SUMMARY OF THEMATIC SESSION A1, A2, A3 & A4

Thematic Session A1
"Environmental Education in the Wired Age"

a) Background

Cities are hubs for ideas, commerce, culture, science, productivity, social development and much more. However, many cities are facing various urban challenges such as congestion, pollution, lack of funds to provide basic services, a shortage of adequate housing and declining infrastructure. The Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG-11) aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

One of the SDG-11 targets is to enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management. This session is related to SDG 11, particularly to the target of making cities inclusive and sustainable with the use of innovative technologies. For bottom-up stakeholder engagement, participation, education and awareness-raising, implementing smart technologies is crucial. This session highlighted a few examples from cities in the Asia-Pacific region that have successfully implemented projects, using innovative technologies to develop urban solutions through an inclusive process.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Mr. Sang-Bum Kim	Former Vice Mayor of Seoul	CityNet
Panellists			
1	Mr. Tony Newling	Asia Government Lead	Microsoft
2	Drs. Herry Karnadi, M.Si.	Head of General Government Administration Division	Bogor, Indonesia
3	Mr. Sigit Setyawan	CityAPP Sidoarjo, Head of Public Works Department for Highway Construction and Maintenance	Sidoarjo Regency
4	Dr. Thwin Kyaw Kyaw	Executive Committee Member	Mandalay City Development Committee
5	Mr. Tetsuya Nakajima	Executive Director for Development Cooperation, International Affairs Bureau	Yokohama, Japan
6	Dr. Sang-Baek Chris Kang	Director	Korea Local Information Research & Development Institute (KLID)
7	Ms. Ying Gao	Habitat Partners Coordinator	UN-HABITAT

c) Summary of Discussion

- Recent improvements and cost reductions in IT infrastructure have created a vast opportunity for networking and collaboration among the citizens (particularly youths), private and public sectors.

- Barriers such as literacy and access to technology remain; nevertheless there is enormous interest in technological solutions and once initiatives are started, private and public sector support can be achieved.
- Youths represent a large proportion of the Asian population. They are easily interested, active and engaged in environmental activities. Through the use of IT and their energy, effective collaboration between the youth and government can be achieved.
- Cities may lack both capacity and a mandate to implement environmental education. Nevertheless the non-government sector can play a leading role in initiating such activities.
- IT can help facilitate a change in the relationship between citizen and government – from citizens as recipients of services – to citizens as active stakeholders assisting in the work of the government.
- City-to-city cooperation is an effective way of disseminating environmental education through an increased understanding of different approaches.

d) Key Challenges & Recommendations to Stakeholders

- Cities are aware of urban challenges they are facing but often lack the capacity and mandate to develop and implement technology-based solutions.
  - Bottom-up approaches like CityAPP are excellent examples of stakeholder engagement and 'crowdsourced' technical solutions (apps) for urban challenges
  - The government is an important stakeholder; however non-government actors may play a leading role.
- Environmental education is often not a political priority.
  - Important to raise environmental awareness, show opportunities of green growth and share examples of sustainable projects,
- Information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure can be a prerequisite for e-learning and/or bridging the information gap, yet local areas in developing countries/small cities generally do not have ICT infrastructure.
  - Internet access can be achieved cheaply and conveniently using wireless networks rather than the expense of laying cable. Additional digital learning material and contents also need to be supplied.Environmental education is difficult to implement in developing countries where the concept of environmental education is new.
  - Establish city-to-city exchanges to give exposure to different methods of environmental education.
- Urban and environmental challenges are more interconnected and complex than ever, requiring a new mode of partnerships. But building sustainable partnerships has its own set of challenges and a key area is how to engage the region's next generation as proactive stakeholders.
  - Mainstream youths at the heart of sustainable development in Asia-Pacific with apeople-centered in approach.
  - Introduce innovative participatory projects or technological tools that trigger new dialogues and transform stakeholder interactions or trigger behavioral change.
  - Promote 'partnership, partnership, and more partnerships' (including with new types of partners such as startups).

Thematic Session A2
"Public Green Spaces for Tourists as well as Citizens"

a) Background

Public and green spaces are essential for improving health and the quality of life for urban citizens. In many cities, they have high value as local heritage and cultural sites, being visually attractive destinations for both citizens and tourists. Goal 11 of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has set a target of providing places for people to be physically active. Besides that, this target also contributes to other goals, including: No. 3 (Ensuring Healthy Lives), No. 7 (Ensure energy for all) as well as No. 8 (Economic growth). Furthermore, 'urban biodiversity' is recognised as an emerging theme for urban planning.

In spite of their important functions, public green spaces are often threatened by competing plans of conversion to residential housing and commercial buildings. This session discussed how cities could further their economic and environmental goals by smartly creating multi-use spaces that are attractive to citizens as well as tourists and visitors.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Mr. Sengdara Douangmyxay	Acting Head of Urban Planning Division	Ministry of Public Works & Transport, Lao PDR
Panellists			
1	Mr. Danai Jaitanong	Deputy Mayor	Chiang Kian Municipality, Thailand
2	Ms. Penpuk Ratanafumku	Mayor	Kohkha Municipality, Thailand
3	Mr. Chanarong Leelaburanapong	Deputy Major	Krabi Municipality, Thailand
4	Mr. Phoumy Ophetsane	Vice Governor	Luang Prabang Municipality, Lao PDR
5	Ms. Nguyen Thi Thu Ha	Vice Head	Danang City, Viet Nam
6	Mr Oeun Pov	Vice Governor	Siem Reap Province, Cambodia
7	Ms. Wendy Yap	Deputy Director, International Relations	National Biodiversity Centre, Singapore
8	Mr. Tomonori Kimura	Partner	Japan Development Institute

c) Summary of Discussions

- To many cities today, the notion of public green spaces has extended from parks to include areas of infrastructure and facilities that provide services such as water supply and telecommunication, as well as streets, or shopping malls. These places are underappreciated, though they are important for citizen's physical and psychological health and strengthening the community spirit in residential neighbourhoods.
- Public green spaces often 'lose out' to economy-stimulating but 'brown activities' like shopping malls. It is possible to arrive at a 'win-win' situation, and not be stuck with a 'brown' versus 'green' argument.

- Apathy about green spaces is a real challenge ('Some people just don't care'). However, to citizens of a 'forest city', an environment with rich biodiversity is a primary setting for social activities. More importantly, forests are crucial for self-sufficiency and food security.
- Financing the maintenance and preservation of green spaces, as well as weak regulation are key challenges.
- In the case of Japan, it was helpful to invite key persons to visit Kanagawa prefecture for sharing information and capacity building on low-carbon tourism or other areas. Actions were backed by formal agreements such as Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
- City-to-city exchange is helpful, but it is important to know the unique context and challenges of different towns/cities.
- Maintenance of trees and green spaces (pruning, cutting etc.) is required to develop good green spaces.

d) Key Challenges & Recommendations to Stakeholders
- Promote effective participatory governance mechanisms and co-creation of public green spaces (i.e. governments and citizens work together to design, maintain and preserve public spaces). Strong leadership is essential.
    o Build capacity of local stakeholders so that they can be actively engaged in the maintenance and preservation of green spaces.
    o Draw inspiration from local traditions and values to produce local Innovation, vision solutions. For example, it is possible to preserve green spaces by ordaining the protected status of forests drawing from local cultural traditions (a practice in Thailand).
- Encourage people to engage with and connect to nature, especially to evoke awareness through a livelihood approach.
    o Tell local stories which teach the linkages between green spaces and local community resilience to raise awareness.
    o Youths can be recruited as 'environmental warriors' from schools. Use good governance to initiate change and participation and to decide on a common course of action.
- Make 'multi-purpose' green spaces which provide spaces of leisure (skateboarding, animals, exercising etc.) as well as for economic growth (vendors, tourism etc.)
    o Not only appeal to importance of services provided by natural ecosystems, also argue that it is beneficial for the local economy (e.g. aquaculture and eco-tourism instead of shopping malls).Watershed protection and tourism promotion seem to be two persuasive reasons for preserving green spaces.
- To address lack of, or weak regulation and low policy priority:
    o Estimate the financial value of the ecosystem service, through the 'Payments for Ecosystems' (PES) approach.
    o Establish a clear (official) mid-to long term vision of how the city will look visually, especially the public green spaces.
    o Set clear criteria of what requires improvement. Set clear targets and break measures into smaller, practical measure. Frame them in line with the common concerns of local governments such as drainage, traffic control, traffic safety, parking etc.
- Urban biodiversity could be integrated in policies and practices related to public green spaces and parks through an application of "Urban Biodiversity Indicators" developed as the self-help assessment tools that should be practical and not too complicated

Thematic Session A3
"Localising Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)"

a) Background
In September 2015, the 193 members of the United Nations unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) along with 169 related targets. The importance of cities was highlighted through the adoption of a dedicated goal on cities (Goal 11). Cities will play a critical role in the implementation of the majority of goals and targets as the bulk of the action required to implement them will have to take place at the local level.

The session discussed how cities may provide leadership in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and what sort of innovative approaches are required to make effective implementation and sound data collection possible.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Dr. Bernadia Tjandradewi	Secretary-General	United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG-ASPAC)
2	Mr. Lorenzo Santucci	Economic Affairs Officer	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
Panelists			
1	Mr. Prasong Sriwatana	Mayor	Nong Reua Municipality, Khon Khaen, Thailand
2	Mr. Yeekun Suriya	Mayor	Prik Municipality, Thailand
3	Mr. Arif Dermawan	Project Coordinator, Malang City Environment Board	Malang City, Indonesia
4	Ms. Nguyen Lan Phuong	Officer	Association of Viet Nam Cities (ACVN)
5	Ms. Claudia Hermes	Programme Director	Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA)
6	Mr. Simon Olsen	Senior Policy Researcher	Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

c) Summary of Discussion
- A number of cities are already aware of SDG11 and other goals, particularly related to the environment, and are already undertaking actions in their daily work to address these issues. Community meetings and involving schools can help raise awareness for SDGs at local level. Networking at all levels from community to international level and involvement of all sectors are crucial.
- Local authorities are increasingly adopting partnerships in their work, moving away from traditional bureaucracy; providing them with good enabling environment will be a key to the success of local governance, which includes but is not limited to the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation.
- Intermediate organisations, such as city associations and international initiatives, can play catalytic

roles to support cities and municipalities, which include reflecting voices from local governments into national planning, policies and programs, enhancing communication with the private sector, and mobilising domestic and international financial resources for localising the SDGs.

- Sharing best practices among cities and municipalities, and lessons learned may help to develop national policies.
- Rather than selecting priorities among all the goals, it is important to ensure that lessons learned from the previous global goals and integration across goals are reflected into forthcoming policies and interventions.
- In order to ensure effective policy implementation on the ground, it is crucial to empower the local governments and advance the decentralization agenda.
- Public participation must be enhanced in line with providing capacity building, technical assistance and funding to local governments. Reliable data through effective Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) is needed for localising the SDGs. Data collection with public participation will ensure more impactful results.

d) Key Challenges & Recommendations to Stakeholders
- There is a strong basis for implementing SDGs at local level, building on existing strengths and achievements. The 2030 Agenda is very comprehensive and ambitious and its implementation may seem daunting to local governments. However, the priorities of most cities are already aligned with the SDGs and local governments have already been taking action on many targets for many years now. Awareness raising efforts need to highlight this.
- Policy integration (more policy coherence, less duplication) and improved governance at all levels will be critical. There is an urgent need to further empower local governments through 'real' decentralisation and a more enabling environment. Local governments need to be supported with enhanced mandates, resources (financial and human) and capacities and pro-decentralisation legal framework.
- Local governments alone cannot achieve the goals. People need to be at the centre of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – not just as recipients – but also in its implementation. Strong partnerships between different levels of government and with civil society, academia, and the private sector need to be forged.
- Intermediaries can play a key role in bridging gaps. Association of cities help share knowledge and promote cooperation among cities but have also a key role to play in enhancing communication between local and national governments, promoting the replication and up-scaling of good practices and influencing policies. Other intermediaries, including multilateral financial institutions, international organizations, think tanks, etc. may help to link cities with the required finance, technologies and capacity building.
- HLS ESC should leverage its comparative advantage and focus mainly on the environment-related SDGs and targets. HLS ESC can play an important role as a platform to help localise the SDGs by fostering city-to-city cooperation and developing 'champions' among cities, while working with national governments to create the necessary enabling environment and promoting replication and up-scaling of good practices.

Thematic Session A4
"Better City-to-city Cooperation"

a) Background

City-to-city cooperation is widely adopted as a practical means to transfer environmental management know-how and experiences from one city to others. SDG Goal 17 also promotes global partnership for sustainable development with particular focuses on knowledge sharing, diffusion of environmentally sound technologies and targeted capacity-building through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. This session examines how intercity cooperation functions and how it can be further enhanced.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Dr. Junichi Fujino	Senior Researcher	National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), Japan
Panellists			
1	Mr. Yoshiharu Inoue	Manager, International Environmental Strategies Division, Environment Bureau	Kitakyushu City, Japan
2	Mr. Makoto Mihara	Assistant Manager, International Cooperation, Environment Bureau	Osaka City, Japan
3	Dr. Nguyen Trung Viet	Head of Climate Change Bureau, Department of Natural Resources and Environment	Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam
4	Ms. Meg Yandoc	Communication Specialist	CDIA
5	Ms. Chee Anne Roño	Program Manager	Clean Air Asia
6	Mr. Takahiro Ikenoue	Acting Director, Office of Climate Change	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
7	Dr. Bernadia Tjandradewi	Secretary-General	UCLG-ASPAC

c) Summary of Discussions

- What do cities want to learn from other cities? What can be transferred from one city to others? What worked and what did not?
    - Intercity cooperation is helpful, but not easy to conduct well. A learning city now can be a mentor city later.
    - A number of partnerships between Japanese cities (e.g. Kitakyushu city) and Chinese cities have been established on the particular challenge of air pollution (especially for reducing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and PM2.5) under initiatives of "Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting (TEMM) among China, Korea and Japan).
    - A good example of collaboration between Osaka and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is how Osaka supported HCMC to develop its "Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2016-2020 towards 2025". The support included preparing city-level emissions inventory (by IGES Kitakyushu), GHG mitigation scenarios and reduction targets (with the Asia-Pacific Integrated Model (AIM)). Further, business groups helped to explore the feasibility of pilot projects. An

example is how liquid fertiliser has been produced in HCMC (using Japanese technology) is then applied for the cultivation of organic vegetable, which are sold in Aeon (a Japanese) supermarket) under Japan's Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM).

- o Policy dialogue between the cooperating cities is important. Cities need to outline clear terms for all parties involved in the cooperative partnership, such as governance structure, completion date, action list etc. and be backed by a formal agreement, such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

- What are the interests and incentives of the mentor cities? What were the costs and benefits by engaging in intercity cooperation? What do you require to the recipient cities?
  - o Many cities in developing countries are keen to learn from cities in developed countries. However, cities in developed countries face constraints and limitations in their engagement (financial resources, human resources, and support from local citizens).
  - o Understanding the needs and situation of the partner/recipient city is essential to establish effective technical cooperation.

- What are the required roles of the intermediators and network managers? How can the knowledge sharing and capacity-building be best facilitated?
  - o Several organisations are active in this area. For example, CDIA is establishing 'centres of learning' in cities; Clean Air Asia is conducting C^3 (city-to-city cooperation) programme; and UCLG-ASPAC operates 'Key Knowledge Management Hub', where cities can share good practices and inspirational stories to catalyse innovation in other cities, especially on how to make projects implementable in spite of funding, capacity and other constraints, as shown by the case of Kitakyushu-Hai Phong cooperation in air pollution management.
  - o Help to expand the areas of cooperation – from environmental issues to others– such as education etc.
  - o Good city level projects are able to mutually fulfill the goals of both cities. To avoid a 'top-down' approach, the real needs of citizens should be reflected, and facilitation is required when involving citizens to define those needs.

d) Key Challenges & Recommendations to Stakeholders

- Cities, especially the larger cities (due to their large impacts, both positive and negative), should leverage on their prominent status and embrace stronger responsibility to contribute to global society. Cities may try harder to tap into existing resources within the city to address their budget and manpower constraints. Sometimes, resources may not necessarily be from within the city.
- It is challenging to justify to citizens in 'mentor cities' that tax money should be spent in other 'recipient; cities which are unfamiliar to citizens. Therefore it's necessary to clarify the benefits to citizens in a clear and concise way. To inspire change, it is crucial to have communication skills to convey compelling stories. These stories should be realistic, and may even include challenges and mistakes made, so that other cities could learn.
- For effective 'matchmaking', clear mapping of good practices supplied by 'mentor cities' and the needs demanded by 'recipient cities is important. Mutual understanding and reciprocity is important so that both 'mentor' and 'recipient' cities are motivated to participate and sustain the partnership..
- In implementation, action lists (step-by step concrete measures that are based on scientific findings) are the core of collaboration. It is advisable for the 'recipient' city to start small with one or two projects and prepare adequate human resources establish a sound business case. Once some small-scale projects have been demonstrated as effective, and the subsequent challenge is how to scale up those projects.

- National agencies may consider establishing a programmatic approach for city-to-city cooperation to develop a broader 'network'-type collaboration among many cities and diverse stakeholders. The programme should involve the private sector, as the existing and past initiatives suggest that good projects are often based on public -private partnerships.