

SUMMARY OF THEMATIC SESSION B1, B2, B3 & B4

Thematic Session B1 “Green Buildings”

a) Background

Globally, buildings use about 40% of the world’s energy, 25% of water, 40% of resources, and they emit about 1/3 of global GHG emissions, which is the largest contributor among other sectors according to UNEP. Existing buildings have significant energy saving potentials by retrofitting energy efficient equipment and insulating building envelopes. Rapidly urbanising Asia with numerous new building constructions has enormous opportunities to yield the benefits too by introducing proper policies, regulations and incentives. As the usage of renewable energy and energy efficiency as well as resource-use efficiency and clean and environmentally sound technologies are stressed in the Goal 7 and 9, this session focuses on the ways to promote green buildings in Asian cities.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Ms. Milag San Jose-Ballesteros	Regional Director for Southeast Asia and Oceania	C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
Panelists			
1	Mr. Jonathan Cheng	Deputy Director, Green Building Policy Department	Building and Construction Authority, Singapore
2	Mr. Frediswinda de Leon De Guzman	Engineer III, Green Building Unit, Department of the Building Official	Quezon City, the Philippines
3	Dr. Nguyen Trung Viet	Senior Advisor to the Director of Department of Natural Resources and Environment on Climate Change and International Relations, Head of Advisory Group to Climate Change Steering Board of Ho Chi Minh City	Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam
4	Ms. Shahrinaz Maamor	Associate, Environment	Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA), Malaysia
5	Mr. Nguyen Khac Tiep	Sustainable Energy Expert	Former UNIDO Official

c) Summary of Discussions

- Incentives – economic and non-economic ones – can help spur and promote the development of green buildings. These incentives include green certification mechanisms, tax credit provisions, additional floor or land space rewards and the overall lowering of barriers for the private sector.
- As incentives alone cannot be the sole measures, providing complementary laws and regulations and ensuring their compliance are also important for green building development. Some examples highlighted include ordinance, penalties, and even withholding of building permits.

- Extensive dialogue and timely engagement with various stakeholders – including building owners, tenants, and industry – is critical to promoting green buildings.
- All the experiences shared by the cities clearly showed that it is essential for the public sector to take the lead in green building development in Asian countries.
- And while there are many measures and incentives available to encourage green building development, they are heavily context-dependent and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. For example, Singapore’s experience differs significantly from Quezon City, which differs from Ho Chi Minh City.

d) Key Challenges & Recommendations to Stakeholders

- Information is critical, but getting sound data and managing that data can be a challenge. There is also the need to ensure that these data are effectively communicated to stakeholders; the data need to make sense to them. Stakeholders also need to be aware of any upfront costs for green building development.
- Integrating green building plans into a city’s overall development strategies and goals is important to prevent conflicting policies. Cities need to work across multiple agencies.
- There continues to be a lack of human resource in many Asian cities, especially technical expertise in understanding how best to develop green buildings.
- There needs to be a stronger connection between the national and the sub-national. For example, national policies and plans need to connect with city-level implementation. National policies also need to be revisited as cities look at developing green buildings.
- The monitoring, measuring, and tracking of progress of current ESC Model Cities and related partnerships in relation to green buildings should be a focus in the “New HLS”.

Thematic Session B2 “Transport and Green Mobility”

a) Background

Target No.2 of Goal 11 under the SDGs states: “By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons.” Transport also plays an important role for achieving other SDGs, among them Goal 7 (energy) for energy efficiency and Goal 3 (health) for traffic accidents. This session explored how these targets can be achieved.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Mr. Roland Haas	Programme Director	GIZ
Panelists			
1	Ms. Pornsri Kitcham	Advisor to Mayor	Nonthaburi Municipality, Thailand
2	Mr. Arif Dermawan	Project Coordinator, Malang City Environment Board	Malang City, Indonesia
3	Ms. Jang Seoyoung	Program Officer	Suwon City, Korea
4	Mr. Gyesoo Jung	Assistant Manager	Korea Environment Corporation (KECO)
5	Ms. Chee Anne Roño	Program Manager	Clean Air Asia
6	Mr. Amit Bhatt	Director-Transport	World Resources Institute (WRI) India
7	Mr. Nguyen Khac-Tiep	Sustainable energy expert, former UNIDO official	Independent consultant

c) Summary of Discussion

- What do cities need to do? What are they doing already?
 - The transport sector plays a major role in SDGs and their target achievements. In SDG No. 11 (cities), 7 (energy) and 3 (health/traffic accidents), transport is explicitly mentioned. In some other SDGs, although transport has an implicit role even if it is not directly mentioned.
 - Changes in society (aging or shrinking population etc.) require adequate transport planning and solutions. Cities should not only conduct transport planning, but also follow up with concrete actions.
 - Community engagement and media involvement are keys to implement successful sustainable transport campaign. Sustainable transport involves not only environment issues, but also road safety, health issues and financial consideration, and they can be framed along these to appeal to citizens.
- What are the enabling conditions needed and obstacles faced in achieving sustainable mobility for passengers and freight in the urban context?
 - If electric vehicles (EV) are considered, the price of EV is a common concern among cities in promoting sustainable transport.

- However, before taking any political decisions on EV promotion, analyses of the energy mix (share of high carbon fuels) in the countries and well-to-wheel consideration and alternative modes are necessary.
- The contribution to total CO₂ emissions of freight vehicles is as high as up to 50%, although their number is below 10% of the total vehicle fleet.

d) Key Challenges & Recommendations to Stakeholders

- Pedestrian-friendly and other non-motorised transport modes are good options to be promoted. Yet there will be resistance from the public. Those measures need to be accompanied by public participation and consultation procedures as well as awareness raising campaigns in order to achieve change of mind-set.
- Urban development planning has to go hand in hand with transport planning, which need to be regulated by government authorities.
- Green freight needs to be considered in national and urban transport policies, through promotion of cleaner trucks, reduction of empty trucks, and improvement of supply chain management.
- Champions – either mayors or lower level management staff — are crucial in achieving progress toward sustainable development.

Thematic Session B3 “Sustainable City Planning”

a) Background

Asian cities are rapidly urbanising. People are moving to cities and it is estimated that as much as 44 million new urban residents move into Asian cities every year, according to an ADB report. Rapid urbanisation has also been the key driver of Asia’s dynamic growth as the same report estimates over 90% of wealth is produced by the urban population in East Asia and over 70% in Southeast Asia and South Asia. However, as cities grow, they inevitably create suburbs often in an uncontrolled way, causing traffic congestion and environmental problems. As the SDG Goal 11 highlights the necessity of making cities sustainable, this session focused on how to ensure the quality of urbanisation in Asian cities.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Dr. Tadashi Matsumoto	Senior Policy Analyst	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Panellists			
1	Mr. Tetsuya Nakajima	Executive Director for Development Cooperation, International Affairs Bureau	Yokohama City, Japan
2	Engr. Frediswinda de Leon De Guzman	Engineer III, Green Building Unit, Department of the Building Official	Quezon City, Philippines
3	Dr. Xiaomei Tan	Climate Change Specialist	Global Environmental Facility (GEF)
4	Mr. Takashi Otsuka	Director	ICLEI Japan
5	Dr. Quang Nguyen	Viet Nam Programme Manager	UN-Habitat
6	Mr. Amit Bhatt	Director-Transport	World Resources Institute (WRI), India

c) Summary of Discussion

- There is a clear need for transport-oriented development. However, there are issues with silos within cities – land use and transportation departments do not always effectively collaborate.
- Currently there are inadequate levels of public consultation, leading to the establishment of infrastructure which creates social segregation or is built in areas without demand.
- Citizens are not adequately consulted on urban development leading to the creation of social segregation or infrastructure which lacks demand.
- Urban greening/agriculture or forestry is not always well supported in cities in both developed and developing countries leading to a lack of green public space.
- Inequity and segregation of social groups in cities is caused or worsened by certain kinds of development, such as large shopping malls and gated communities.
- Financing is a key issue for infrastructure planning. Cities are unable to access adequate levels of funding and need to be able to attract inward investment.
- What goes wrong in cities in Asia? Congestion, urban sprawl and inefficient land use.

d) Key Recommendations to Stakeholders

- Prioritise key projects, both land use (such as improvement of central business districts) and infrastructure (such as public transport).
- Apply a holistic approach in planning, ensuring that the organisational structure of the city encourages cross-department collaboration. In particular, pursue transport-oriented development based on the 'Avoid-Shift-Improve' model.
- Work with the citizens to raise awareness and understanding of city planning, and lead to more integrated land use.
 - Encourage green public spaces – even smaller ones – to create people-friendly, walkable areas which attract local businesses, both creating a lively atmosphere within the city and boosting local incomes.
- Create incentives to attract inward investment. Well-planned infrastructure will boost green growth and pay for itself over the longer term.
- Reduce infrastructure costs by more efficient land use planning. Introduce mechanisms to capture value increase.

Thematic Session B3 “Sustainable City Planning”

a) Background

Urban resilience has become an increasingly important concept in recent years as cities are experiencing both new opportunities and challenges that come with the rapid urbanization. While city managers are working to spur the economy of their cities and ensure uninterrupted basic urban services (for example, water and transport), they are also faced with new challenges, such as 100-year floods, tidal inundation, coastal erosion, and water shortage, among others, which result in serious damage to cities and cause ripple effects to the country’s economy, and sometimes even to the region and the world.

Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities of the SDGs – to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable – provides a good opportunity for cities and those who work with cities to focus their resources and investment on how to make cities more resilient to unexpected stresses and shocks. The session aims to learn what ‘urban resilience’ means to different stakeholders; how it is being implemented in practice; and draw lessons for one another to help cities achieve their resilience goal.

b) List of Speakers

No.	Name	Title	Affiliation
Moderators			
1	Mr. Saengroaj Srisawaskraisorn	Climate Adaptation Specialist, Regional Environment Office	USAID
Panelists			
1	Ms. Pornsri Kichtham	Advisor to Mayor	Nonthaburi, Thailand
2	Mr. Ernie Rojo	Executive Assistant II and Local Economic and Investments Promotion Officer, Office of the Mayor	Dipolog, Philippines
3	Ms. Cristina Romualdez	City Councilor	Tacloban, Philippines
4	Dr. Nguyen Tung Lam	Director	Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE), Viet Nam
5	Dr. Jim Jarvie	Mercy Corps Network Director	Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN)
6	Ms. Laidis Mias-Cea	Asia-Pacific Coordinator, Cities and Climate Change Initiative	UN-Habitat

c) Summary of Discussion

- Resilience-building creates both winners and losers. Cities and stakeholders need to ask themselves who is implementing the resilience activity and who are the beneficiaries. Cities need to contextualize resilience.
- Resilience therefore cannot just benefit a few. Resilience-building activities need to be inclusive and equitable with a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups in the community.
- Resilience is also more than just disaster risk management or climate change adaptation. Good resilience-building activities need to consider social and economic dimensions, as well as climate change mitigation (e.g. low emission development, energy efficiency).
- Resilience should not be seen as merely protecting assets and infrastructure, but should be viewed as an effort to create a system that can help cities survive, recover, and thrive in times of crisis.
- Partnership is critical to implement resilience-building activities in cities. This requires a whole systems approach, involving different stakeholders, particularly the private sector.
- Resilience is ultimately a governance challenge – strong leadership and good governance are key foundations for resilient city development.

d) Key Challenges and Recommendations to Stakeholders

- All levels of government need to have a common understanding of the SDGs and targets, including Goal 11. The SDGs need to be translated and reflected into national and sub-national plans. Mechanisms to support localizing the SDGs are therefore critical to implementation.
- Cities continue to lack capacities and knowledge to localize actions on the SDGs, particularly beyond responding to disasters. Expertise from development partners is needed to fill this capacity and knowledge gap.
- Knowledge by itself, however, is insufficient for cities to build resilience. There needs to be effective delivery systems or mechanisms, such as trainings and peer-to-peer learnings, to make knowledge active for stakeholders.
- Institutionalizing resilience into government processes remains a challenge. The principles of resilience – such as robustness, redundancy, responsiveness, diversity and flexibility, modularity, and safe failure – need to be mainstreamed into city government processes and be integrated into cities' land-use plans, economic plans, and other related development plans.