











## **Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024**

Towards Decarbonization in the Asia Pacific through 2025 NDCs

20 - 22 August 2024 | Bangkok, Thailand

## **Summary Report**



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# Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALP	Asia LEDS Partnership
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
COP29	Conference of the Parties 29 (in Baku, Azerbaijan)
СРС	Competitive Procurement Centre (for Clean Energy)
EE	Energy Efficiency
EV	Electric Vehicle
GCAP	Global Climate Action Partnership
GHG	Green House Gas
HDPACs	High-Level Development Policy Action Committee
LRT	Light Rail Transit
LEDS	Low-emission Development Strategies
LT-LEDS	Long-Term Low-emission Development Strategies
MRT	Mass Rapid Transit
MRV	Measurement, Reporting, and Verification
NBS	Nature-Based Solutions
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
OTEC	Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion
RDMA	Regional Development Mission for Asia
SPP	Smart Power Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## **Overview**

## **Introduction to the Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024**

The Asia LEDS Partnership (ALP) Forum 2024, held from 20th to 22nd August in Bangkok, Thailand, emerged as a landmark event in the drive towards a low-carbon future for the Asia-Pacific region. Hosted by the Asia LEDS Partnership (ALP) Secretariat and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and supported by global institutions supporting climate action, such as the United States Department of State (US DoS) funded Global Climate Action Partnership (GCAP), United States Agency for International Development – Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID – RDMA) funded Smart Power Program, and the NDC Partnership, the forum attracted leaders, policymakers, experts and youth dedicated to implementing an ambitious climate agenda in the region. This dynamic convergence highlighted the region's commitment to accelerating its transition to a climate resilient, net zero emissions future.

Since its inception in 2012, the ALP has evolved from its initial goal of improving regional coordination on LEDS and green growth to becoming a dynamic peer-learning network driving inter-regional collaboration on low-carbon and climate-resilient strategies.

A decade later, the Partnership continues to build on its legacy of fostering climate leadership and a regional community focused on implementing national climate commitments by developing and deploying innovative stakeholder engagement processes, climate financing mechanisms and cutting-edge solutions, while preparing to enhance climate ambitions in the NDCs. The 2024 Forum was not just a reflection on past achievements but a launchpad for future innovations, highlighting the unveiling of the Southeast Asia Competitive Procurement for Clean Power (CPC), poised to bolster regional decarbonization efforts. The event reaffirmed the region's unwavering commitment to sustainable development and collaboration, ensuring continued momentum towards achieving the Paris commitments.

More than 150 participants from 32 Asia-Pacific countries engaged in forward-looking sessions and dynamic discussions that witnessed earlycareer professionals interacting and exchanging ideas with seasoned policymakers. It focused not only on the need for robust commitments but also on just transition and practical sectoral approaches, with a strong emphasis on gender parity, inclusive and whole-of-society approach, and interlinkages between adaptation and mitigation ambitions.

The Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024 was more than a conference; it was a movement—an inspiring convergence of ideas, innovation, and ambition that set the stage for a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future for the Asia-Pacific region. The ALP has become a catalyst for transformative climate action, continuously pushing boundaries and advancing a collective vision for a greener tomorrow.



#### **Key Messages**



#### **Aligning NDCs with LT-LEDS and National Plans**

This alignment ensures that climate goals are not just standalone targets but are considered and integrated into the broader development agenda, reflecting local contexts, priorities, and scales, especially when defining unconditional commitments.

Multiple countries are already developing the new cycle of NDCs 3.0 to reflect this alignment and other sector plans, emphasizing the need for integrated planning and implementation, including interlinkages between adaptation and mitigation ambitions. Breaking the silos between NDCs and climate change strategies, and alignment with SDG roadmaps and strategies is crucial for achieving substantial emission reductions, climate resilience development and securing climate finance.



#### **Strengthening Coordination and Inclusion**

Countries are making strides towards robust inter-ministerial coordination, with growing recognition of the importance of involving sub-national governments in the planning process. A strong emphasis was placed on integrating aspects of gender, workforce development, inclusion, and youth engagement in both the preparation and implementation of NDCs 3.0, ensuring that these efforts are inclusive and equitable.



#### **Domestic Financing and Private Sector Engagement**

The role of domestic financing is pivotal for NDC implementation, alongside a clear need to engage the private sector. Participants underscored the importance of clear policy frameworks that encourage public-private partnerships and innovative financing models to develop bankable, climate-resilient projects that attract investment. Simplifying and demystifying international finance mechanisms can make climate funding more accessible. The need for and importance of finance ministries in planning and prioritizing climate action was also expressed by countries.



# Knowledge Sharing (including Technology Transfer) and Capacity Building

Technology transfer emerged as a critical enabler for achieving decarbonization goals. However, many countries face challenges in preparing LT-LEDS and monitoring NDC implementation due to a lack of technical resources and support. To overcome this, there is a pressing need for platforms that provide access to new tools, resources, and technical support, facilitating the adoption of clean energy technologies and sustainable practices.



#### **Standardizing Data and Transparency**

Improving coordination through standardized data collection, sharing, analysing, reporting, and transparency within and across countries is imperative. This approach supports evidence-based policymaking and enhances monitoring capacities, allowing for better tracking of progress towards NDC and LT- LEDS goals.

Exploring frameworks for enhancing transparency in climate reporting, including the use of MRV systems, to build trust among stakeholders and improve policy implementation.

#### **Localized Solutions for Sustainable Transport**



Decarbonizing the transport sector requires localized, context-specific solutions. Many countries face the dual challenges of rising private car ownership and low public bus ridership. Exploring innovative public transport systems, such as electric buses, shared mobility services and other forms of non-motorized transport, with attention to safety, accessibility, and infrastructure development came up as viable options. Context specific solutions include policy levers to either incentivise (using discounts, lower tariffs for EV purchases, public transport subsidies, preferential terms on PPP investment projects and on multi-modal public transport systems) or disincentivise (high tariffs and vehicle tax for all or certain types of vehicles like SUVs).

Examining the role of smart technologies, including real-time data, GPS, and mobile apps were recommended, in optimizing transport networks, improving efficiency, and reducing emissions at the local level. Promoting electric mobility, building charging infrastructure, and implementing policies that support large-scale renewable energy deployment are seen as immediate priorities.



#### **Regional Collaboration and Learning**

The Forum highlighted the importance of regional collaboration (between development partners, governments, financial institutions, private sector and other stakeholders) and peer learning as essential tools for countries to share best practices, overcome common barriers, and scale solutions for a just energy transition. Initiatives like the CPC in Bangkok are pivotal in fostering clean technology adoption and enhancing regional cooperation through innovative procurement frameworks and knowledge-sharing. Besides, the role of regional organizations like the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is important in mobilizing climate finance, with significant investments already being channelled into the region.

#### **Empowering Local Governments**



Empowering local and regional governments is crucial for climate action. Designing strategies for integrating local climate action plans with national and regional policies will prove beneficial. Building their capacity in technology procurement, financial planning, and resource management will enable them to lead climate initiatives more effectively.

Development partners are encouraged to create long-term platforms for stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and successful LT-LEDS implementation, with active involvement from National Designated Authorities and Direct Access Entities. Furthermore, local governments need to explore mechanisms to improve access to climate finance, including through national budgets, international funds, and public-private partnerships, enabling them to fund sustainable projects.



#### **Integrating Climate and Social Goals**

Integrating climate action with long-term social development goals ensures that strategies are not only sustainable but also inclusive and equitable, protecting vulnerable communities and ensuring job creation in green sectors. This holistic approach aligns environmental objectives with broader socio-economic development, supporting a resilient and sustainable future for all. Women, Youth and Marginalized Communities involvement in renewable energy initiatives and other climate-related activities is essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable development.



### **Adaptability and Flexibility in Climate Strategies**

LT-LEDS are adaptable frameworks that can be recalibrated based on national circumstances. They serve as key tools for ministries, financial institutions, and the private sector in identifying priorities and guiding long-term investments in climate action.



#### **Importance of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS)**

NBS are essential for addressing multiple environmental challenges such as air pollution, biodiversity conservation, and emissions reduction. By advancing sustainable development, NBS enhance both social and environmental resilience. They are cost effective, scalable, and offer numerous co-benefits such as improved livelihoods, climate adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. These approaches could enhance co-benefits and minimize trade-offs across adaptation and mitigation actions and complement each other.



## **Inaugural Session**

#### Introduction

Day 1 of the Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024 began with opening remarks from **Emani Kumar**, *Lead Director of the Asia LEDS Partnership and Deputy Secretary General of ICLEI*, emphasizing the critical need for ambitious climate actions. Keynote addressed by **Daniele Violetti**, *Senior Director of Programs Coordination at the UNFCCC Secretariat*, inaugural address by **Dr. Fuad Humbatov**, *a member of the COP 29 Presidency*, and remarks by **Dr. Sangmin Nam**, *Director, Environment and Development Division of ESCAP* highlighted the importance of aligning NDCs with LT-LEDS to drive regional decarbonization efforts. **Deo Gabinete**, *Regional Manager, NDC-Partnership* stressed on the importance of resource mobilization, finance, and capacity building to achieving the climate goals.

The major highlight of the day was the launch of the **Competitive Procurement Center (CPC) for Clean Power** by USAID. Introduced by **John Bruce Wells**, *Chief of Party for USAID's SPP*, and officially launched by **Michael Ronning**, *Mission Director of USAID's Regional Development Mission for Asia*, the CPC aims to be a one-stop service for best practices and technical know-how in the competitive acquisition of clean technology and energy systems. This initiative marks a significant step forward in accelerating clean energy deployment in Southeast Asia and fostering transparent, affordable procurement practices. Supported by a \$1.3 million grant from USAID's Southeast Asia SPP, the CPC will offer essential resources such as case studies, market evaluations, and customized procurement guidelines, managed by ICLEI as the Secretariat in partnership with Creagy Company, SuSca Group, and the World Resources Institute. A user-friendly procurement storefront website will also be developed to provide access to research outputs and tailored technical support services.

The day's **plenary sessions** focused on integrating climate goals into national and sectoral plans, enhancing inter-ministerial coordination, and addressing challenges in NDC enhancement. The discussions laid a strong foundation for the forum's subsequent sessions, reinforcing the commitment to regional cooperation and capacity building.





#### **Highlights from Sessions**

**Plenary 1** focused on the preparation of LT- LEDS and ensuring alignment with NDCs. The session identified the challenge of a siloed approach to climate planning and underscored the importance of developing strategies in tandem, highlighting the need for cohesive policies across sectors, including energy and transport, to meet both short-term and long-term climate goals. Presentations in the session also elaborated on progress made towards achieving Paris climate targets and the outcomes and recommendations of the First Global Stocktake (GST1) on the Parties' progress towards these goals as well as remaining gaps to be addressed. The discussions emphasized the critical role of financial alignment and private sector investment in supporting the successful implementation of NDCs and LT-LEDS. It also highlighted the increased focus on NBS and recognized the role of women and financial institutions like the ADB in achieving climate goals.

**Plenary 2** delved into sector-specific strategies for developing and implementing LT-LEDS, with an emphasis on cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, youth engagement, and the integration of innovative technologies. Key sectors addressed included industrial decarbonization, energy sector diversification, sustainable transport, agricultural practices, and forest conservation. Addressing capacity-building, technology, and finance gaps were identified as key to the successful development and implementation of LT-LEDS. Speakers discussed the importance of stakeholder engagement and inclusive planning processes to ensure that LT-LEDS reflect the diverse needs of society and contribute to broader socio-economic goals as well as mitigation and adaptation ambitions, making these strategies more effective and sustainable.

The country deep dives in **Plenary 3** provided detailed insights into how different countries are approaching their LT-LEDS. Key highlights included Kazakhstan's integration of emerging technologies like green hydrogen and nuclear power in both their business-as-usual and net-zero planning scenarios. These scenarios were developed using hybrid models for LT-LEDS-NDC formulation, enabling data-driven forecasting, that combines multiple assessment models, balancing socio-economic considerations with environmental goals. Kazakhstan has also set a long-term vision of carbon neutrality by 2060, with sectoral strategies in energy, agriculture, and waste management playing key roles. Subsequently, Mongolia highlighted its approach which involves developing a forward-looking 2050 policy through High-Level Development Policy Action Committees (HDPACs). The 2050 policy also aims to embed climate change as a key issue into all relevant socio-economic policies. Various Ministries are also being restructured within Mongolia to strengthen focus on addressing climate change. Mongolia is also working towards comprehensive water management strategies, with a strong emphasis on public communication and stakeholder engagement. Additionally, the

session emphasized the promotion of energy efficiency measures while simultaneously increasing RE capacity, which has the potential to reduce overall demand for energy as well as establish linkages with adaptation strategies. Countries also emphasised the need for thorough assessment of the actual cost of blended and clean fuels with emphasis on local context and conditions as against relying on global studies to develop local policies. Countries were in broad agreement that local-level actions and impacts will lead to more relevant and effective decisions at higher levels of policymaking.

Overall, this Plenary highlighted the value of regional collaboration including partnerships between and among youth, women, business, local government, and national government, technology transfer between countries and exchange of knowledge and best practices, increase in avenues of finance, usage of quality data to improve MRV and skilling/upskilling of workforce specifically towards green jobs as some of the measures that could help countries support the implementation of LT-LEDs and establish linkages with adaptation ambitions.

#### **LT-LEDS Clinics**

#### 1. Policies & Regulatory Frameworks Clinic

The Policies Clinic concentrated on the necessity of robust policy frameworks that are essential for the successful implementation of LT-LEDS. Discussions revolved around the engagement of the private sector and the establishment of inclusive approaches that ensure policy coherence across various levels of governance. It was noted that engaging the private sector is crucial for mobilizing the required financial resources and that public-private partnerships can significantly accelerate progress. The clinic highlighted the importance of developing strong institutional frameworks, that are both horizontally and vertically aligned, to ensure that policies are effectively executed and monitored, thus supporting the overall success of LT-LEDS initiatives.

The session also highlighted the role of participatory approaches through stakeholder engagement, which have been shown to improve governance and project outcomes. Examples included providing incentives for startups to spur innovation and encouraging knowledge sharing at all levels, including regional cooperation and South-South cooperation, to foster the dissemination of best practices. The clinic emphasized the importance of nature-based solutions and initiatives like seed banks to preserve biodiversity, as well as empowering women in climate-smart villages as crucial stakeholders in community-based adaptation and resilience efforts. During the Clinic, Thailand shared that the country is working on enhancing its MRV system to improve data aggregation and analysis for better inventory accuracy and tracking progress. Thailand



is planning initiatives around carbon capture and green hydrogen, aiming to integrate these into the national energy strategy. The Department of Climate Change and Environment is coordinating efforts across key sectors—energy, transport, waste management, industry, and natural resources—to align with Thailand's NDCs.

#### 2. Institutional Arrangements Clinic

The Institutional Arrangements Clinic focused on the significance of creating centralized coordinating bodies at both national and subnational levels to manage cross-sectoral actions effectively, thereby ensuring cohesive implementation of LT-LEDS. Successful models such as Sri Lanka's National Climate Board and the Philippines' Cabinet Cluster for Adaptation and Mitigation were highlighted as effective frameworks that enhance coordination at the subnational level.

Moreover, the clinic emphasized the importance of inter-country coordination through knowledge sharing of best practices on institutional mechanisms. A key takeaway was the proposal to establish a global platform to capture and share data across countries, which would not only highlight best practices but also facilitate the dissemination of innovative approaches at a global level. The discussion also stressed the need to adapt successful national-level schemes to local contexts, particularly to address the needs of marginalized communities by establishing local bodies that can aggregate community demands, thereby enabling more targeted climate financing. Additionally, setting clear KPIs and establishing systems for regular review and adjustment of policies based on performance, and developing comprehensive data platforms and robust tracking mechanisms were reiterated, which will also help subnational governments to report progress on climate initiatives.

During discussions, Papua New Guinea highlighted that it currently lacks a LT-LEDS and requires significant technical assistance for its development. The country faces substantial energy infrastructure challenges, including frequent blackouts, which hinder the progress of clean energy initiatives. While data aggregation is conducted by implementing agencies, there is no standardized framework, particularly at the subnational level, which affects the consistency and reliability of climate data. Financial support is also a major hurdle for advancing public transport and clean energy projects, and there is a need for clear roadmaps and technical guidance to address these gaps.

#### 3. Climate Finance Fiscal Instruments Clinic

The Fiscal Policy session explored the crucial role of fiscal mechanisms in enabling the implementation of LT-LEDS. Discussions focused on leveraging tools such as carbon pricing, green bonds, and tax incentives to mobilize funding for low-carbon development. Participants



underscored the need for aligning national budgets with climate goals, ensuring that fiscal policies not only support emission reduction efforts but also drive sustainable economic growth. The session also highlighted challenges, including the need for transparent and accountable climate finance systems, and the importance of creating fiscal environments that attract private sector investment. Regional collaboration, in terms of knowledge sharing and organising knowledge exchange events was recommended to enable alignment of fiscal strategies, ensuring that financial resources are efficiently utilized across the Asia-Pacific region to support transformative climate actions.

#### 4. Technology Transfer and Capacity Building Clinic

The Technology session emphasized the importance of creating enabling environments for technology transfer and capacity building to support LT-LEDS. Key enablers identified included raising awareness and education to enhance the understanding and acceptance of new technologies. Ensuring that the university curriculum addresses emerging policies and technology is key in developing a work-force that is well prepared to deploy relevant technologies. The integration of industrial development policy with the climate agenda of the country was also emphasised. The session highlighted the role of the private sector in identifying and championing new technology. An inclusive approach to skill development and continuous training for work force across the value chain is essential. Best practices such as incentivizing startups and empowering women in climate-smart villages were showcased as examples for driving innovation and enhancing resilience at the community level.

At this clinic table, Lao PDR spoke about its focus on improving public transport with the introduction of electric vehicles, including an Electric BRT system. However, the country lacks a comprehensive policy and strategic framework for the transport sector, which is critical for scaling up EV adoption. Financial and strategic challenges persist, and there is a need for technical assistance to develop a robust MRV system for the national GHG inventory. Innovation and digitalization in the transport sector are also priorities, as Laos aims to modernize its transport infrastructure to meet climate goals.

#### Key Takeaways for Participants from Day 1

- Importance of Alignment: The forum underscored the critical need for aligning NDCs with LT-LEDS to ensure coherent policy
  frameworks and effective climate action. Participants were encouraged to take this alignment back to their national contexts to drive
  integrated and ambitious climate strategies linking both adaptation and mitigation strategies and development goals.
- Regional Collaboration: By sharing their challenges and successes, countries demonstrated the value of regional partnerships in tackling common obstacles. Participants were urged to continue fostering these connections beyond the forum to build a stronger, more resilient Asia-Pacific community.
- Role of Innovative Approaches: The discussions highlighted the importance of incorporating innovative technologies and inclusive approaches into LT-LEDS. Countries were encouraged to leverage the CPC and other regional resources to enhance their strategies and access the support needed for their implementation efforts.

## Day Two

## Introduction

Day Two of the Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024 delved deeper into enhancing NDCs and mainstreaming sustainable practices across sectors. The sessions in the first half of the day underscored the need for integrative approaches to finance, technology, and policy, focusing on scalable solutions that align short-term actions with long-term climate goals. The second half of the day delved into energy and transport focused sessions which touched upon multiple themes including electrification of mobility, linking regional and global initiatives in transport as well as strategies to accelerate the energy transition.

#### **Key Messages**

#### **Enhanced NDCs for 2025**

Countries were urged to develop NDCs that are not only ambitious but also implementable and bankable. This calls for the integration of financial mechanisms and private sector engagement to ensure the feasibility and sustainability of climate actions.

#### **Sustainable Transport**

Mainstreaming sustainable transport solutions into NDC 3.0 was highlighted as a critical area. The need to overcome challenges in vehicle electrification, especially in economies with high reliance on traditional automotive industries, was discussed.

#### **Clean Energy's Role**

Clean energy remains central to achieving ambitious NDC targets. The importance of scaling up investments in renewable energy and integrating innovative technologies was emphasized, alongside the need for regional cooperation to overcome market and supply chain barriers.

## **Plenary 4: Panel Discussion on Country Experiences**

The session provided a comprehensive recap of the gaps and challenges that countries face in their NDC journeys, highlighting areas such as inadequate financing, technological limitations, and the need for more robust MRV systems.

The session comprised of overview presentations by countries on the progress made from the previous round of NDC updates. This was followed by a panel discussion comprising of more country viewpoints as well as an intervention from the Youth participants on the envisaged role that Youth can play towards setting more ambitious goals and climate targets.







**Azerbaijan** emphasised its commitment to reducing GHG emissions by 40% by 2050, with a focus on increasing renewable energy to 30% of total energy production by 2030. A net-zero emission zone is being developed and a local carbon trading mechanism is being implemented. Three emission scenarios were presented: Business as Usual (BAU), Real Low Emission Development Scenario (RLEDS), and Best Low Emission Development Scenario (BLEDS), with the latter aiming for carbon neutrality. The "Green Energy Corridor" project, which will connect the Caspian Sea region to the EU via a submarine cable is a significant step towards green energy export. The country highlighted the importance of linking adaptation and mitigation ambitions to achieve climate goals. The country is making efforts in climate finance and international cooperation, especially leading up to COP29 in Baku.

**Cambodia** is focusing on strengthening its MRV systems and leveraging international support to bridge financing gaps. The country has made significant progress in the energy sector, where renewable energy now constitutes 57.3% of the total energy generation mix. Despite these advancements, Cambodia faces challenges in scaling up its NDC implementation, with only 44% of the total actions currently being implemented. The country emphasized the importance of private sector engagement and the need for capacity building to support ongoing climate actions. Cambodia is also making strides in gender and youth engagement, highlighting the importance of inclusive climate action.

**Philippines** has integrated climate resilience into its infrastructure projects to reduce vulnerabilities, focusing on enhancing disaster preparedness and promoting climate-resilient infrastructure. The country aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 75% by 2030, with 72.29% of this reduction conditional on international support. Significant investments are required, particularly in the energy, waste, and transportation sectors, with the energy sector alone needing an estimated USD 36.5 billion to meet its targets. The Philippines continues to explore partnerships and funding opportunities, including public-private partnerships and market-based mechanisms, to support its NDC implementation.

**Tajikistan** highlighted the need for external support to balance energy access with emissions reduction. The country's adaptation strategy identifies key sectors like energy, water resources, transport, and agriculture as both climate-sensitive and priorities for development. Tajikistan emphasized the importance of improving its monitoring and evaluation system to manage adaptation measures effectively and ensure progress towards its NDC targets. The country also stressed the need for capacity building, especially in the use of advanced analytical tools and data management technologies to improve the effectiveness of its MRV systems.

**Nauru** is exploring innovative energy solutions such as agri-voltaics and has operational solar farms, but it lacks secure battery storage systems. The country is interested in reinstating OTEC projects, but requires technical assistance to explore alternative technologies and develop a comprehensive energy roadmap. Nauru is also focused on electrifying the government fleet and conducting awareness campaigns on e-mobility. The country heavily relies on diesel-based power generation and lacks a robust Energy Management System, which poses challenges for tracking energy emissions. Capacity building in climate change and data aggregation (MRV) is critical to enhance Nauru's energy management capabilities.

**Kazakhstan** is making efforts to improve its MRV system, focusing on aligning with international standards and enhancing data quality. Capacity building and training are essential components of Kazakhstan's approach, with a special focus on data management.



## Plenary 5: NDCs 3.0 - Developing Enhanced, Implementable, and Bankable NDCs for 2025

Plenary 5 explored strategies for crafting enhanced NDCs that are both ambitious and actionable.

The NDC Partnership showcased the NDC 3.0 Navigator, a tool developed by the NDC Partnership to assist countries in creating actionable, financeable, and socially inclusive NDCs. It encourages a just transition, sector-specific strategies, and alignment with the Paris Agreement's long-term goals.

In the panel discussions, experts emphasized the need for countries to:

- Align short-term goals with long-term climate objectives (LT-LEDS).
- Mobilize finance through better planning and regional cooperation.
- Engage all levels of government and society for inclusive climate action.
- Set clear, actionable targets, especially in high-emission sectors like transportation.

Discussions underscored the need for clear financial frameworks and robust stakeholder engagement to support the development of NDCs that align with long-term climate goals. Speakers also highlighted the integration of climate resilience into planning processes as a critical component, with an emphasis on ensuring that NDCs are not only aligned with current climate targets but also adaptable to future challenges. The session concluded with a call for increased ambition in the next round of NDC submissions, emphasizing the importance of setting realistic yet bold targets that can drive significant progress towards the Paris Agreement goals.

#### Plenary 6: Mainstreaming Sustainable Transport in NDC 3.0

Key discussions in plenary 6 revolved around the advancements and challenges in sustainable transport, particularly in the context of NDCs. UNEP's Global Electric Mobility Programme, supported by international and regional agencies, aids over 50 low- to middle-income countries with grants and loans to support electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and transition, aiming to reduce emissions and dependence on fossil fuels.

The plenary highlighted the immense potential for electrifying the two- and three-wheeler (2&3W) market, especially in Southeast Asia, where countries like Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, and Malaysia account for over 95% of ASEAN's 2&3W population. This market, projected to triple in electric penetration by 2026 and reach 100% by 2040, is crucial for reducing emissions, as it already drives down global oil demand by approximately 1.8 million barrels per day. Challenges include the need for charging infrastructure, harmonized regulations, and standards for battery recycling and consumer protection.



Key market trends suggest that Asia will witness significant growth in electric mobility, particularly with e-scooters, battery-as-a-service models, and expanding cargo e-vehicles. UNEP's beta visualizer tool for global electric 2&3W data aids in tracking trends and encouraging policy alignment across member states.

Thailand highlighted that the EV adoption rate in Thailand's passenger car segment has seen a remarkable growth, with EVs now representing a 12% market share. However, the significant hurdle is the high prevalence of pickup trucks, which are difficult to electrify due to payload and battery size limitations, that has slowed the pace of EV adoption. To address this issue, the Electric Vehicle Association of Thailand (EVAT) is providing subsidies, reducing excise taxes, and waiving import duties to make EVs more affordable and accessible.

This growth of EVs is supported by government policies such as subsidies, excise tax reductions, and import duty waivers. Additionally, efforts are underway to develop a unified payment system for charging stations. However, challenges remain, including the high prevalence of non-electrified vehicle types and data collection hurdles that complicate the establishment of baselines for fuel efficiency and vehicle registration data. Collaborative efforts, alongside technical advancements in designing more efficient transport policies, were highlighted as crucial. The discussions also stressed on the need for improving fuel efficiency standards and supporting measures to encourage vehicle efficiency. The use of low-carbon fuels, such as biodiesel and biofuels, was suggested as a potential solution for older vehicles.

## Plenary 7: Role of Clean Energy in Achieving Ambitious NDC Targets

Plenary 7 highlighted significant strides made in the expansion of renewable energy, particularly in Azerbaijan, where initiatives such as the commissioning of a 206 MW solar power plant have substantially contributed to the country's ambitious targets. Azerbaijan is also developing a certification system for renewable energy consumers and conducting studies to assess its renewable energy potential, supported by international partners like the World Bank. Azerbaijan also outlined a strategic roadmap aiming for significant growth in offshore wind and integrated hydrogen production by 2030.

The SDG 7 Road Map initiative, which comprises 16 national and 8 sub-national road maps, aims to enhance energy access, promote renewable energy, and improve energy efficiency. The discussions highlighted that while many existing NDC targets are ambitious, there is significant potential for enhancement through regional cooperation, capacity building, and action-based reduction strategies.

The Global Wind Energy Council addressed the challenges of meeting ambitious renewable energy target. It highlighted that local manufacturing of components, such as turbines, will only become viable once installation reaches a gigawatt-scale per year. Until then, countries will need to rely on imports from regions with more cost-effective production capabilities. The session also emphasised the growing importance of carbon finance as a tool for supporting green energy projects, noting that investment levels need to triple between 2024 and 2030 to meet net-zero targets.





#### Key Takeaways for Participants from Day 2

- Actionable and Bankable NDCs: Participants were encouraged to focus on developing NDCs that are not only ambitious but also have clear pathways for implementation, supported by robust financial frameworks and stakeholder engagement.
- Scaling Up Clean Energy: Emphasizing the need for significant investment and regional cooperation to achieve clean energy targets, the discussions provided actionable insights into leveraging both public and private sector resources.
- Inclusive Climate Action: The importance of involving youth, women, and marginalized communities in the climate dialogue was a recurring theme, ensuring that climate actions are equitable and comprehensive.

A collaborative approach was suggested for maximizing efficiency and cost-effectiveness in renewable energy deployment. Countries could set up regional production facilities, each specializing in different components of wind technology infrastructure—for example, one country focusing on turbine production while another specializes in manufacturing foundations. This would optimize resources, reduce costs, and accelerate the deployment of renewable energy technologies across the region. By 2040, the renewable energy sector is expected to create 140 million jobs which will require skilled workforce, inclusive and conducive policies, labour market adjustment, fiscal incentives, feed-in tariffs, net metering, and a clear regulatory framework to attract private sector investment.

The discussion underscored the importance of regional cooperation, with countries like China, Korea, and Japan coordinating efforts to optimize renewable energy production across the region. The session also focused on the role of youth and innovation, emphasizing the need for inclusive policies that provide access to training and mentorship, thereby empowering young people to contribute to the clean energy movement.

# **Day Three**

## Introduction

Day Three of the Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024 centered on translating climate policies into actionable and bankable investments, and mainstreaming support for multilateral climate change actions. The sessions highlighted the importance of national roadmaps for clean energy and sustainable transport, focusing on the practical steps needed to meet ambitious NDC targets through multilevel and multi-stakeholder engagement.

### **Key Messages**



#### **Scalable Clean Energy Deployment**

The need for enabling large-scale deployment of clean energy through policy frameworks, competitive procurement, and public- private partnerships was emphasized. Participants were encouraged to develop national roadmaps that align with regional and global climate commitments.



#### **Sustainable Transport Solutions**

Sessions focused on designing effective national roadmaps for sustainable transport, with discussions on electrification policies, incentives, and overcoming infrastructure challenges.



#### **Investment in Climate Action**

A recurring theme was the translation of climate strategies into bankable projects that attract both public and private sector investments. Innovative financing mechanisms and support from international partners were highlighted as essential to bridging the investment gap.

#### **Energy and Transport Sessions**

In the Energy Session E1: Enabling Large-scale Deployment of Clean Energy, countries shared their experiences with clean energy policies, focusing on challenges such as grid integration and scaling up renewable energy projects. Michael Williamson, Section Chief of the Energy Division at UNESCAP, moderated the session and highlighted the importance of enhancing grid flexibility and storage solutions to accommodate the variability of renewable energy sources. Ken Haig from Amazon Web Services discussed the role of private sector investment in driving large-scale clean energy deployment, pointing to the need for governments to set clear and ambitious targets and to remove barriers to corporate renewable power procurement.

Department of Energy, Philippines presented an in-depth case study on the hybridisation of power generation on Palawan islands through both a policy and a technology lens. This project, which intends to replace diesel-based power generation with renewables is a great example of international collaboration with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) offering technical support towards enabling hybridisation.

Dr. Yuchen Lin presented Tianjin's strategies for achieving carbon emission peaking, focusing on energy-saving measures, new power systems, and low-carbon industrial development. Key projects include optimizing coal power operations, promoting renewable energy sources (solar and wind), and enhancing energy efficiency in industrial sectors. He also presented a case study on Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-city which serves as a model for sustainable urban development, featuring passive ultra-low energy buildings and a diversified renewable energy system.

The USAID SPP (Sustainable Partnerships Program) presented the role of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and its application to modern day energy systems. Apart from highlighting the role of correct sizing the BESS system to ensure optimal function and reasonable Rol, the SPP also presented options to deal with end of life applications including recycling and repurposing of used batteries.

Lao PDR presented a strong example of inter-regional power trading and procurement within Southeast Asia to demonstrate regional collaboration. Lao PDR also touched upon its plans for integrating green Hydrogen into the national energy system in a phased manner between 2030-2050.

### **The Transport Session T1**

Designing National Roadmaps for Clean and Sustainable Transport highlighted the importance of setting clear targets for vehicle electrification and developing supportive policies and incentives to accelerate the transition to sustainable transport. The session featured insights from various countries, including Tonga, where **Sione Misi**, *Energy Planner from the Tonga Department of Energy*, shared the country's roadmap that aims to achieve 70% renewable electricity by 2025 and tackle high private vehicle demand through policies encouraging the adoption of electric vehicles. **Kim Jong Min**, *Deputy Director of the Transportation Policy Division from the Seoul Metropolitan Government*, shared Seoul's experience with public transportation reforms, including the introduction of unlimited public transit passes and incentives for young adults, which have successfully reduced personal car use and promoted more sustainable travel behaviour. Below is a summary of the discussions on sustainable transport challenges and initiatives across various countries:

**Bhutan:** is in the early stages of adopting EVs, with limited infrastructure and free charging stations currently available. A roadmap for hydrogen as an alternative fuel is under development, focusing on the transport sector. The country faces challenges with grid infrastructure, which is currently insufficient to support the anticipated demand from EVs. To address these issues, Bhutan is exploring sustainable business models and requires technical assistance to develop a master plan for EV infrastructure and energy system enhancements.





**Nepal and Fiji** highlighted the need for behaviour change to promote sustainable transport, noting that private vehicle ownership is often seen as a status symbol.

**Indonesia** identified challenges in deploying EV charging stations in complex urban areas with heavy-duty trucks. Emphasized the need for support in designing charging schemes to reduce emissions. Establishing common emission reduction targets for ASEAN countries to foster regional cooperation is another collaborative approach suggested by Indonesia.

**Cambodia** faces difficulties due to outdated urban planning and inefficient public transport systems. Key constraints include budget shortfalls limiting public transport expansion, a preference for personal vehicles, particularly two-wheelers and recognition of electric mobility as a potential solution but lack of technical capacity to implement it at scale.

**Maldives** stressed the importance of the sea transport sector but lacks a comprehensive transport roadmap integrating marine transport across islands. Maldives also requires technical assistance for developing sustainable water transport connections.

Overall, these discussions reflect shared challenges in achieving sustainable transport and the necessity for infrastructure development, policy support, and regional collaboration among nations.

In the **Energy Session E2: Competitive Procurement of Clean Energy**, participants discussed the role of competitive procurement in reducing costs and enhancing the efficiency of clean energy projects. The newly launched Competitive Procurement Center by USAID, expected to support clean and renewable energy procurement across the Asia-Pacific region by offering resources, technical assistance, and policy research. Key areas of focus for scaling up renewable energy (RE) adoption included optimizing regulatory frameworks to allow third-party access, expanding the market via Direct Power Purchase Agreements (DPPAs), and enhancing data acquisition and communication systems.

The session, led by **Swetha Ravikumar**, *Executive Director of FSR Global* showcased successful procurement models in the region. She emphasized the importance of transparency and competition in procurement processes to drive down costs and attract a wider range of investors. A successful example of accelerating RE adoption in Sarawak, Malaysia was highlighted, which has transitioned from a gas-dominant energy resource base to one led by hydropower, complemented by balanced indigenous thermal energy to maintain supply diversity and security.

Thailand's Utility Green Tariff (UGT) program and pilot DPPA were also discussed, highlighting the country's move towards a more liberalized energy market. Thailand has introduced two UGT plans: UGT1, with fluctuating tariffs tied to fossil fuel prices, and UGT2, offering stable rates by focusing on renewable energy (RE) portfolios. UGT2 also allows consumers to participate in financing and procurement of RE, providing price stability while adapting to Thailand's regulatory framework.

The session further explored Vietnam's energy transition, driven by the USAID-funded *V-LEEP II* project, through Direct Power Purchase Agreements (DPPAs). The demand for RE in Vietnam was examined from the perspectives of consumers, RE developers, and EVN (Vietnam Electricity). Vietnam's wholesale energy market, dominated by single buyers, limits direct access to RE, which is bundled with grid power and unbundled RE certificates. The lack of a clear policy framework post-2021 has also created financial challenges for RE projects.



The DPPA model, connecting public and private sectors is a crucial component of Vietnam's energy strategy. Vietnam's decree on DPPAs, although focused on wind and solar energy, and targeting primarily manufacturing consumer, facilitates private sector-led RE investments. It also helps EVN recover transmission and distribution (T&D) costs while ensuring grid reliability. Key lessons from Vietnam's approach include the need for country-level support for global firms pushing for RE, the importance of consumer-developer collaboration to shape clean energy policies, and the role of government capacity-building in making flexible, viable decisions that foster a successful energy transition.

In **Transport Session T2: Designing Appropriate Sustainable Transport and Vehicle Electrification Policies and Incentives** focused on creating effective incentives for vehicle electrification, addressing barriers such as infrastructure needs and regulatory challenges including inclusive mobility solutions catering to diverse population segments. **Aakansha Jain** *from the Global South Clean Transportation Centre* at the University of California Davis emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to sustainable mobility. Beyond vehicle electrification, she advocated for integrating improved measures like public transport, ride sharing and aggregator services, non-motorized transport options and urban design to create inclusive and sustainable transport. Fleet electrification, she observed, is expected to play a key role in decarbonization.

Below is a summary of the key points mentioned by countries during the session in the context of sustainable transport:

**Fiji** mentioned that land transport contributes 3-7% of Fiji's greenhouse gas emissions, with petrol being the primary fuel. Approximately 70% of Fijians rely on private vehicles for daily transportation needs. Other transport challenges include lack of data, coordination, transitional frameworks, technical capacity, and access to finance. Fiji aims to reduce CO2 emissions from the energy sector by 20% by 2030, promoting electric mobility and non-motorized transport.

**Nepal's** transport sector accounts for 36% of Nepal's annual GHG emissions. Electrification targets include 20% of public transport vehicles to be electric by 2025 and 90% by 2030. 3,500 electric micro and minibuses are intended to be deployed to meet this target. Barriers include high upfront costs of EVs, lack of charging infrastructure, and unstable policies. As of early 2024, there are at least 350 charging stations in Nepal. The government is also working on improving EV adoption through incentives and infrastructure development.

**India** aims for net zero emissions by 2070. Transport emissions are rising due to increased consumption and vehicle ownership. The pathway to abate transport emissions is through electrification of public transport and alternative fuels alongside electric vehicles (EVs). India also outlined the FAME scheme, which promotes EV adoption through financial support. Approximately 90% of two-wheeler sales currently are financed under this scheme.

**Laos** has set a policy to increase EV adoption by 2025 and has already met its target for setting up charging stations. While ICE vehicles incur taxes that fund infrastructure, EVs are exempt, raising concerns about road maintenance funding into the future. Lao is also focusing on battery waste management as part of its EV strategy.

**Malaysia** is converting older buses into electric buses to reduce fossil fuel reliance. The country has introduced women-only coaches in public transport systems as a successful example of gender-inclusive policies.

## Plenary 8: Translating Climate Policies, Plans, and Strategies into Bankable Investments

This session delved into the practical aspects of converting climate policies into investment- ready projects. A key challenge identified was the need for infrastructure upgrades in transmission and distribution, particularly in the clean energy sector. Case studies from countries such as India (EV Financing Landscape), Thailand (Utility Green Tariff), Malaysia (Government Green Procurement) and Laos (Monsoon Wind Power Project) showcased the importance of robust regulatory frameworks and innovative financing models to attract investments in clean energy and sustainable infrastructure. The role of sub-national policies was also highlighted as a crucial driver for accelerating the EV transition.

USAID Southeast Asia Smart Power Program (SPP) emphasized the need for integrated energy resource planning, arguing that energy transitions cannot be planned in silos but require a coordinated approach across sectors. He stressed that achieving energy security must go hand in hand with climate goals, advocating for more dynamic and adaptive regulatory practices that respond to evolving market conditions and technological advancements. He also highlighted the importance of ensuring that investments foster job creation with a gender-balanced approach. SPP also set the scene for the session by showcasing its ambition to secure \$2 billion in financing green power procurement and enhancing renewable power across ASEAN nations.

Other speakers highlighted the mismatch between project needs and available financial instruments, stressing the importance of risk mitigation strategies for financiers. Tools like the NDC Partnership's and the Green Climate Fund's (GCF) Joint Climate Investment Planning and Resource Mobilization Framework was cited as valuable resource for national climate investment strategies.

The session highlighted the region's challenges in mobilizing private financing for renewables, overcoming policy inconsistencies, and increasing investment in green technologies. ASEAN nations are behind in clean energy investments as a share of GDP compared to global levels, highlighting their urgent need to bridge the gap. Meeting these targets will require massive quantum of investment to bring the region closer to achieving the climate goals.

Programs like Vietnam's green bonds, Thailand's Utility Green Tariff, and Cambodia's solar projects aim to attract private and public funding. Malaysia's green procurement and Indonesia's SDG investment platforms are highlighted as tools to boost green finance.

Key takeaways from the discussion included learning from global case studies, setting clear targets to align supply and demand within ecosystems, linking strong policy actions with cost and capital requirements and establishing MRV mechanisms to track emissions and adapt to dynamic policy and regulatory environments. Suggestions include adopting outcome-based financing models, creating regional policies for EVs, and implementing clear financial incentives to bridge the funding gap and ensure climate goals align with economic development.



### **Plenary 9: Mainstreaming Support for Multilateral Climate Change Actions**

Discussions in this session underscored the need for coherent support at national, regional, and international levels to achieve ambitious climate goals. **Dr. Sanjini U Nanayakkara**, *Project Manager, Accelerated Deployment and Decision Support Center, National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)* highlighted the role of multi-level governance in driving climate actions that are inclusive and aligned with global commitments. She pointed out the critical importance of breaking down silos between different levels of government and stakeholders, enabling a more collaborative and supportive environment for implementing climate actions. The session emphasized that effective multilateral support could amplify the impact of national efforts and facilitate the exchange of best practices and resources. Aaron Ng, from the U.S. Department of Energy reiterated his support towards regional collaboration initiatives in Southeast Asia to accelerate the rate of energy transition and sustainable development.

Diana Quezada from Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) highlighted the role in mainstreaming climate actions through various initiatives that support countries in transitioning towards sustainable, low-carbon economies. GGGI promotes the Climate Action and Inclusive Development (CAID) program which helps develop policies that facilitate low-carbon and resilient development pathways while ensuring social inclusivity. GGGI also aids countries in formulating LT-LEDS, to encourage country ownership and institutional capacity building, ensuring that climate actions are aligned with national needs and offered such support to all country representatives present.

Multiple speakers emphasized the role of mobilizing green finance to support sustainable development projects. By developing green investment plans and facilitating access to financial resources, enhancing institutional capacities through technical support and knowledge sharing among member states countries can better implement their climate strategies effectively. This financial support is crucial for driving projects that contribute to both economic growth and environmental sustainability. Panelists also pointed out the need for exchange of best practices and lessons learned from various projects between stakeholders, which helps replicate successful interventions across different contexts and strengthens international cooperation on climate mitigation efforts.



#### **Summary of Country Voices from ALP Forum**

- Fiji: Highlighted the need for technical capacity and access to finance to achieve its NDC target of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 20% from the energy sector by 2030. Emphasis was placed on promoting electric mobility and enhancing fuel efficiency standards.
- Nepal: Discussed its ambitious plans for electrification, including targets for electric vehicle penetration and the deployment of electric buses and charging infrastructure as part of its broader NDC goals.
- **Bhutan:** Shared initiatives for sustainable urban transport, including deploying electric buses and enhancing pedestrian infrastructure, as part of its efforts to maintain its status as a carbon-negative country.

#### Key Takeaways for Participants from Day 3

- Investment Readiness: Participants were encouraged to focus on making climate projects investment-ready by integrating financial viability considerations into early planning stages.
- Support for Multi-Level Actions: The discussions highlighted the value of multilateral support in enhancing national and local climate actions, with a call for increased cooperation and alignment among various levels of governance.
- Accelerating Transport and Energy Transitions: The sessions provided practical insights into accelerating transitions in the energy and transport sectors, with a focus on setting clear, actionable targets and creating supportive policy environments.



## A Call to Action and Invitation to Engage

As we conclude the Asia LEDS Partnership Forum 2024, it's clear that our journey toward a low-carbon, climate-resilient Asia-Pacific is both a challenging and achievable endeavour. The forum has highlighted the critical need for continued alignment of NDCs LT-LEDS and emphasized the importance of integrating climate goals into national and sectoral development plans.

#### A Call to Action

1. Strengthen Regional Collaboration: We urge all participants and stakeholders to continue fostering regional cooperation. By sharing knowledge, resources, and best practices, we can overcome common barriers and accelerate our collective progress.

2. Enhance Domestic and Private Sector Financing: As discussed, there is a pressing need to mobilize domestic resources and engage the private sector more effectively. We call on governments to simplify international financing mechanisms and develop clear policy frameworks that encourage innovative financing models.

3. Empower Local Governments and Communities: Local and regional governments play a crucial role in driving climate action. We encourage capacity-building initiatives that equip these leaders with the tools, knowledge, and financial resources needed to lead climate initiatives effectively.

4. Accelerate Clean Energy and Sustainable Transport Adoption: We call for ambitious national roadmaps that support the large-scale deployment of clean energy and sustainable transport solutions. This includes prioritizing electric mobility, building necessary infrastructure, and implementing supportive policies and incentives.

#### **Invitation to Return**

As the Asia LEDS Partnership continues to evolve, we invite you to stay engaged with us through our ongoing capacity-building activities, peer learning sessions, and technical support initiatives. Your participation is vital in shaping the future of our region's climate strategies.

## Join Us in Future Forums

We look forward to welcoming you to future forums, where we will continue to build on the foundations laid here. Let's drive ambitious climate action and create a resilient, sustainable future for the Asia-Pacific region together.

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#### **Asia LEDS Partnership Secretariat**

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, South Asia C- 3, Lower Ground Floor, Green Park Extension, New Delhi - 110 016, India Tel: +91-11-4974 7200, Fax: +91-11-4974 7201, Email: iclei-southasia@iclei.org



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