

**Outcome Document  
of the International Conference on  
Achieving Sustainability to Empower Future Generations  
13–15 March 2014**

The delegates to the International Conference on Achieving Sustainability to Empower Future Generations, representing the people as well as the private and public sectors in the Asia-Pacific region, gathered from 13 to 15 Mar 2014 in Taipei. The conference was organized by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Green Trade Project Office, and China Productivity Center in conjunction with the Eco-Products International Fair 2014, involving more than 20 international experts/speakers and more than 200 participants, including 30 international delegates representing 15 different countries.

This document reflects our strong commitment to making a positive contribution in line with the objectives of producing “action-oriented, concise, and easy to communicate” sustainable development goals following on from the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and The Future We Want: Outcome Document Adopted at Rio+20.

We recognize that there is a need to redefine “sustainable development” to stress the importance of development that meets the needs of the present while safeguarding the Earth’s life-support system on which the welfare of current and future generation depends. We also encourage the inclusion of a target for access to sustainable energy among the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The projected timings of climate departure, when countries and cities in Asia and the Pacific will face the impact of dangerous climate change from 2020 onwards, is occurring earlier based on recent research. We stress the need for a sense of urgency to set in motion actions to make our cities and countries more sustainable, to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, speed up the introduction of renewable energy, increase energy efficiency measures, and promote the prudent use of natural resources.

This document recommends the following actions based on discussions during the conference.

## **A. Creating an Energy Future Sustainable for All**

### **Action 1: Set targets for cities and countries in the Asia-Pacific to meet at least 20% of energy demand from renewable sources by 2020**

While aware of much that is being done by various sectors through startups, entrepreneurial efforts, and enterprises of all sizes to initiate and fund renewable energy projects in the Asia-Pacific, greater recognition must be given to these efforts, along with more funding and policy support from international agencies and governments.

Just as some countries in the Asia-Pacific are already ahead in terms of the percentage of renewable energy consumed, other countries are constrained as a high percentage of energy is currently imported. The EU has increased its target of renewable energy use to 27% by 2030. Therefore a regional approach with regional targets is required in the Asia-Pacific.

### **Action 2: Set targets for cities and countries in the Asia-Pacific to achieve up to 20% improvement in energy efficiency across the board by 2020**

As energy efficiency is the quickest way to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, countries and cities in the Asia-Pacific should commit to a target of 20% improvement compared with 2014 in energy efficiency across the board by 2020 and at the same time harmonize the energy efficiency standards for industries, buildings, automobiles, and home/office appliances in the region.

More collaboration and cooperation between the public and private sectors is required in every city and country to commit resources and funding to achieve the required level of energy efficiency.

### **Action 3: Encourage greater participation of and partnerships among diverse stakeholders enabling access to sustainable energy for all**

International and regional agencies, along with APO member governments, should encourage greater participation by all stakeholders and partnerships between the public and private sectors, involving businesses, NGOs, and communities at the grassroots level to ensure that all have access to energy from sustainable sources and energy security is achieved.

This is in line with the objectives of the UN initiative on “Sustainable Energy for All” and similar “Energy for All” campaigns, but outreach to a wider audience and more widespread involvement in these and similar programs are necessary. Greater media and community involvement is required to draw attention to what governments, businesses, and NGOs are currently doing. Establishing a Clean and Green Energy Day (or Week) and intensive information campaigns would help focus attention on this, especially if promoted in all cities and countries in the region.

### **Action 4: Adoption of low-carbon technologies along with other energy management initiatives**

Low-carbon technologies, along with the use of renewable energy sources, must be considered as an important part of environmental solutions and a key factor in introducing and managing energy security, productivity gains, sustainability of supply, and technological innovations.

As countries and international agencies have come a long way toward agreeing on limiting greenhouse gas emissions, there needs to be a commitment to continue to research and introduce innovative solutions, related low-carbon technologies, and energy distribution systems including smart grid technology. For example, technological developments in solar panels have significantly reduced their costs and led to wider adoption of solar energy by businesses and households in many countries. Similarly, feed-in tariffs where offered have incentivized purchases of solar systems. In countries where subsidies are in place for energy (largely fossil fuel) these could be diverted, at least in part, to encourage the production and use of low carbon technologies.

## **B. Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production**

### **Action 5: Recognize the need for governments to set examples for green purchasing and procurement**

Governments should adopt policies, practices, and guidelines to specify that only products and services that use less energy and raw materials, produce less waste, help the development of small producers (fair trade), support sustainable, ethical production and distribution, and are handled in ways that are least damaging to the environment can be purchased and procured. This would minimize the overall environmental footprint in the region.

Governments need to work with the private sector to encourage behavioral changes in purchasing departments of public and private organizations and integrate green purchasing and procurement in their organizational systems. Sustainable consumption and production should be mainstreamed as an overarching development framework in the planning process of each country.

### **Action 6: Emphasize the importance of designing and producing sustainable products and services among businesses**

Businesses must consider and manage the environmental and social impacts in the production of goods and service and in daily operations. Businesses should design products and packaging that can easily be reused, repaired, or recycled. The private sector should also examine new business models for turning products into services so that consumers pay for access to rather than ownership of products.

### **Action 7: Encourage public-private sector partnerships to promote sustainable products among consumers**

The public and private sectors should work together on effective education and campaigns allowing consumers to understand the impacts of their choices of products and services on the environment. They need to conduct shared research studies and surveys on consumer attitudes toward green products and services, eco-labels and how their purchasing behavior is affected.

Businesses should ensure that their products and services are certified by recognized eco-label and green certification programs so that consumers can make conscious choices to choose green products.

## **C. Building Resilience into Sustainable, Smart and Livable Cities**

### **Action 8: Develop benchmarks and best practices for more resilient, sustainable, smart and livable cities**

With the growing threat of adverse impacts of climate change, cities in vulnerable locations need to prepare for the worst and adapt to rising sea levels, extreme weather, and storm surges that can be expected with increasing frequency. There is a need to develop benchmarks and best practices for more resilient, sustainable, smart and livable cities, irrespective of the size of urban areas in the Asia-Pacific, and then promote their adoption.

In view of the rapid global urbanization and environmental challenges created by it, we need to recognize the role of various stakeholders in promoting urban planning practices that take into account sustainability and smart livability. Cities that have started to take the lead in these areas should be recognized.

### **Action 9: Encourage more test-bedding projects with public-private sector partnerships**

There should be more test-bedding projects with public-private sector partnerships to assess and implement smart, sustainable solutions and technologies for cities, with the results shared among countries in the region.

Governments should initiate holistic programs in the urban sector to promote renewable energy use, deploy electric vehicles or special-purpose vehicle systems, design self-sustaining buildings, and adopt municipal and industrial waste/biomass-to-energy projects.

### **Action 10: Introduce sustainable technologies and transport in urban areas**

More sustainable transport systems and measures should be introduced in urban areas which could affect efforts to manage mobility and settlement of people, reduce poverty, create jobs, and resolve other social issues, as well as reduce the traffic congestion and air pollution that occur in a number of cities in the region.

Transforming cities for the better through sustainable technologies should be prioritized. With the need to improve the quality of life and economic competitiveness, cities must become more resource efficient and environmentally friendly. Technology is a major lever for sustainable city development. Effective infrastructure contributes to economic prosperity and an improved quality of life. Urban residents need clean air, potable water, security, efficient buildings, a reliable power grid, and mobility solutions.

### **Recommended Actions**

#### **A. Creating an Energy Future Sustainable for All**

- 1) Set targets for cities and countries in the Asia-Pacific to meet at least 20% of energy demand from renewable sources by 2020
- 2) Set targets for cities and countries in the Asia-Pacific to achieve up to 20% improvement in energy efficiency across the board by 2020
- 3) Encourage greater participation of and partnerships among diverse stakeholders enabling access to sustainable energy for all
- 4) Adoption of low-carbon technologies along with other energy management initiatives

## **B. Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production**

- 5) Recognize the need for governments to set examples for green purchasing and procurement
- 6) Emphasize the importance of designing and producing sustainable products and services among businesses
- 7) Encourage public-private sector partnerships to promote sustainable products among consumers

## **C. Building Resilience into Sustainable, Smart, Livable Cities**

- 8) Develop benchmarks and best practices for more resilient, sustainable, smart and livable cities
- 9) Encourage more test-bedding projects with public-private sector partnerships
- 10) Introduce sustainable technologies and transport in urban areas