focus on

the well-being of the people through the following strategies: (i) creation of green spaces; (ii) waste minimisation and sound waste management; (iii) energy efficiency; and (iv) sustainable consumption. Political commitment and community participation (schools, NGOs, local communities etc.) have been critical in the success of the implementation of these strategies.

- ii. Recognising the varying circumstances, capacities and challenges faced by cities to become environmentally sustainable, ASEAN developed Key Indicators for Clean Air, Clean Water and Clean Land as guidelines, which are also used as the basis for the selection of cities to be recipients of the Certificates of Recognition under the ASEAN ESC Award programme.

b) Thematic Session B ('Capitalising on Opportunities for Air Quality Action', chaired by Ms. Mary Jane Ortega, Clean Air Asia and co-chaired by Mr. Boyd Jouman, IRDA)

- i. The key success factors for mobilising actions for air quality management actions include: bringing together all key stakeholders, creating a comprehensive Master Plan, adequate incentives, monitoring and enforcement, effective use of science and technology, public participation, city-to-city cooperation and continuous improvement through research and development.
- ii. The main challenges and constraints include financing, ensuring ownership of initiatives, awareness raising, securing buy-in of relevant stakeholders (e.g. mayors, politicians, head of departments in local government agencies, businesses, local communities etc.) and capacity building.
- iii. Existing frameworks for improving air quality management include: Clean Air Plan Development in the ASEAN Region and the Master plans for Metropolitan Air Quality Management in Seoul Metropolitan Area.

c) Thematic Session C ('Decarbonising Cities', chaired by Dr. Tadashi Matsumoto, OECD and co-chaired by Dr. Junichi Fujino, National Institute for Environment Studies (NIES))

- i. The key benefits of city-to-city cooperation are in terms of transferring knowledge, experience, technology, systems and know-how to create a virtuous economic circle in all of Asia, leading to economic growth and increased environmental sustainability.
- ii. Some of the lessons learnt from in Japan-ASEAN city-to-city collaboration include: (i) the need to involve the national government and secure their collaboration in parallel to city-level cooperation; (ii) identifying the right timing to involve the private sector; and (iii) cultural differences.

4) In Thematic Sessions D, E and F, the following key messages were arrived at (Appendix F):

a) Thematic Session D ('ASEAN ESC Cities Part 2', chaired by Mr. Sengdara Doungmyxay,

MPWT, Lao PDR and co-chaired by Mr. Yutaka Fukase, JICA)

- i. ESC promotion has been evolving in the countries of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam (CLMV) at policy and practical levels by learning experiences from other ASEAN countries and by the application of local approaches and schemes.
- ii. ESC promotion requires: (i) consensus building and coordination among relevant agencies and stakeholders; (ii) policies and strategies to be understood and shared so that they can be put into real practice; and (iii) participatory approach by involving multi-tiered actors, especially in solid waste management.

b) Thematic Session E ('Governance and Community Engagement', chaired by Mr. Abdul Jamil Arshad, Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, Malaysia and co-chaired by Ms. Aisa Tobing, CITYNET)

- i. A good plan and programme is not just left as a document, but needs to be realised through actions. Outcomes should be monitored with appropriate indicators, including those which measure happiness and welfare.
- ii. Governance and community engagement have to create a value of collaboration, encouragement, empowerment, involvement, and participation. Involving more people and all stakeholders will lead to better results.
- iii. Sharing of experiences and lessons learnt among cities and relevant actors are a means to help propel continuous progress in ESC initiatives.

c) Thematic Session F ('Resiliency', chaired by Ms. Milag San Jose-Ballesteros, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group and co-chaired by Ms. Lilian Mercado, Oxfam)

- i. Programmes that promote low carbon development (decarbonisation efforts) are complimentary to urban resiliency initiatives, as shown in the experience of Phnom Penh, Legazpi and the Republic of Korea.
- ii. Programmes that promote behavioural change are required and need to be integrated to successfully implement and scale up resiliency programs.
- iii. Bridging political and operational considerations is necessary to implement effective strategies. Private sector partners and investors need to be brought in through a collaborative and productive manner. Many non-linear approaches are needed as cities are complex with multiple timelines.
- iv. City-to-city linkages enable cities to learn from each other through shared challenges, interests and opportunities.

5) In Plenary 2 'Reporting Back by Session Chairs', the Seminar noted the summary messages arising from all Thematic Sessions. There was a common consensus among all the Thematic Session Chairs, as follows:

- a) Need for all stakeholders in communities to be involved in the formulation and

implementation of visions, goals, targets and mechanisms for promoting ESC.

- b) Need for community people to own the programme for ESCs through a variety of consultative processes specific to each country.
 - c) Need for the political leadership, in particular, the mayors to take initiatives, and even to take some risks in some cases, for promoting ESC, meeting the changing needs and requirements of community residents of all ages.
 - d) Need for the closest possible collaboration among local, state and national governments in promoting ESCs to the next higher stage.
 - e) Need for enhancing regional cooperation among all cities under EAS EMM, and in this respect, the need for increasing bilateral and multilateral assistance in financing and technical capacity development for ESC.
- 6) **During Plenary 3 and Plenary 4 'ASEAN ESC Cooperation Bazaar)**, local governments connected with other key ESC stakeholders to explore potential collaboration opportunities on ESC projects.
- 7) **The Seminar therefore:**
- a) **Recognised** that by 2050, most of ASEAN and East Asia's population will be concentrated in cities and urban areas, and current patterns of urban development are unsustainable. Hence, sustainable city planning and management require special attention in the region's post-2015 agenda, particularly to target local governments who will lead and implement transformative actions with the support by all other stakeholders.
 - b) **Acknowledged** that the collective progress on ESC made by regional, national and local actors is promising and needs to be urgently enhanced with increased scale, spread, and synergies. ESC promotion requires not only physical and infrastructure, but also socio-economic strategic planning with equitable sharing of costs and benefits among all.
 - c) **Noted** that national ESC policies and plans would not move forward unless there are strong and perceptive leadership at all levels (regional, national and sub-national) and the closest possible collaboration among them, as well as active engagement of all stakeholders in local communities including the private sector, civil society organisations (CSOs), the academe and community residents. Therefore, special efforts are required to create innovative governance and institutional arrangements at all levels to enable bottom-up, community-led sustainability actions in a coordinated, collaborative and inclusive manner, based on long-range planning where all stakeholders participate in the formulation, implementation and monitoring that is backed by sound data with concrete implementing resources and mechanisms, both bilateral

(including city-to-city cooperation) and regional initiatives add value through cross-country knowledge synthesis, networking, benchmarking and dissemination of lessons learnt.

- d) **Reaffirmed** that: 'low-carbon', 'resiliency' and 'good governance' are critical cross-cutting themes to be integrated into city development, paying attention to: (i) appropriate policy/legal frameworks supported by feasible financing and incentive mechanisms; (ii) environmentally-sound technology and science-based approaches; and (iii) city-to-city collaboration as a strategy for mobilising actions and support to the local level.
- e) **Referring to (a) – (d) above, ASEAN and EAS Environment Ministers are recommended to note the following:**
- i. **EAS participating countries (national governments) are encouraged to:**
 - Set up or enhance existing national ESC initiatives (e.g. national ESC indicators, ESC awards, national ESC networks, national ESC guidelines etc.) and policies (backed by legal framework) to incentivise local sustainable city actions.
 - Continue organising a regional seminar such as the HLS ESC (or equivalent) to foster discussion, networking, knowledge exchange and regional cooperation on ESC in a broad and inclusive manner;
 - Actively contribute to both bilateral and regional ESC cooperation activities under the EAS EMM framework;
 - ii. **ASEAN Member States** (in collaboration with ASEAN Secretariat, local governments and interested parties) are recommended to:
 - Conduct further discussions on a proposed draft action plan for an ASEAN ESC Community 2025;
 - Document and disseminate (in both English and vernacular languages) the following in an '**Online Sourcebook**' under the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme:
 - City ESC vision, goals and targets
 - Good ESC practices/policies
 - Requirements of assistance and interests of ASEAN Members States and cities in ESC international cooperation
 - iii. **Local governments (especially 'Model Cities' under the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme)** are encouraged to:
 - Set up a 'Multi-stakeholder Mayoral Advisory ESC Committee' (or equivalent) and an 'International Liaison Office' (or equivalent) and which will implement ESC projects within their cities, such as:
 - 'Model residential communities'

- 'Model schools/learning institutes'
 - 'Model Green/Low-carbon Private Building'
- iv. **Donors, international development agencies and all other supporting organisations** are encouraged to:
- Not only continue, but to scale up funding, technical assistance and other forms of support to ASEAN Member States and ASEAN cities, utilising established mechanisms and platforms under ASEAN and EAS EMM, such as the HLS ESC and the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme.
- f) **Requested** the Secretariat (IGES and/or ASEAN Secretariat as appropriate) to communicate to and report the Chair's Summary of the 6th HLS ESC and consult relevant stakeholders on possible ways forward at the following upcoming meetings:
- i. 14th Meeting of the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AWGESC) to be held tentatively on May/June 2015 in Da Lat, Viet Nam;
 - ii. 26th Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on the Environment (ASOEN) which is planned to be held tentatively in August 2015 in Malaysia (t.b.c.);
 - iii. 13th ASEAN Plus Three Environment Ministerial Meeting to be held tentatively in September 2015 in Viet Nam (t.b.c.);
 - iv. The forthcoming 5th EAS Environment Ministers Meeting;
 - v. Other relevant major meetings and seminars pertaining to ESC, including those under global processes such as the post-2015 development agenda and the preparations for the 3rd United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III, to be held in 2016) and to provide full support to their regional preparatory processes.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Concept Note

Appendix B – Programme

Appendix C – List of Participants

Appendix D – Summary of Plenary Session 1

Appendix E – Summary of Thematic Sessions A, B and C

Appendix F – Summary of Thematic Sessions D, E and F