



Mayors Forum: Urban Green Growth in Dynamic Asia

13:30-17:00, 20 October 2013
Kitakyushu International Conference Centre, Japan

Background

Green growth has increasingly become a worldwide policy agenda, and greening cities is an important option for action for green growth. Cities have a unique role to play in advancing green growth at national and global level, as they have greater potential to create synergies between environmental and economic objectives. At Rio+20, the Heads of State and high level representatives endorsed green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication as one of the important tools available for achieving sustainable development. In the Rio+20 outcome document – *The Future We Want*, they also recognized the important role of municipal governments in setting a vision for sustainable cities, from the initiation of city planning through to revitalization of older cities and neighbourhoods, including by adopting energy efficient programmes in building management and developing sustainable, locally appropriate transport systems with due importance to mixed-use planning and non-motorized mobility.

In 2010, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launched the **OECD Green Cities Programme**, which aims to assess the impact of urban sustainability and green growth policies on urban and national performance through case studies in key OECD and non-OECD cities, across a range of geographic, economic and national regulatory contexts. Four city-level studies were carried out in 2011 and 2012: Stockholm (Sweden), Kitakyushu (Japan), Chicago (United States) and Paris/Ile-de-France (France). These publications are part of the OECD Green Growth Studies series and inform the synthesis report **Green Growth in Cities**, published in May 2013.

One lesson that has come out of the OECD Green Cities Programme is the need to adapt urban green growth models to different development contexts. The OECD Strategy on Development, endorsed by the OECD Meeting of Council at Ministerial Level in May 2012, underscores the need for incorporating inclusive green growth into development policies as part of efforts to promote sustainable development, and it highlights greening cities as an important option for action. Among cities in the urbanising world, Asian cities exhibit a type of development characterised by rapid and continuous urbanisation, underpinned by fast economic growth, and led in most places by manufacturing industry and rapidly rising motorisation. These processes have generated increasing greenhouse gas emissions, sprawling development and local environmental problems, as well as rising disparities in income, education and job opportunities among urban populations. These trends differ sharply from those prevailing across most of the OECD area and call for a green growth model which takes into account of the local circumstances specific to Asian cities. At the same time, despite of such differences, Asian cities share many policy objectives as well as conditions with OECD cities. This highlights the need for mutual learning and orchestrating efforts in the global community in the pursuit of urban green growth.

In December 2012, The OECD launched a project on **Urban Green Growth in Dynamic Asia** under the Green Cities Programme. Based on the knowledge obtained from the previous OECD Green Growth studies, it aims to explore ways to foster green growth in fast-growing cities in Asia. A kick-off workshop was held in Stockholm on 24 May 2013, attended by five local and national representatives from



Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, as well as representatives from the City of Stockholm and the City of Kitakyushu. The participants identified the following key points and expressed interests in further knowledge sharing with OECD and other stakeholders.

- Urban green growth as key concept and means to achieve sustainable development of cities
- Developing and emerging countries face many challenges in common with OECD countries in urban green growth but there are also different dimensions with regards to economic growth, access to and provision of public services, especially for the urban poor
- Interest in learning from OECD cities' experiences to avoid locking into carbon intensive infrastructures, and to enable decoupling of economic growth from environmental impacts
- Need to focus not only on what to do for urban green growth, but on how to achieve it

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), has also been actively pursuing sustainable urban management, in particular in the areas of Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST), 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle), and IPLA (International Partnerships for Expanding Waste Management Services of Local Authorities) in Asian countries. Under the EST initiative, the Asian countries adopted the Bangkok 2020 Declaration (2010-2020) in 2010, and the Bali Declaration on Vision Zeros - Zero Congestion, Zero Pollution, and Zero Accidents in April 2013. In addition, forty-four Asian cities are signatory to the Kyoto Declaration to promote EST in cities. Under the 3Rs initiative, the Asian countries voluntarily agreed to the Ha Noi 3R Declaration (2013-2023) in March 2013 to promote 3Rs and resource efficiency in their national policies and planning. All these intergovernmental Declarations provide important basis for local-level actions and measures in the context of achieving healthy and sustainable cities in line with the Rio+20 outcomes – *The Future We Want*. IPLA, launched at CSD-19 in May 2011 and one of the Rio+20 Partnerships, aims to foster multi-stakeholder partnerships as the basis for expanding waste management services of local authorities and for achieving zero waste society. Under IPLA, developing cities, e.g., Ahmedabad (India), are increasingly motivated to work towards a zero waste society. UNCRD serves as the global coordinating secretariat for IPLA, which has now around 200 registered members from 62 countries world-wide. In addition, UNCRD is promoting sustainable cities among developing city mayors, utilizing Shanghai Manual developed by UN DESA in cooperation with other UN system organizations.

Objectives of the Forum

Mayors Forum: Urban Green Growth in Dynamic Asia aims to discuss key policy frameworks and instruments to achieve urban green growth among not only Asian mayors but also mayors from OECD cities and UNCRD's EST, 3Rs and IPLA networks. Although opportunities and challenges for urban green growth are different from one city to another, sharing knowledge and learning the diverse contexts will provide each city with potential avenues for developing and pursuing their own green growth actions. In addition, the forum also aims to facilitate knowledge sharing and mutual learning among mayors and a number of international organisations working in the field to foster green growth/sustainable development in Asia.

The event is organised by the OECD, in collaboration with United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) and City of Kitakyushu. The Forum is a key component of the “Kitakyushu Eco-Month” and organized as part of the “International Conference on Future of Cities”.

Preliminary Agenda

✚ Welcoming remarks from the co-chairs / Introduction (13:30 – 13:45)

Mr. Rintaro Tamaki, Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD

Mr. Nikhil Seth, Director, Division for Sustainable Development, UNDESA (tbc)

Mr. Kenji Kitahashi, Mayor of Kitakyushu, Japan

✚ Roundtable discussion I: Green growth policy frameworks and instruments for Asian cities (13:45 – 14:35)

Cities with various circumstances share policy opportunities and experiences to avoid locking into carbon intensive infrastructures and to enable decoupling of economic growth from environmental impacts in the rapid urbanisation and economic growth contexts. Topics include: land use and transportation (urban form, infrastructure, traffic management), waste (disposal, recycling, WTE), water (provision, quality), wastewater (sewage, treatment), energy (energy efficiency in industries, buildings) and vulnerability to natural disasters.

- What are current needs for greening cities as well as fostering economic growth in your city?
- Which areas or sectors are of particular importance when talking about green growth in your city (and why)? What are your experiences to date?
- Which lessons could be useful for peer learning in Asia as well as in other parts of the world?

✚ Roundtable discussion II: Key implementation issues for urban green growth (14:35 – 15:25)

Participants discuss key implementation barriers for fostering urban green growth and how to overcome them. Topics include: awareness for environmental challenges among policy makers and citizens; understanding of the green growth concept; role of resource efficiency, 3Rs and EST for urban green growth; financing availability and financial instruments; capacity to create and implement urban green growth strategies.

- What are key drivers for implementing urban green growth?
- How can we encourage political commitment and leadership? How to identify quick wins and co-benefits to get better political support? How to increase public awareness?
- What leadership Mayors can demonstrate in implementing resource efficiency, 3Rs and EST policies and programmes in complement to agreed frameworks, such as Ha Noi 3R Declaration (2013 – 2023) and Bangkok 2020 Declaration on EST (2010-2020) in Asia?
- What roles can cities play in creating conditions to mobilising private finance and for successful public-private partnerships?

✚ Coffee break (15:25 – 15:55)

✚ Roundtable discussion III: Knowledge sharing and collaborative actions (15:55 – 16:45)

In order to foster urban green growth, it will be effective for Asian cities to share results and facilitate a joint learning process together with other cities, implementation agencies and networks at equal footing. This could be in the form of joint workshops and peer learning,

exchange through regional and global networks, etc. In this context, participants will discuss effective action options.

- What are your knowledge sharing experiences with other cities in the areas of urban green growth? Are they useful (or not), and why?
- How can we use peer-learning among cities more effectively for mutual learning and scaling up of good experiences?
- How can cities and development agencies collaborate effectively in policy design and implementation for urban green growth?

 **Co-chairs' wrap-up** (16:45 – 17:00)

Cities invited (preliminary)

- City of Phnom Penh, Cambodia
- City of Paris, France
- City of Ahmedabad, India
- Capital Province of Jakarta, Indonesia
- City of Surabaya, Indonesia
- City of Yokohama, Japan
- City of Kawasaki, Japan
- Vientian Capital City, Laos
- City of Johor Bahru, Malaysia
- City of Yangon, Myanmar
- Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Philippines
- City of Stockholm, Sweden
- Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Thailand
- City of Chicago, United States
- City of Hai Phong, Vietnam
- Ho Chi Ming City, Vietnam

Further information

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