Report Launch: Prospects for Transitioning from a Linear to Circular Economy in Developing Asia

Virtual Regional Side Event of the World Circular Economy Forum

Tuesday, 1 March 2022
16:00 – 17:00 (Tokyo time, GMT+9)

Speaker Biographies (by session)

Opening Remarks

Tetsushi Sonobe
Dean and CEO, Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI)

Tetsushi Sonobe is the Dean and CEO of the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), the Tokyo-based think tank of the Asian Development Bank that promotes the realization of a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific through policy research and capacity building.

Born in 1960 in Tokyo, Dean Sonobe obtained his PhD in economics from Yale University and BA in economics from the University of Tokyo. His research interests are centered on the empirics of economic development, particularly the roles of industrial clusters, human capital, social capital, management practices, and market competition in industrial development in developing Asia and other regions.

Before joining ADBI in April 2020, Dean Sonobe served for six years as a vice president of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Tokyo and taught economics for thirty years at Tokyo Metropolitan University and GRIPS. Dean Sonobe is a recipient of the Nikkei Book Publication Prize and the Masayoshi Ohira Memorial Prize, and a founding board member of the Japanese Association for Development Economics.
**Keynote Address**

**Mari Pantsar**  
**Director, Sustainability Solutions, The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra**

Mari Pantsar leads the Sustainability solutions theme at Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra. She steers the strategy of the theme and ensures that all activities related to it direct Finland towards a more ecologically sustainable and competitive society. Mari has about 20 years’ experience of managerial tasks in the development of cleantech and circular economy business in the private and public sector and on several companies’ boards. She has a doctorate in philosophy and holds the title of docent at the University of Helsinki and at Lappeenranta University of Technology. Among others, she is a board member of International Institute for sustainable Development.

**Panel Discussion (Moderator followed by panelists)**

**Linda Arthur**  
**Senior Capacity Building and Training Specialist, Asian Development Bank Institute**

Linda Arthur is a senior specialist at the Asian Development Bank Institute. She works with government officials by designing knowledge products to strengthen policy making and implementation across a range of priority areas for developing and emerging Asia, including use of strategic foresight for inclusive recovery policies; innovation ecosystems to spur green growth; and leveraging behavioral insight to augment development impact. She is seconded from the Asian Development Bank, where she has worked since 2003, in various positions, including field assignments in Afghanistan and Pakistan. She holds a PhD from Oxford University and an MA and BA from the University of Toronto.

**Nicholas (Nick) Kolesch**  
**Vice President of Projects, Alliance to End Plastic Waste**

Nicholas joined the Alliance to End Plastic Waste on May 1st, 2020 as Vice President of Projects, responsible for the sourcing, development, planning and implementation of projects focused on ending plastic waste in the environment in locations around the world.

Nicholas brings a strong international background in the chemicals and plastic business. A Canadian and Australian citizen, he has worked extensively in Europe and Asia throughout his career.

Nicholas held various management positions in the Borealis Group from 2009 – 2020. Most recently as Head of Marketing Automotive, based in Vienna Austria. Prior to that he was located in Singapore as Strategic Planning Manager for Borouge Pte. Ltd.

He started his international career in the chemical industry in 1998 with Ciba Specialty Chemicals where he held several sales, marketing, strategy and management positions in Hong Kong, Switzerland, Thailand and the United Kingdom.
Nicholas holds an MBA in Marketing and Strategy from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada.

**Gregorio Rafael Bueta**
Faculty Member, Ateneo de Manila University School of Law

Grip is an environmental, climate, and sustainability lawyer who has worked with governments, private sector, and international organizations (i.e., ADB, UNDP, UNEP, WWF, and Greenpeace). He is a member of the IUCN – World Commission on Environmental Law. He lectures on Natural Resources Law, and International Environment and Climate Law at the Ateneo Law School. He is a Fellow of Parabukas, a Principal Advisor of Climate Smart Ventures, and Legal Consultant of EcoWaste Coalition.

Grip has been involved in policy and legislation work concerning plastics, solid waste management, WTE, EPR, PRTR, protected areas management, and sustainable cities.

As a Judicial Capacity Building Expert with ADB, he has extensively worked with judiciaries and legal professionals on environment and climate law.

Grip has a degree in Political Science and a Juris Doctor degree from the Ateneo de Manila University, where he was the recipient of the St. Thomas More Most Distinguished Graduate Award.

**Lerwen Liu**
Adjunct Professor, Graduate School of Management and Innovation (GMI), KMUTT, Thailand
Founding Director of STEAM Platform
Circular Economy Institutional and Business Model Specialist & Consultant Team Leader for the Technical Assistance project: PRC Green Circular Economy Zero Waste Cities by the Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Managing Director of NanoGlobe Pte Ltd (Singapore)

Dr. Lerwen Liu specializes in business development and education in emerging technologies, circular economy, and sustainability. She focuses on strategic development, assessment, and support of emerging technologies including nanotechnology and Artificial Intelligence with applications in all sectors. She has 20 years of practice in global business development in strategic partnership & communication and marketing. She has been bridging government, industry, and academics in developing sustainable solutions to address the challenges humanity is facing today. She has worked in both the developed and developing world focusing on youth leadership and entrepreneurship development towards sustainability.

She founded the STEAM Platform in 2018 focusing on youth empowerment with convergent STEM knowledge, strategic communication skills, entrepreneurship for SDGs2030, Circular Economy, and Industry 4.0. She is the convenor of the Circular Economy Leadership & Partnership (CELP) Summit 2021 under the CE Accelerator program which she co-founded at Knowledge Xchange for Innovation Center in Bangkok. She has been an invited expert in nanotechnology, innovation, entrepreneurship, and circular economy by different agencies in the united nations, Asia Development Bank (ADB), Islamic Development Bank, and other government bodies. She has co-founded a number of emerging technology start-ups and mentored hundreds of youth leaders in Asia. She was a founding secretary of the Asia Nano Forum supporting the strategic development of Nanotechnology in 17 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Lerwen holds a Ph.D. in Physics from UNSW Australia. She is an Australian citizen, currently based in Bangkok and Singapore.