STRENGTHENING THE ENVIRONMENT DIMENSIONS OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

KNOWLEDGE-SHARING WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

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Cover design by Kookie Trivino. On the cover: Images of forest habitat, marine life, and community-based fishing activities evoke the priorities of Sustainable Development Goals 12, 14, and 15.

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Preface

Five years ago, the international community agreed on a potentially transformative set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Nearly halfway through 2020, it is a good time to assess progress and challenges to achieving that aspirational vision. Unfortunately, many of the assessments to date arrive at the sobering conclusion that we are not on pace to achieve any of the SDGs. Perhaps most concerning is that many of the most glaring shortfalls are evident for SDGs related to the environment. As natural resources and ecosystems are critical to human well-being and prosperity, failure to protect the environment could undermine many other SDGs.

The recognition of the environment's foundational importance was the main reason the Asian Development Bank (ADB) initiated a technical assistance (TA) project entitled *Supporting Implementation of Environment-Related SDGs in Asia and the Pacific*, in 2016. The TA project was designed to help policymakers integrate SDGs 12, 14, and 15—and select SDG targets that are environment-related—into their countries' development plans, policies, and programs. It was believed that this integration was essential to taking action that would halt the degradation of environment and natural resources.

The TA project began with an initial phase that scoped how 15 countries were performing on the environment-related SDGs and surveyed decision-making support tools that could address key gaps. This initial scoping phase then set the stage for more focused pilot interventions designed to address relevant needs identified in Mongolia (on data and policy coherence), the Philippines (on a sustainable consumption production action plan), and Viet Nam (on data). As those pilot interventions ended, more than 90 policymakers as well as representatives of civil society, business, and international organizations convened in Manila for a closing workshop on 27–28 November 2019 that reflected on what the TA project had achieved and what else could be done to advance its objectives.

This knowledge-sharing workshop proceedings summarizes the discussions and information shared during the TA project's closing workshop.

The workshop helped generate the following useful findings:

- The SDGs have awakened an interest in integrated approaches, systems thinking, and the circular economy model. Interest in these concepts is peaking at the same time governments are reflecting the SDGs in a wide range of policies and plans. The more governments see the value in these concepts, the more that the environment will be valued in those policies and plans. Tools and knowledge that can help decision makers meaningfully apply these concepts in diverse contexts are much needed. For example, tools that can help policymakers enhance coherence between a diverse set of sectoral policies can be useful in many parts of the world.
- While such tools and knowledge will help establish core concepts, using those concepts as a basis for action will require governments to move away from silos and segmented decision-making processes. A critical step in this direction will be ensuring environment-related discussions occur in agencies with remits outside the environment. Institutional reforms that help decision makers see and act upon the links between the environment, human health, and well-being exemplify such an important change in this direction. Reforms that can help support long-term transformation in the transport, energy, or water sectors illustrate another

sustainable step forward. Across all sectors, results-based management can boost accountability for environmental impacts.

- Other means of implementation will also factor into implementing and enhancing accountability for environment-related goals. Although data is frequently mentioned as a constraint in this regard, policymakers can help overcome that barrier by becoming more literate in relevant data terminology and precise in articulating data needs. The establishment of national coordinating mechanisms that helps sectoral line ministries to engage statistics offices (while retaining their autonomy) can help ease communication. ADB's experience in supporting Mongolia shows that there can be good benefits from this type of cross coordination, which can be replicated and scaled up in other countries. Knowledge sharing between countries on their experiences with establishing these types of institutional coordination should be encouraged.
- Another important means of implementation is financing, which is a challenge especially in achieving environment-related SDG goals and targets. Green financing, which facilitates investments that provide environmental benefits within the context of sustainable development, in integrating national financing frameworks, gives opportunities not just for the public funds but for the private sector to participate towards this goal. However, there is a huge gap between the need for green financing and available supply, which are mostly from public funds. There is need for governments to help stimulate markets for green investments through setting right incentives, including reforms of taxes and subsidies related to environmental goods and services. In addition, there are opportunities for the private sector to participate in green financing such as in responsible banking, sustainable stock exchange, and sustainable insurance programs. The use of green finance road maps would further encourage increased demand for, and issuance of green finance. ADB, as a multilateral development bank, can support governments catalyze green finance by leveraging ADB finance to reduce project risks and assist governments on the development of bankable, green infrastructure projects (as in ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility).
- SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production sits at the nexus of many SDGs. It also can offer options for governments hoping to translate the circular economy into tangible actions. For example, governments can help by creating incentives such as no or lower duty for trade in environmentally sustainable products and can enact green procurement legislation. They can also create incentives in that legislation that motivate companies to support green procurement.

ADB extends its sincere appreciation to those who participated in and contributed to the discussions at the closing workshop, including the organizers, facilitators, presenters, discussants, and government participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Thanks are also extended to ADB, the United Nations Economic and Social Committee for Asia and the Pacific, and the United Nations Environment Programme staff who contributed to the workshop, and the TA project team comprising of Emma Marsden, senior environment specialist, and Christopher Darius Tabungar, senior operations assistant, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, Safeguards Division, ADB; and the following consultants: Simon Høiberg Olsen, Eric Zusman, Katherine Thoday, Lisa Antonio, Jon Alan Cuyno, Phong Nguyen, Le Duc Chung, Bolor Radnaabazar, Dianne April Delfino, and Tanya Concepcion.

The workshop presentations are available online at <https://events.development.asia/learning-events/regional-knowledge-sharing-workshop-strengthening-environment-dimensions-sdgs-asia>.

Bruce Dunn

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Asian Development Bank

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BAPPENAS	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (National Development Planning Agency)
DMC	developing member country
EU	European Union
FDES	Framework for the Development of Environmental Statistics
GDP	gross domestic product
GNH	gross national happiness
IGES	Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
NDA	National Development Agency (Mongolia)
NDCs	nationally determined contributions
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority (the Philippines)
NSO	National Statistics Office (Mongolia)
PRC	People's Republic of China
SEEA	System of Environmental-Economic Accounting
SCP	sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TA	technical assistance
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Introduction

Opening the workshop. Bruce Dunn, Asian Development Bank, welcomes participants to the workshop.

Background

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) intentionally emphasize environmental issues equally alongside socioeconomic issues. However, whether that attention translates into meaningful action depends on how effectively policymakers integrate the environmental dimensions of the SDGs into development policies, plans, and programs. In 2016, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) initiated a technical assistance (TA) project on *Supporting Implementation of Environment-Related Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific* to equip policymakers with the knowledge and tools to integrate select environment-related goals (SDGs 12, 14, and 15) and targets into their development plans, policies, and programs.¹

The TA project's first phase, which was informed by a prior regional knowledge-sharing workshop held in Bangkok in February 2018, took stock of how 15 countries were performing on a subset of environment-related SDGs and targets; and produced a compendium of tools to help stakeholders navigate the array of existing methods, techniques, and approaches used to integrate environmental concerns into decision-making processes.² The stocktaking and compendium of tools underlined that there are indeed many challenges to leveraging the SDGs to improve the state of the environment.³ They also suggested that these challenges are surmountable with well-designed support. The TA project's second phase involved three subprojects that reflected learnings from the first: in Mongolia (on policy coherence and data); the Philippines (on sustainable consumption and production); and Viet Nam (on data). The results of these subprojects were shared at the final regional workshop on *Strengthening the Environmental Dimensions of the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific* held in Manila, Philippines on 27–28 November 2019.

¹ SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 15 (Life on Land); in addition to the targets under SDGs 12, 14, and 15, the project also defined the following related targets: 2.4, 2.5, 3.9, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6a, 7.2, 7.3, 7b, 8.4, 8.9, 9.4, 11.4, 11.6, 11.7, 11a, 11b, 11c, and 17.7.

² ADB. 2018. *Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Knowledge-Sharing Workshop Proceedings*. Bangkok. 21–22 February. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/434651/environment-dimensions-sdgs-asia-pacific-proceedings.pdf>; and ADB and United Nations Environment Programme. 2019. *Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Tool Compendium*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/481446/environmental-dimensions-sdgs-tool-compendium.pdf>.

³ ADB. 2019. *Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Stocktake of National Responses to Sustainable Development Goals 12, 14, and 15*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/481246/environmental-dimensions-sdgs-stocktake-report.pdf>; and ADB and United Nations Environment Programme. 2019. *Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Tool Compendium*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/481446/environmental-dimensions-sdgs-tool-compendium.pdf>.

Workshop Objectives and Participation

The workshop's main objectives were to disseminate the findings and technical guidance materials developed during phase 1 of the TA project; to share the knowledge, experiences, and lessons from the phase 2 in-country subprojects from Mongolia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, as well as other relevant case studies; and to make recommendations on the way forward to take stronger action on the environmental dimensions of the SDGs. More than 90 participants from government, international organizations, nongovernment organizations, civil society, and private sector from across Asia and the Pacific participated in the workshop, discussing results and offering recommendations.

Workshop Structure

The workshop was held over 2 days. Sessions on the first day focused on the results of the stocktaking and information on tools used for integration. The first day also featured breakout sessions highlighting challenges and opportunities to take an integrated approach for SDGs 12, 14, and 15, as well as the roles of different actors, including the private sector, in working on such an approach. The second day focused on the sharing of experiences and lessons from the three country case studies (Mongolia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam) and provided opportunities to discuss recommendations on the way forward.

Day 1 Proceedings

Panel discussion on integrating environment dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals. Eric Zusman, Asian Development Bank consultant; Aneta Nikolova, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; Peter King, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies; Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India; and Kinga Wangmo, Gross National Happiness Commission, Bhutan in a discussion on integrating the environment dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Opening Session

Eric Zusman, Asian Development Bank (ADB) consultant, facilitated this session.

Bruce Dunn, ADB, delivered the opening remarks, welcoming the participants and thanking the governments of Mongolia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam for participating in the subprojects of the second phase of the technical assistance (TA) project. He then welcomed colleagues from the National Development Agency (NDA), Ministry of Environment and Tourism, and the National Statistical Office (NSO) of Mongolia; the Philippines' National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA); and Viet Nam's Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE) and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. He also thanked colleagues from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) as partners in this TA project and for their involvement in the production of the TA project's knowledge products.

Status of environment in Asia and the Pacific. Bruce Dunn, Asian Development Bank, shared information on the environmental situation in the region.

He then stated that while this TA project focused on three environment-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 12, 14, and 15), there are many other important dimensions for achieving sustainable development across

the region. In this connection, he stressed that many SDGs have an environmental dimension and that failure to address these dimensions will also undermine development opportunities. He proceeded to summarize regional environmental challenges related to biodiversity, land degradation, water scarcity, ocean health, plastics, and air pollution, and emphasized that the SDGs reflect the “binding constraints” our environment places on other dimensions of development. He also stressed that though it can be relatively easy to talk about integration as a technical exercise, the frequently overlooked political aspects of the integration challenge are vitally important.

Emma Marsden, ADB, then gave her introductory remarks, stating that the SDGs represent a new opportunity for governments to take an integrated approach; that this TA project started in November 2016 with a view toward addressing integration of the environment in all SDGs, but with a concentration on three environment-related SDGs (12, 14, and 15) and targets that were selected for this TA project. She gave an overview of the TA project’s work in the past 3 years, including the subprojects in the three developing member countries, and proceeded to present an overview of the objectives of this workshop as well as the outputs of the TA project, including case studies.

Importance of Integrating the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs into Policies, Plans, and Programs

Emma Marsden, ADB, facilitated this session.

Aneta Nikolova, UNESCAP, started her presentation with a warning that Asia and the Pacific is unlikely to achieve any of the SDGs at the current pace (Figure 1). This is based on the findings of a regional progress assessment conducted by UNESCAP.⁴

Figure 1: Asia and the Pacific Region’s Progress Toward the Environment-Related SDGs 12, 14, and 15

Source: A. Nikolova. 2019. Progress of Implementation of the SDGs in the Asia-Pacific Region. Presentation for the 2nd Regional Knowledge-Sharing Workshop on Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific. Manila, 27 November. <https://events.development.asia/node/23023>.

⁴ UNESCAP. 2019. *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report*. Bangkok. https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/ESCAP_Asia_and_the_Pacific_SDG_Progress_Report_2019.pdf.

While indicators on good health and well-being appear to be on track, key indicators for SDG 6 on Clean Water, SDG 8 on Economic Growth and Decent Work, and SDG 12 on Responsible Consumption and Production are regressing. Overall, the UNESCAP analysis indicates a 50% regression in environmental indicators, although there is still some uncertainty with two-thirds of the SDGs not yet having data. Slow progress on SDG 17 (Partnership for the Goals) is particularly critical, since it emphasizes the means of implementation for all of the SDGs.

For SDG 12, the material footprint of Asia and the Pacific is already significant and growing at an alarming rate. Countries are invited to use a simulation tool to understand the size of that footprint. There are particular challenges in the United Nations (UN) South and South-West Asia subregion with targets 12.1 (on Responsible Consumption and Production policies) and 12.7 (on Public Procurement).⁵ Action on these two targets should be accelerated. Since sustainable consumption and production (SCP) can serve as an engine for growth, accelerated progress on these and other SDG 12 targets could pay dividends for other SDGs.

For SDG 14, there are particular challenges concerning over-fishing and plastic pollution when it comes to implementation. While not a focus for all countries in the region, the Pacific is an area where attention toward addressing these issues is urgently needed. Fortunately, in recent years there has been notable momentum toward developing a framework for a regional seas action plan. Despite this momentum, targets 14.5 (on Coastal Conservation) and 14.2 (on Ecosystem Protection) require more attention.

For SDG 15, there is relatively good data to assess progress. That data demonstrate progress in increasing protected areas and reforestation, while challenges remain for protecting habitat and biodiversity loss. The UN East and North-East Asia subregion is the subregion that needs to pay the most attention to implementing this SDG.⁶

The overall challenge is to increase political will to address issues. Taxation was suggested as an approach that should be given greater consideration and is being discussed in the UN Global Economists Forum with a secretary general's resolution potentially forthcoming. Participants were also invited to join the more than 1,100 people who are registered for the SDG Community of Practice under UNESCAP's SDG Help Desk.⁷

Eric Zusman, ADB consultant, gave an overview of the stocktaking report carried out in the first phase of the TA project.⁸ The stocktaking sought to understand country priorities; the types of activities initiated to address priorities, challenges, and barriers to implementation; and the role

Stocktake findings. Eric Zusman, Asian Development Bank consultant, sharing the findings from the first phase of the technical assistance project.

⁵ The UN South and South-West Asia subregion is composed of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Turkey. UNESCAP. Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia. <https://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/south-south-west-asia>.

⁶ The UN East and North-East Asia subregion is composed of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, and Russian Federation; and associate members Hong Kong, China; and Macau, China. UNESCAP. Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia. <https://www.unescap.org/subregional-office/east-north-east-asia>.

⁷ UNESCAP. SDG Help Desk E-Learning. <https://sdghelpdesk-elearning.unescap.org/>.

⁸ ADB. 2019. *Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Stocktake of National Responses to Sustainable Development Goals 12, 14, and 15*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/481246/environmental-dimensions-sdgs-stocktake-report.pdf>.

of the development and environment communities in supporting action. A desk study was carried out for a geographically diverse cross-section of 15 countries selected for further in-depth study.

Key findings were that although awareness of the environment-related SDGs was high, there were considerable challenges with integration and data collection as well as the allocation of finance toward the achievement of goals. This informed the stocktaking recommendations, that support was needed to help act on interlinkages, strengthen the integration across sectors and levels of decision making, improve the quality and quantity of environmental data, and redirect finance.

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, gave an overview of the tools compendium, which was produced under the first phase of the TA project.⁹ He highlighted tools to support an integrated approach, including the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Interlinkages Tool, Systems Thinking, Strategic Environment Assessments, and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA). He emphasized that political prioritization was as important as technical issues, and that there needs to be an understanding that there will be trade-offs between goals with both winners and losers from decisions.

Jonathan Gilman, UNEP, reminded the audience that taking an integrated approach is not new and has been discussed since the 1972 Stockholm UN Conference on the Human Environment. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development helps to reinforce system-wide strategic planning while the Addis Ababa Action Agenda promotes the use of integrated national financing frameworks. He shared the findings of a UN assessment of integrated approaches in 33 countries and 100 programs and projects; he noted that such approaches are often characterized by being multi-disciplinary, involving multi-type partners and addressing multiple SDGs. Successful approaches normally had a champion that advocated for integration at the beginning of the process. He highlighted UNEP's involvement with the Poverty Environment Action for Sustainable Development Goals Programme (2018–2022) which builds on the 13-year Poverty Environment Initiative with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This initiative has been focusing on integrating the environment into finance policies and decisions in Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Nepal.

The floor was then opened for participants' inputs. A Cambodian representative noted that SDGs should not just be integrated into national planning systems but all planning systems at all levels and, further, that the SDGs should not be seen as just the government's responsibility. A representative from the lead planning agency in Indonesia, the National Development Planning Agency/BAPPENAS, stated that tackling a strategic issue such as adopting a circular economy model could help to mainstream an integrated approach.

Day 1 of the workshop. A snapshot of participants listening attentively in one of the interesting sessions during day 1 of the workshop.

⁹ ADB and UNEP. 2019. *Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: Tool Compendium*. Manila. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/481446/environmental-dimensions-sdgs-tool-compendium.pdf>.

Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Member Countries and ADB

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, started the panel discussion by asking **how the SDGs have affected integrated approaches**.

Bruce Dunn, ADB, shared that he felt the SDGs had influenced the design and content of ADB's Strategy 2030. They led to this strategy being organized around cross-cutting themes as opposed to sectors. He also cited the creation of the Action Plan for Healthy Oceans and Sustainable Blue Economy as being an example of a new integrated approach that ADB was taking to environmental issues.¹⁰

Wahyuningsih Darajati, BAPPENAS, Indonesia, said that the SDG agenda has allowed Indonesia to move from a sector to a more cross-sector approach in their upcoming 5-year plan, 2020–2024. This plan addresses seven themes in a way that is holistic, integrative, thematic, and spatial. Issues such as gender equality, good governance, social and cultural principles, and digital transformation have also been considered in this cross-cutting fashion. Taking this approach has required a strong political commitment that engages all stakeholders. Indonesia has sought to generate a national movement for SDG implementation. To be effective, it is necessary to develop a good strategy that demands accountability for actions and has clear and measurable indicators. A communication strategy will also be vital in spreading awareness and obtaining buy-in from relevant sectors.

Smita Luthra Nakhooda, ADB, highlighted that one of the opportunities of the SDG framework is that everyone can align their work with the goals. This provides an entry point to link to environmental issues that have previously been ignored. However, not all targets are equal and linkages and trade-offs will vary. Strong social and environmental safeguards are therefore necessary to manage and mitigate trade-offs.

Jonathan Gilman, UNEP, highlighted UNEP's Global Emissions Gaps Report that came out the same week as the workshop.¹¹ The report indicated that to achieve the 1.5°C climate goal, a 7.6% decline in emissions a year is required. Such a reduction translates into a five-fold increase in the ambition of current nationally determined contributions (NDCs). Opportunities exist to reach these goals by focusing on the electrification of transport, accelerating renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency. He concluded by suggesting that when discussing climate change, greater awareness on adaptation and health issues was needed.

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, then asked **what are some of the challenges to taking forward integrated approaches and how these could be addressed?**

Bruce Dunn, ADB, said that the focus on environmental impact assessments within ADB meant that the environment was often perceived as an incremental issue that could be added to other projects. He cautioned instead that there is a need to move integration up the project cycle so that environmental issues can be better addressed and become the focus of large-scale investment. This also requires a more accurate costing of externalities. He cited a recent University of California study on coral reefs which showed that losing the top meter of a coral reef ecosystem could increase the power of waves four-fold, resulting in a doubling of economic costs: \$1.8 billion a year in the United States.

¹⁰ ADB. 2019. *Action Plan for Healthy Oceans*. <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/related/145036/Action%20Plan%20for%20Healthy%20Oceans%20and%20Sustainable%20Blue%20Economies.pdf>.

¹¹ UNEP. 2019. *Emissions Gap Report 2019*. <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2019>.

Smita Luthra Nakhooda, ADB, was cautiously optimistic that the ADB Results Management Framework was moving toward more cross-cutting thematic outcomes. These outcomes should align better with Strategy 2030 but there is also a need to focus on project origination and to better operationalize intent. She further noted that ADB was one of the first multilateral development banks to map all projects to the SDGs and is now working to align common approaches with the others. They have further developed templates for country partnership strategies to monitor how the portfolio will support achievement of the SDGs. The focus is now on supporting operational colleagues to bring about this shift. In this context, a knowledge product is being developed with the UNDP on how to align national SDG priorities with the country partnership strategies.

Jonathan Gilman, UNEP, highlighted the role of partnerships around mobilizing finance and science to encourage stronger action. UNEP's Finance Initiative has built partnerships with banks, insurers, and stock exchanges while the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has been critical at mobilizing action on climate change, with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services doing the same for biodiversity.

Wahyuningsih Darajati, BAPPENAS, Indonesia, emphasized the need to convince people that the environment was not a cost but a long-term investment and that externalities needed to be internalized. Using strategic environmental assessments can help on both of these points. She nonetheless pointed out that the lack of data for indicators may pose a challenge for the SDGs. This is particularly since Tier 1 methodologies exist for only 93 indicators. There is also a need to better link to appropriate technologies and take an integrated approach to the allocation of financial resources.

During the ensuing discussion, **Suzanna Sumkhuu, NDA of Mongolia**, asked how economic planning for the environment has changed in Indonesia given that conventional growth is often the overarching framework within which decisions are made. Wahyuningsih Darajati, BAPPENAS, Indonesia, replied that there is a need to consider trade-offs between the short term and long term, highlight sectors that contribute to gross domestic product (GDP), and focus on transformation in key sectors such as water and energy that have strong social links as well.

Suzanna Sumkhuu, NDA of Mongolia, then noted that a significant challenge is the silo approach taken to implementing the SDGs and Paris Agreement, for example, and that international organizations do not always promote coherence when working in countries.

In response, **Jonathan Gilman, UNEP**, noted that ministries of finance, planning, and foreign affairs have started to establish environmental units. UNEP is planning a review of these environmental units within non-environmental agencies and will share lessons.

The Role of Sustainable Consumption and Production and the Circular Economy

Presentations

Patrick Schroeder, Chatham House, gave a presentation on the Circular Economy (Figure 2) in the context of the TA subproject in the Philippines.

His presentation highlighted that the circular economy model is not a new topic. In Japan, it is similar to the 3Rs; in India it is known as resource efficiency; in the United Kingdom it is referred to as sustainable materials management and resource efficiency. SDG 12 targets and indicators are also linked to the circular economy as they also address, among other things, areas where the circular economy concept is being applied, such as food systems, sustainable buildings, lifestyles, and procurement. For example, target

- 12.1 refers to the implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes which will mainstream SCP into national action plans;
- 12.3 on reducing food waste (which also includes need to reduce meat consumption) illustrates the circular economy concept;
- 12.4 refers to environmentally sound management of chemical wastes at all stages in their life cycle;
- 12.5 aims to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste;
- 12.6 aims for companies to adopt and report on sustainability practices;
- 12a refers to strengthening technological capacities for SCP;
- 12b aims for the circular economy model in tourism through sustainability tools, strategies, and action plans; and
- 12c is about rationalizing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.

The circular economy model provides new opportunities across many sectors. In business, for example, the shift from end-of-pipe to circularity helps reduce environmental risks from operations. The economic case for making this shift often focuses on job creation. Although not all sectors will win, and some jobs will be lost, overall there will be a net gain for society and the planet. The circular economy model has a potential net economic benefit of €1.8 trillion for Europe, and the potential to create 3 million extra jobs and reduce unemployment by 250,000 by 2030. In the European Union (EU), the circular economy model is regarded as critical to promoting industry competitiveness and circular economy business models are attracting big investments (e.g., a €10 billion initiative for adopting the circular economy model was launched in July 2019).

He also made a point to distinguish between linear supply chains and the circular economy. The latter consists of flows and extends the use cycle, or it narrows flows by changing utilization patterns and creating new loops through repair, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling.

Both these flows and loops stand in sharp contrast to the practice of planned obsolescence. The Butterfly Diagram (of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Figure 3) depicts how the circular economy offers better solutions than the linear system, e.g., through reuse and remanufacturing as opposed to landfill and incineration. Biological nutrients can be collected and extracted from consumer waste and turned into biochemical feedstock. Technical nutrients (e.g., from mining and materials manufacturing) can be recycled, remanufactured, and returned to the manufacturing loop.

Figure 2: Key Tenets of the Circular Economy

Source: P. Schroeder. 2019. SDG 12—Sustainable Production and Consumption and Circular Economy. Presentation for the 2nd Regional Knowledge-Sharing Workshop on Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific. Manila. 27 November. <https://events.development.asia/node/23035>.

He pointed out that the circular economy model is gaining traction worldwide. Circular economy concepts and policies are being reflected in country and regional (such as the Caribbean and Latin America) road maps and action plans. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has a circular economy promotion law and 5-year plan. In the EU, a circular economy package ("Green Deal") was adopted in 2015 including a range of waste and recycling laws to help close the loop of product lifecycles, such as banning separately collected waste from going to the landfill and promoting industrial symbiosis. The circular economy model will represent half of the EU's effort to achieve zero net carbon emissions by 2050. A Circular Economy Monitoring Fund was also established to measure progress toward adopting the circular economy model. The fund could also serve as a model for other countries to monitor national SCP plans and be useful for cross-country comparisons. He emphasized that the circular economy model directly and/or indirectly contributes to and supports the SDGs. It thus also represents a new development model.

For the question and answer session, **Simon Olsen, ADB consultant**, asked for clarification on "fast fashion," and why this does not fit into the Circular Economy concept. The response to this question suggested that some large brands have introduced initiatives such as recycling and re-using clothing fibers or old clothes or fabrics, but there are limits to what these activities can achieve. The bigger question is how we consume, acquire, and/or choose our clothing. Do we look for better quality materials or rent clothes we only use for some occasions? This kind of consumer behavior requires a shift in mindset. The circular economy model is thus not just about technology. It requires fundamental changes in behavior—both from the manufacturer and the consumer.

Figure 4: Sustainable Development Goal 12 Interlinkages Mapping

Note: This figure was adapted from the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies Interlinkages Visualization Tool.

Source: National Economic and Development Authority – Agriculture and Natural Resources. 2019. Philippine Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production. Presentation for the 2nd Regional Knowledge-Sharing Workshop on Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific. Manila. 27 November. <https://events.development.asia/node/23036>.

In the question and answer session, one participant asked whether they were considering linkages between SCP and climate change. The response was that in the action plan, there are both adaptation and mitigation components. An example of adaptation is improving the resilience of ecosystems, while an example of mitigation is improving technologies to lessen emissions. These actions are not only part of the SCP action plan but also the Philippine Development Plan.

Another participant asked what process was used for calculating the economic costs and benefits to justify the resources sought and allocated for the actions in the action plan. The response was that an extensive cost-benefit analysis had not yet been done, but when the action plan will be presented to the government agencies, NEDA will be able to guide them through investment planning.

Panel Interventions

This panel discussion was facilitated by **Gina Pulawska, Asia-Europe Foundation**, who initially asked **what role does SCP play in implementing the environment-related targets of the SDGs?** The panelists were also asked to provide practical examples.

Loraine Gatlabayan, SWITCH-Asia, explained that there are three components in the SWITCH-Asia program: regional policy, an SCP facility, and EU grants. The program has provided technical support to 24 countries to promote SCP as well as the circular economy model and climate change action. Currently SWITCH-Asia is looking into requests for assistance to develop SCP action plans and SCP road maps in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. SWITCH-Asia's regional policy component also provides support for SDG monitoring and reporting.

Yongping Zhai, ADB, said there is a need for coordination among people working on the SDGs. For example, those working on SDG 12 (SCP) should cooperate with those working on SDG 7 (energy).

The facilitator then proceeded to ask **how can the energy sector at ADB contribute to the attainment of the SCP agenda?**

Yongping Zhai, ADB, said the assumption is that demand for and consumption of energy will continue to grow. He said that his work in ADB typically concentrates on ensuring the continuous supply of energy to meet these growing demands. His main takeaway from this session is that in addition to balancing energy supplies and demands, he should also be asking whether the demand and supply is sustainable. In reviewing proposals, he should thus begin to look at not only whether the technology is correct, but also whether production is sustainable.

The facilitator then asked **for the next Conference of Parties, countries are supposed to prepare their climate plans and NDCs. How could SCP be integrated in this?**

Preeti Bhandari, ADB, responded that although SCP is not high on national agendas, the initial set of NDCs reference SCP. SDG 7, for example, tops the list of actions, and these are closely linked with SCP. In fact, out of 160 action plans assessed, over 1,000 activities are focused on sustainable energy and only 200 on SCP.

The next question from the facilitator was **how does ADB assist the private sector in developing member countries to contribute to the SCP agenda?**

Jeff Weber, ADB green business and supply chain consultant, responded that the question is really whether business and industry can help countries achieve the SDGs; and whether business can act without being told what to do. The answer is yes—as evidenced from the work of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and smaller industries. An example is an ADB project in Mongolia with a company engaged in cashmere manufacturing. For this project, ADB did a sustainability assessment of the company, which then led to a voluntary, industry-wide program to improve the sustainability of their industry, not just the company. Given the right incentives (which are not always financial in nature), business can appreciate the merits of SCP. Often these merits become clearer when there is a strong business case for companies to change. Some of the more important business benefits include lowered costs from energy efficiency and water use efficiency.

The facilitator then asked the participants **how they see business moving SCP forward.**

Ny-Ann Nolasco, The Purpose Business, said that SDG 12 is the only SDG written in economic terms as it focuses on consumption and demand. Companies and customers can more closely relate to consumption and demand, and these two issues are where companies exercise the most control. While there is a need to lower consumption and demand, there is also a need to see the contribution of technology; for example, this is evident with waterless technologies.

Loraine Gatlabayan, SWITCH-Asia, explained that SWITCH-Asia provided grants for the greening of the supply chain in the private sector (e.g., cashmere manufacturing). It also links the private sector with the policy process to increase multi-stakeholder collaboration.

The facilitator then asked the panelists **to describe activities their organizations undertake related to SCP**.

Anna Oposa, Save Philippine Seas, shared with participants how their organization works with resorts and schools to reduce single-use plastics. She noted that relevant programs include “Straw Wars” and “PET Battles.” Her organization works with companies to provide options for consumers such as through refilling stations for personal care products. She stressed that the Asia and Pacific region is home to some of the world’s most valuable biodiversity but because it also generates considerable plastics pollution, biodiversity is threatened. Therefore, the region needs to assume a leadership role in reducing plastics pollution to preserve its biodiversity.

The session then opened for comments and questions from the floor.

One participant said that Asia and the Pacific is regressing on the SDGs; the region is producing beyond what is needed, and that reviving oceans will take 1,000 years. On a similarly cautious note, he opined that perhaps

Panel discussion on the role of sustainable consumption and production and the circular economy. Loraine Gatlabayan, SWITCH-Asia; Anna Oposa, Save Philippine Seas; and Preeti Bhandari, Asian Development Bank, share ideas and experiences on the role of Sustainable Consumption and Production and the circular economy.

it was already too late to take meaningful action. **Preety Bhandari, ADB**, retorted that just because not enough action is being taken does not mean action is futile. She emphasized the need for people to have faith in human ingenuity and social innovation and not expect governments to do everything. Everyone should also look at what can be done as individuals to “move the needle.” In many cases, it is no longer a debate between developed and poor countries, or between the environment and economic development. Since many of the most serious environmental problems transcend physical and sectoral boundaries, concerted cross-national and sectoral efforts are needed. **Ny-Ann Nolasco, The Purpose Business**, agreed that there is a personal imperative to do what one can do. She said that if one’s house is on fire, one does not sit back and watch it burn. She emphasized that people’s actions should reflect the fact that things need to change, not the certainty that it will. She also emphasized the importance of data and technology to bring about change. **Loraine Gatlabayan, SWITCH-Asia**, said that platforms for engagement and sharing are already good starting points for change. However, much work needs to be done on the policy side. There are many tools for SCP across different thematic areas. There is a need to collaborate on these tools and replicate successful approaches.

Another participant asked about ADB’s policy regarding the financing of energy projects and nuclear energy. **Yongping Zhai, ADB**, responded that in looking at energy solutions, energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies are clearly important. He further explained that ADB is not financing nuclear energy, in part, because it does not have internal expertise [on nuclear power] but also due to the associated risks of nuclear power. There is need to move to cleaner technologies and locate renewable energy sources nearer to residences. Energy projects also help create jobs.

The same participant then asked about the impacts of reducing consumption and production in automobile and garments manufacturing, which are major industries in Bangladesh. Another participant wondered if the transition to SCP and a circular economy model would force businesses to shut down and people to lose jobs. To reduce the casualties from such a transition, he asked what types of complementary policies could be developed to support those that lose jobs in the shift to sustainable consumption and production.

Preety Bhandari, ADB, commented that compensation mechanisms can be tricky because, for example, compensation for garment workers who lose their jobs often leads to discussions about compensation for large garment companies. In the longer term, you need to look at compatibility of the skills mix and an education system that provides a broader context for (an understanding and appreciation of) the SDGs. **Jeff Weber, ADB green business and supply chain consultant**, commented that from a business standpoint, there are business models that allow companies to become more sustainable economically, socially, and environmentally. **Loraine Gatlabayan, SWITCH-Asia**, added that production processes can move toward greener technologies and greener value chains to help bring about the shift to sustainable lifestyles, but that the right institutional arrangements need to be in place and the silo mentality needs to change. The Philippines SCP Action Plan, for example, provides a platform for different stakeholders to achieve socioeconomic goals while mainstreaming SCP. **Ny-Ann Nolasco, The Purpose Business**, commented that 43% of the top 10 global companies have declared alignment with the SDGs and have shown year-on-year financial growth. Market forces are making them pay attention to SDG issues. The more globalized companies are, the more they need to compete for natural resources while building and maintaining reputations as responsible companies.

Another participant commented that efficiency in the use of natural resources and the minimization of waste sit at the core of SCP. Innovation and technology are very important for helping industry minimize energy and waste.

Gina Pulawska, Asia-Europe Foundation, wrapped up the panel discussion by stating that the session moved beyond the environment and the SDGs, covering much ground, evoking vivid metaphors, and pointing to linchpins of change. Resource use efficiency, collaboration, and technology are keys to the future and there needs to be a collective effort where everyone gets on board and perseveres. The session outlined many concrete examples on how this can be achieved in practice.

Break-out Sessions on Integrating the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs into Policies, Plans, and Programs

The workshop then moved into four separate breakout sessions focusing on the three environment-related SDGs in question (12, 14, and 15) as well as one breakout group focusing on actions that government could take to better involve the private sector, including public procurement. During the sessions, participants shared challenges to taking an integrated approach and worked to produce recommendations on how to move forward on the issue in question. After the session, the workshop reconvened in plenary, and rapporteurs shared the key recommendations.

Recommendations from the breakout session on SDG 12 included the following:

- For ADB, there is a need to support capacity development related to green procurement and green finance principles for both the public and private sector.
- For developing member countries (DMCs), in formulating SCP National Action Plans, governments need to address issues related to implementation and monitoring progress, including identifying the responsible organizations and appropriate institutional arrangements. National stakeholder forums involving all responsible organizations including government departments, the private sector, and civil society organizations should be created to support plans.
- For in-country action, to avoid a fragmented approach, governments need to have a cross-sector SCP focal person who can work with sectors and development partners to align projects and programs with SCP actions; there is a need to ensure green actions such as green procurement are incentivized, and that subsidies for non-green actions are avoided.

Recommendations from the breakout session on SDG 14 included the following:

- For ADB, that all investments should be reviewed against environmental criteria in relation to their support for the blue economy and/or how they impact positively or negatively on the marine environment.
- For DMCs, to support integrated marine spatial planning, and the development and implementation of marine protected areas.
- On monitoring and evaluation metrics and statistics, ocean accounting can help with standardizing ocean-related data and statistics; and there is a need to gather data on point and nonpoint sources of marine pollution.
- In relation to the private sector, there is a need to support marine-related certification schemes and push for extended producer responsibility in relation to the management of post-consumer plastics.

Recommendations from the breakout session on SDG 15 included the following:

- For ADB, a modest shift is needed in the focus of traditional development projects so that there is greater awareness of bioresources, nontimber forest products, agroforestry, and items that can cause net gains from the beginning with the development of country partnership strategies.
- For DMCs, mobilizing domestic resources for financing for biodiversity management and protection, including payment for ecosystem services should be explored.
- On monitoring and evaluation metrics and statistics, creating a dashboard to show progress on the biodiversity-related SDGs could be useful, but this requires data.
- In relation to the private sector, there needs to be better monitoring, control, and surveillance of biodiversity impacts to increase accountability for the use of natural resources—which also requires data.

Recommendations from the breakout session on the role of public procurement and the private sector included the following:

- Governments should create duty-free incentives for trade in green goods and agree on a standard definition of green procurement to develop green procurement legislation. They should also create incentives in that legislation that can motivate companies to support green procurement.
- ADB and development partners should develop a training program on public-private partnerships that can promote sustainable consumption and production. They should also consider hosting green procurement business forums and roundtables.

More general recommendations relevant across the SDGs and the themes in question included:

- Long-term plans that go beyond 2030 should be developed. Such plans should be “living documents” with periodic review and revision as new challenges emerge. All other sector plans should be embedded within such a long-term framework.
- Nested multi-spatial and multi-temporal plans within the long-term planning horizon were emphasized. Plans at ecosystem (river basin), provincial, community, and city levels need to be vertically and horizontally integrated and aligned with the long-term plan. Multi-temporal plans need to be nested at annual, 5-year, or decadal, and at long-term milestone dates.
- All donor assistance needs to facilitate implementation of these plans, which should be coordinated and synergistic.
- Low-hanging fruit should be implemented first to build on successes rather than abandoning failures. Energy efficiency was mentioned in this regard as one example of low-hanging fruit.
- Governments should strategically recognize political realities and strike at the right time for more ambitious actions.

For ADB, comments included the following:

- Long-term national plans can help frame country planning strategies. This occurred in the case of ADB’s assistance to Indonesia for a marine science education project. That project led to the creation of a Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries that after another 3 phases over 15 years resulted in the Coral Triangle Initiative in 6 countries. This was a journey over about 30 years but fully aligned and coherent.
- Find the kind of visionary thinking that led to the Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation program as a peace initiative following the cessation of hostilities in the region. Expand the regional economic integration approach to other regions. For example, create a South Pacific Special Economic Zone aligned to the Samoa Pathway with Australian and New Zealand assistance.
- Provide the Asia and Pacific region with a Sustainable Development Data Initiative by allocating a fixed percentage of investment loans (say 1%) to fund data collection, collation, and synthesis.
- Expand technical assistance for upstream planning, including strategic environmental assessment for policies, plans, and programs, and integrated economic and environmental planning.
- Create a new work stream on assessment of policy effectiveness, comparing before and after. This should lead to a compendium of successful policies and implementation success factors.
- Continue to develop green and blue bonds and other innovative financial instruments geared toward facilitating increased private sector involvement in the SDGs.
- Lead the way with green procurement practices both in investment projects and in internal ADB operations. Boilerplate language should be added to standard loan documents for these purposes.

Wrap-up Session

Eric Zusman, ADB consultant, gave participants a summary of the discussions during the first day of the workshop.

He noted that following the brief welcoming remarks, an introductory presentation helped set the context for the rest of the workshop. That presentation underlined that much of the Asia and Pacific region is at a critical crossroads when it comes to sustainably managing its natural resources. In fact, there are growing signs that current development models are transgressing planetary boundaries. This is particularly evident in the areas of natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable consumption and production. The TA project was designed to leverage SDGs 12, 14, and 15 (and some related targets) to help reorient development patterns and pursue a more sustainable course in the Asia and Pacific region.

This was followed by a series of presentations that summarized the current status of the SDGs; and findings from the first phase of the TA project. A presentation then demonstrated that on many of the SDGs, Asia and the Pacific has not made sufficient progress. Another presentation laid out the key results from a national stocktaking of 15 countries' performance on the environment-related SDGs. That stocktake revealed that many countries, while aware of the importance of these SDGs, have struggled to adjust their institutions and data systems to manage them in an integrated manner. A review of decision-making support tools nonetheless illustrated that there are numerous tools and approaches that can help strengthen that integration.

A panel discussion then followed which concentrated on integrating the environment dimensions of the SDGs into policies, plans, and programs. That panel discussion underlined several good practices that countries are adopting to support this integration; for example, Indonesia has mainstreamed the SDGs into budgeting process. ADB is also exploring opportunities to incorporate the SDGs into country partnership strategies that provide a framework for defining priorities for country lending.

The next session focused on one of the key outputs from TA project, an SCP Action Plan for the Philippines. That action plan was developed through a well-designed stakeholder engagement process to promote, among other things, green public procurement. The sessions then discussed other enabling policies related to the SDGs that would be good for the environment, including aligning work on environmental protection and climate policies, and providing financial and regulatory incentives to reduce the production and consumption of plastics.

The final session consisted of a series of breakout groups that discussed several practical recommendations to advance work on SDGs 12, 14, and 15 and working with the private sector. These practical recommendations were also discussed during the closing panel discussion on the second day.

Day 2 Proceedings

Panel discussion on finance. Anouj Mehta, Asian Development Bank; Lin Lu, Asian Development Bank; Dr. Gem Castillo, Resources, Environment and Economics Center for Studies, Inc.; and Jonathan Gilman, United Nations Environment Program, on the panel on Green Finance.

Opening Session

Eric Zusman, Asian Development Bank (ADB) consultant, opened Day 2 by emphasizing a focus on practical next steps to strengthen the integration of environment-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into policies, plans, and programs.

Addressing the Environmental Dimensions of the SDGs in Socioeconomic Policies and Importance of Environmental Data to Inform Policy Development

Presentations

Suzanna Sumkhuu, National Development Agency (NDA) of Mongolia, presented findings from the first technical assistance (TA) subproject component from Mongolia.

Her presentation highlighted the concept of planetary boundaries, and that development needs to be undertaken within these boundaries. Planetary boundaries provide a safe operating space for humanity and protect human well-being and future needs. Transformational change is needed so that policymakers will not go beyond these limits.

Integrating environment SDGs into national policies. Suzanna Sumkhuu, National Development Authority, Mongolia, presenting on the National Development Agency's subcomponent under the technical assistance project.

She showed that the boundaries of a safe operating space in Mongolia have been breached. The country is heavily focused on economic growth and needs to rethink its development framework and coherence across the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of development. In Ulaanbaatar, for example, carbon dioxide per capita, air, and soil pollution are very high; there is lack of green spaces. *Ger* districts (comprised of internal migrants living in slum-like conditions in their traditional Mongolian tents) are growing.

Mongolia's Sustainable Development Vision came to fruition following the establishment of a clear legal framework for development planning. In 2015, that framework led to the creation of a Parliament of the Development Policy Planning Law. The law listed all development policies that should be included in the Sustainable Development Vision as well as the institutions responsible for their implementation. For sustainable development, the Government of Mongolia recognizes the importance of a “whole of government” and a “whole of society” approach. As such, apex level institutional mechanisms were established such as subcommittees on the SDGs and a National Council for Sustainable Development (headed by the Prime Minister). In addition, designated gatekeepers for the policy and data side were created in the form of the NDA and the National Statistical Office (NSO). The NDA provides technical and policy support for mainstreaming the SDGs. The NSO strengthens the link between data collection and the SDGs. Meanwhile, the National Council for Sustainable Development handles multi-stakeholder engagement. As of February 2019, these institutions have reviewed a total of 567 national policies; some were found to be irrelevant for managing contemporary issues.

As part of its planning mandate, an NDA working group conducted assessments to determine if policies (i) complement the Development Policy Planning Law, (ii) have targets and indicators for each goal and objective, and (iii) were aligned with a range of domestic policies as well as the SDGs (for example, if the national livestock policy and agricultural policy were aligned). The group also assessed policies for their contribution to Mongolia's Sustainable Development Vision 2030. The results of this exercise showed that majority of policies lacked alignment, indicators, data, and baselines.

The *2019 Mongolia Voluntary National Review Report* highlighted the limited progress on the environmental SDGs and related targets. The report also laid out the challenges behind these shortfalls such as the lack of data or a weak science-policy interface. One of the clearest need areas in light of these shortfalls was SDG 12. For example, despite a waste law and 300 waste collection points, burning and dumping remains rampant; there is virtually no recycling. The lack of recycling was particularly problematic since 90% of waste was generated by households—often in the *ger* districts. For SDG 15, there is a need to consider the relationship between the environment and tourism. This relationship merits attention because there is often not much of an effort to convert mining areas (where natural landscapes have been degraded) into places that could serve other functions. Air pollution is an issue not only within but also beyond the capital of Ulaanbaatar. Despite a new government policy forbidding the burning of loose coal, concerns over health issues remain high.

Through the TA subproject component, the NDA developed a qualitative tool to help policymakers understand the bigger picture and identify underlying policy issues. The process for tool development involved a desk review of 49 existing global and national tools guided by principles such as ease-of-use. The Bhutan Gross National Happiness Policy screening tool, Stockholm Environment Institutes' SDG Interaction Framework, and a policy objective filtration tool were among the tools identified and shortlisted. To further refine the tool, questions were developed based on nationally identified indicators for environment-related SDGs, and 46 environment-related targets. Policies were to be analyzed and assigned qualitative scores ranging from +2 (direct positive impact) to -2 (direct negative impact). Those policies scoring negative marks were to be reconsidered and/or realigned with the environment-related SDG targets. The tool was then tested in the energy (Figure 5) and health sectors. Stakeholder feedback was obtained through a workshop. An accompanying tool manual was developed.

Figure 5: Using the Tool to Test the State Policy on Energy, 2015–2030

SDG = Sustainable Development Goal.

Source: S. Sumkhuu. 2019. Mainstreaming Environment–Socioeconomic Interlinkages into the National Development Policies in Mongolia: A Tool. Presentation for the 2nd Regional Knowledge-Sharing Workshop on Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific. Manila. 28 November. <https://events.development.asia/node/23026>.

In the future, there are plans to carry forward some of this work. Planned next steps include mainstreaming the tool in the development planning processes, building the capacity of planners to use the tool, and encouraging the use of the tool by nongovernment stakeholders.

In the ensuing question and answer session, one participant asked about the extent to which the newly developed scoring the tool was subjective. It was acknowledged that there is an element of subjectivity. However, the results were based on a collaborative and multi-stakeholder process where everyone worked on just one score sheet. In consequence, even though there were disagreements, there was a process that enabled respondents to reach a consensus.

Another participant commented that in his country, policy analysis is not done prior to policy adoption, and yet policies are expected to be effective. There were no indicators to determine whether policies achieved what they were intended to achieve. It was noted that there are statutory requirements that call for evaluating different policy options and selecting the best alternative based on that analysis. In practice, these evaluations are not performed. Nonetheless it still results in better discussions if stakeholders do their homework.

Panel Interventions

This panel discussion was facilitated by **Eric Zusman, ADB consultant**. He began the session by asking the panel **what changes are needed to bringing interlinkages into practice**.

Aneta Nikolova, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), argued for the importance of systems thinking, and proposed for its inclusion in the education system. Students need to regain knowledge about natural resource systems as well as the animals inhabiting them. She stressed that often appreciating these systems requires going beyond classroom learning. She also called for looking for exemplary development models and practices beyond developed countries as sources of inspiration. She further underlined that quick solutions are often not truly sustainable. Rather, making a solution sustainable often involves a lengthier stakeholder engagement process.

Peter King, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), echoed a theme earlier in the workshop when he said that integrated thinking has been around since the 1990s (e.g., integrated area development, integrated water management, and integrated river basin development) and called for learning from past experience. In addition, he underlined the importance of both vertical and horizontal integration when working on environmental and social planning, national and city planning, to corridor planning. He called for institutions to do this kind of planning. Many cities in Asia had excellent plans that were not followed or enforced.

Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India, said that it is important to optimize the use of natural resources and bring together multiple stakeholders. For example, water allocation requires engaging with industry, agriculture, and tourism. On a similar note, he argued for more problem-based and integrated multi-disciplinary research.

Kinga Wangmo, Gross National Happiness Commission, Bhutan, said that the systems approach is not entirely new, yet still valid for SDG planning.

Panel discussion on the importance of data in the context of environment-related Sustainable Development Goals.

Eric Zusman, Asian Development Bank consultant; Aneta Nikolova, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; Peter King, Institute of Global Environmental Strategies; Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India; Kinga Wangmo, Gross National Happiness Commission, Bhutan; and Simon Olsen, Asian Development Bank consultant, discuss the importance of data to inform policy development.

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, said that the SDGs actually make up a system on paper. He nonetheless felt that real integration requires removing boundaries to working together. One way this can be achieved is creating more holistic work portfolios. He also said that while there were many tools to aid integration, some reinforce rather than break down barriers.

The facilitator then asked about the panel's experiences using tools to bridge relationships between government agencies and other organizations.

Aneta Nikolova, UNESCAP, said that policymakers want quick answers, but systems thinking is complicated. Whatever tool is used should bring people together, yet policymakers are not necessarily interested in working across divisions. Thus, effort may be needed to use the tool to build trust and understanding between stakeholders.

Peter King, IGES, highlighted the importance of long-term planning to allow a systems approach to take form and gain ground. He shared his professional experience in managing destructive fishing in a coastal marine project in Indonesia to illustrate his point. He said those working on the project recognized there was a significant lack of capacity to look at marine issues. To fill capacity gaps, those working on the project then established a Marine Science Institute, and later a Marine Research and Environment Planning Program where graduates could find jobs. This was done in the context of a 15-year coral reef rehabilitation project that led to the establishment of the Coral Triangle Initiative in six countries. The plan illustrates that coherent and long-term planning is possible; however, such progress might not be feasible with the SDGs' current 2030 deadline. Instead, an SDG 2050 plan would be more feasible.

Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India shared work he was undertaking with an evidence-based decision-making tool for water and energy. The tool identifies gaps in water demand and supply for energy that had been used as basis for proposals for the Government of India on how to prioritize targets based on strengths and linkages. He also shared examples from a water and climate change project, which linked sustainable cities with water sources and demand.

Kinga Wangmo, Gross National Happiness Commission, Bhutan, pointed to Bhutan's gross national happiness (GNH) as a screening tool that promotes integration. While GNH is not designed for the SDGs, it also has some unique features that make it more like SDG+ in that it incorporates a cultural aspect. The GNH has four pillars with nine domains and 22 variables. All policies are screened against these components, effectively illustrating how interlinkages can be operationalized in different contexts.

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, commented that systems thinking can be daunting because it is conceptual but that the different tools shared in this TA project can help move into more practical solutions, such as with energy and environment interlinkages.

The facilitator then asked the panelists **what types of institutional structures are in place to mainstream systems thinking and whether they form over time.**

Aneta Nikolova, UNESCAP, shared how UNESCAP does national trainings in key sectors. In one of those trainings, a participant from Sri Lanka did a full systems thinking analysis of institutions and the SDGs. She hopes the new government will also consider this example because, like Mongolia, Sri Lanka has many policies but has struggled with implementation. In the Philippines, some of these challenges can be addressed by NEDA as it is positioned to take a broad view of the policy and institutional landscape and is able to get different agencies and stakeholders to sit around the table. Another possible entry point for bringing systems thinking to bear on policy involves religion and culture. For example, in Buddhist countries it is possible to use the concept of "karma" or cause and effect to make people think seriously about the consequences of their actions. She concluded by noting that tools are not only useful for identifying interlinkages but can help identify key technologies as well as barriers to their adoption.

Peter King, IGES, said that the global system has created an industry that is very good at producing more strategies, plans, and road maps, but enjoyed more limited success with these policies' implementation. He said that it is necessary to "stick to the knitting"—that is, to stick with what has been committed in the long term and treat plans as living documents. The temptation to create new plans and institutional arrangements every few years in the name of a new initiative must be avoided. On this point, he questioned what has happened to the national councils for sustainable development. To avoid creating empty policies and institutions, it is important to ensure vertical and horizontal integration and create participatory mechanisms that build accountability into the system. It is also critical to consider power dynamics not as what gets done on paper, but rather what the power brokers want to get done.

Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India, agreed that there is no need to create new departments, but instead to have more flexibility in existing action plans and institutions. Using “scoreboards” to track progress can also be useful.

Kinga Wangmo, GNH Commission, Bhutan, said that as much as institutions are necessary, new ones must not be created as (part of) obligations to new agreements. In Bhutan, she shared that they follow a medium- (5-year) and long-term plan. The SDGs are housed in the GNH Commission, which serves as the lead planning commission.

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, commented that the media as an institution is also important; this is particularly because the media can create political pressure for change when data alone cannot generate that pressure. He drew upon an example from the past in Thailand, where policy decisions on air pollution were informed by modeling results from the Pollution Control Department. The results were shared with the national newspapers to create public awareness, which, in turn, created pressure on policymakers to change the law on air pollution. Data can be used to inform empirically grounded integrated decision making (as opposed to) decisions based on a whim or on political influence.

During the question and answer portion, **Loraine Gatlabayan, SWITCH-Asia**, shared that in the Philippines, the national sustainable consumption and production (SCP) Action Plan triggered the reactivation of the Philippine Council on Sustainable Development and also motivated the departments to talk together. The council serves as a decision-making platform with the involvement of civil society and the private sector.

A participant commented that SCP and climate change impacts youth and children. He then asked what was the best way to include them in policy planning. **Aneta Nikolova, UNESCAP**, said that her organization promotes youth engagement, among others, through the Youth Voices for Climate Action online to collect photos, art works, and other youth interventions and bring them to a greater audience. **Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India**, agreed that information and education of the youth was very important for achieving the SDGs.

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, said that youth could be involved in climate change in a structured manner, through existing major groups’ mechanism, but that they should seek various channels to make their voices heard. He added that amplifying the voice of youth does not diminish the responsibility of the adults to take action on climate change. **Peter King, IGES**, recalled a survey of British politicians who were asked who they considered most influential in making policy decisions. Answers included think tanks and policy advocates, as well as young daughters who bring information from school. This reinforces the point that education is very important.

Another participant asked about the role of corruption (as a barrier to) achieving the SDGs.

Aneta Nikolova, UNESCAP, said that her organization has zero tolerance for corruption with its member states. **Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India**, agreed that there should be transparent systems to reduce corruption. **Peter King, IGES**, added that corruption is a constraint during implementation. For example, in one case, a contractor was being asked to pay 30% of a development project as “social tax,” which is regarded as part of the cost of doing business. To counter this, it is necessary to have accountability mechanisms in contracts, good whistle-blower laws, and problem-solving approaches to deal with corruption. He added that Singapore, for instance, increased salaries of government officials to remove incentives for corruption. Hong Kong, China also has a powerful anti-corruption body.

A participant asked about the persistent gap between intent and achievement, and whether it would be better to have a good plan or good implementation. **Peter King, IGES**, said that plans have to be realistic. Achieving the SDGs by 2030 is unrealistic and may cause the global community to abandon the mission if it seems unachievable. Policymakers can take proactive steps to narrow the gaps between intent and achievement. For instance, a cost assessment for the SCP Action Plan of the Philippines could help to increase implementation prospects. It will also help if the plan focuses on low-hanging fruit such as energy efficiency that deliver clear financial and environmental gains. Energy supply companies may lose so there may need to be a system in place to ensure that such supply companies can also benefit from energy reduction through other business opportunities.

Kinga Wangmo, GNH Commission, Bhutan, added that Bhutan's long-term plan is a living document. It is not fixed, and it can be updated to reflect emerging issues. She added that youth and climate change issues are captured in the plan, along with a national key result area dedicated to countering corruption.

The facilitator wrapped up noting that the discussions had moved from systems thinking to tools, to the importance of capacity building, educational reorientation, institutional issues such as corruption, transparency and data for planning, and karma and cultural factors.

Improving Environmental Data Collection and Management for Monitoring and Reporting on the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs

Presentations

This session featured presentations from two subproject countries of the TA project: Mongolia and Viet Nam.

Kim Thi Thuy Ngoc, Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment, Viet Nam, gave an overview of the institutional and regulatory framework for the SDGs in Viet Nam. In this connection, she noted that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment developed a natural resources action plan for implementation of environment-related SDGs, including 66 specific tasks in support of the SDGs. She then moved into the objectives of the TA subproject, which included the identification of appropriate targets and indicators for tracking implementation, stakeholder engagement, as well as data collection methodologies. She noted that making this subproject work involved engaging many collaborating partners, including the institute, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

The first step in the subproject was based on a policy and data review; the main aim of that review was to produce guidance for environmental monitoring and evaluation. Priority targets were identified and linked with existing multilateral environmental agreement commitments. The policy review found a lack of policy coherence and a need to identify how achievement of environment-related targets would positively influence non-environmental development goals. The second step was a data review of 26 identified indicators in terms of consistency, comparability across international standards, and data availability. Important gaps that need to be addressed to improve the data situation in Viet Nam were identified, and enabled the effective tracking of the environment-related targets. A challenge was the dispersed responsibilities for the identified priority areas that made it difficult to formulate one coherent monitoring and evaluation strategy.

The subproject identified different recommendations to improve policy coordination, enhance professional oversight, and apply new technologies for data collection. Lessons included the need for prioritization and phasing in of implementation, recognition of what is working and what is not working, and conducting a review of how data links to decision making.

Uyangaa Burenduuren and Batzorigt Yunden, National Statistical Office (NSO), Mongolia gave a joint presentation on their work on the NSO and Ministry of Environment and Tourism TA subproject components. The project began with the translation of the Framework for the Development of Environmental Statistics (FDES) 2013 and System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) 2012 for Mongolian readers. For the SEEA, physical flow accounts, environmental activity accounts, and asset accounts were the focus; additionally, pilot water pollution, solid waste, and air pollution emission accounts were undertaken, the latter two for Ulaanbaatar city. The presentation also reviewed key activities, including related UN missions and trainings, emissions inventories per industry, ground water extraction rates, and other types of data necessary to complete the accounts.

The second part of the presentation involved work on updating the “BOH” forms (standardized forms used to collect environmental statistics data) to reflect international agreements and commitments of Mongolia, including multilateral environmental agreements, FDES, Sendai Framework, and the SDGs. The data collection methodology was also updated to link with the data requirements in the SEEA in Mongolia. They outlined the activities consisting of gap analysis as well as the process for revising the BOH Forms Methodology and Guidance. Revising the data collection forms made the task for ground level data collectors much easier and clearer (Figure 6). In total, the project led to the revision of 19 different forms, including those related to biodiversity, climate, water, waste, land,

Figure 6: Cartoonist Interpretation of Information Flow of Data on Environment Before and After the Subproject

Source: U. Burenduuren and B. Yunden. 2019. The BOHs - Base of the SEEA in Mongolia: Overview on the Revising Process of Environmental Data Collecting Forms, Methodology, and Guidance under ADB TA9245. Presentation for the 2nd Regional Knowledge-Sharing Workshop on Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific. Manila. 28 November. <https://events.development.asia/node/23027>.

and others. Since the BOH forms are living documents, additional revisions may be made in the future. Other steps for the way forward include collaboration to improve quality and connect data and information sources; addressing indicators not yet estimated in Mongolia; training data collectors on the ground; creating an integrated database of environmental statistics; and providing users with reliable data and information from a single, formal source.

Discussions included questions regarding elements of environmental-tax accounts, as well as nongovernment stakeholder involvement in data collection.

Panel Interventions

Rikke Munk Hansen, UNESCAP, facilitated this panel discussion. She shared that there is a growing effort in the statistics community in the Asia and Pacific region to strengthen links between data and policy discussions. She further noted that a lack of data and statistics has been raised repeatedly in the workshop. Moreover, data issues often come up in very broad terms, so there is a need to be more specific on the data questions. She also shared that in most countries there is already a significant amount of environmental data, but there is lack of coordination, making it difficult to be useful for policy formulation.

Gurjav Batkhishig, Ministry of Environment and Toursim, Mongolia, discussed the status of environmental data management and which institutions should be chiefly responsible for coordination in Mongolia. She then gave examples from concrete distribution of roles and responsibilities for data collection in Mongolia and told participants that the statistics office assists with the collection, compilation, and quality assurance of environmental data.

Virginia Bathan, Philippine Statistics Authority, shared that the Philippines aims to collect data for natural capital accounts, including disaster and climate change statistics. She added that it is important to have a coordination mechanism like an interagency committee to allow the statistics office to engage with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and others. There are also technical working groups focusing on specific sector resources statistics. She then observed that it is often challenging to get data that is well-aligned with the timing of the SDGs: for example, the period of 2008–2017 was the latest statistics compilation. She noted that, despite these constraints, the Philippines has compiled 70% of the suggested FDES framework. To build on this project, she underlined the importance of capacitating data sources—both those who compile and use the data—and that those accounts rely on good underlying data and statistics.

The panel also discussed the importance of collaboration and coordination for environmental statistics, because most statistical offices find when they start working on environmental statistics that they know very little about the sectors where they are working on. As such, there is a need for both statistics expertise and sector expertise, and that the agencies with sector expertise are the most important users of statistical services and products.

The facilitator highlighted FDES and SEEA (which are also represented in the ADB tool compendium). The FDES and SEEA are statistical frameworks and not policy frameworks; they can be designed to ensure statistics match the requirements in international frameworks. The panel noted that policy demand has to be the ultimate driver for data, and to make this work necessitates strengthening the connection from statistics offices to policymakers.

Joseph Mariasingham, ADB, shared that the SEEA links economic activity with environmental impacts, and that a well-designed SEEA enables users to understand the environmental impact of economic activity. In this respect, the SEEA is not only a statistical framework but also a policy tool. He shared that ADB had not been focusing much on environmental but mostly economic statistics but this was changing. He admitted that indicators are in some cases not based on real on-the-ground statistics, that finding the right data in the region was a huge challenge, and addressing data gaps requires cooperation and broad government support. In the past, there was a limited focus

on environmental impacts. He stressed that since there is a system of national accounts that produces gross domestic product (GDP), there is a need to produce an indicator that can challenge GDP; doing so would be a game changer.

Teerapong Praphotjanaporn, UNESCAP, agreed that SEEA and FDES are statistical and not analytical frameworks. He stressed that statistics offices need to talk to the users of the statistics to gain a common understanding of how statistics affect policy. He outlined a practical approach that once governments have policy documents, they need to identify targets and indicators, and this requires statistics based on global standards such as the FDES to ensure coherence. He argued that indicators are necessary for creating trust, and that the strength of frameworks like SEEA and FDES is to ensure coherence and consistency in indicators over time. He also said that while a cooperative relationship between statistics offices and policymakers is crucial, the independence of statistical offices is equally vital. He further mentioned that cross-national differences in data were a sizable challenge.

At the end of the session, some participants commented that there is a need to harmonize definitions of data. However, others felt that there was a need to allow for national differences, and not impose international standards but rather document differences. Overall, there was broad agreement that standardized indicators will only happen when governments attach importance to the indicators.

Finance

Jonathan Gilman, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), gave a brief introduction to green finance. He observed that the SDG Framework has, as its central objective, the alignment of public and private investment for SDG achievement and increasing coordination of official development assistance (ODA), while the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Sustainable Finance promotes the development of integrated national financing frameworks.

UNEP uses the 2016 G20 Green Finance Study Group definition of green finance. That definition highlights that green finance should help deliver environmental benefits in the context of sustainable development. He then turned to a UNDP study with DBS Bank Singapore indicating that there was \$200 billion needed for green finance, and currently only \$40 billion available, of which 75% is provided by public funds, and 25% private. This financing gap is widening due to extreme weather events. Within the UNEP Finance Initiative, 50 banks have adopted the Principles for Responsible Banking globally; these principles commit banks to integrating the environment into their operations. There are also Principles for Sustainable Insurance, and a Sustainable Stock Exchange Initiative that promotes environment and social reporting among listed companies. The Thai Stock Exchange has the Thai Sustainability Investment list that includes companies with outstanding performance on environmental, social, and governance aspects from its annual sustainability assessment.

In addition to these principles, he outlined some important steps countries can take to make projects and foreign investment more sustainable. Important steps include strengthening the environmental impact assessment and the review process for foreign direct investment. Other indications of a commitment to sustainable financing are developing National Green Finance Road Maps or Nationally Determined Contribution financing strategies. In this context, Indonesia has demonstrated leadership by budget emissions tagging (Low Emission Budget Tagging and Scoring System).

Simon Olsen, ADB consultant, then facilitated the panel and reminded participants that financing is the “Achilles’ heel” of the 2030 Agenda, and that financing is always hailed as important but that necessary details on sources of financing have often proven elusive.

Anouj Mehta, ADB, who works on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Catalytic Green Finance Facility, was asked how traditional assistance mechanisms need to change to achieve the SDGs. He responded by referencing the ADB publication *Catalyzing Green Finance*.¹²

Lin Lu, ADB, was asked how to engage finance ministries on this agenda, and gave the example of the Green Financing Platform for Accelerated Air Quality Improvement in the Greater Beijing–Tianjin–Hebei Region in the People’s Republic of China (PRC). This was established when the Ministry of Finance realized the need to leverage more finance to address air quality. The China National Investment and Guaranty Corporation identifies bankable projects that are supported by a guarantee for debt financing in the absence of collateral and equity investments for green technology start-ups. The establishment of a \$100 million Guarantee Reserve Fund has also allowed for the purchasing of a green bond. Using this example, ADB is working with other financing institutions to increase the capacity to finance green projects.

Gem Castillo, Resources, Environment and Economics Center for Studies Inc., was asked what the role of environment ministries was in generating green finance. He highlighted the example of Manila Bay in the Philippines, which is sinking 9 centimeters a year, and the decision to invest on reclamation with commercial benefits versus investing in ecosystem services with public benefits. Governments need to decide which stakeholders they are seeking to please. UNEP funded a financing for ecosystem services study that was presented to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. To take forward the recommendations from this study, a champion needs to convince the secretary of the benefits of taking a public ecosystem approach.

Jonathan Gilman, UNEP, was asked about the role of the UN in stimulating greater environmental investment. He referred to the role of the UNEP Finance Initiative again as well as support from the Ministry of Environment focal points to encourage them to engage with ministries of finance on this issue. Several countries in Asia have been active on green finance. The Mongolia Sustainable Finance Principles were developed by the Ministry of Environment with the Banking Association, while the Bank of China developed large-scale environmental investment with the input of the Ministry of Environment. The Indonesia Financial Services Authority has issued guidance on sustainable finance that applies to the entire financial system. In 2018 the Government of Indonesia became the first to issue a green Islamic or *sukuk* bond of \$1.25 billion over 5 years. He also referenced the development of NDCs as an opportunity to develop green finance plans.

In the question and answer session, BAPPENAS gave a little more background on their SDG Financing Hub that is intended to mobilize and blend private sector and religious funds (*sukat*) for sustainable development.

A Bangladeshi representative asked what financing was needed for SDG 11 on Sustainable Cities.

Jonathan Gilman, UNEP, highlighted that UNESCAP and UNEP had a proposal to work with cities on clean air action plans that would be funded through a regional financing mechanism. **Lin Lu, ADB**, noted one of the priorities of ADB’s Strategy 2030 is to make cities more livable, and target support at the country level and through a regional TA project on air pollution. It has also established the regional emission reduction and pollution control fund in the PRC, and cities can apply for finance through this fund. Lessons from the PRC’s experience of working with this fund can be shared more widely in Asia.

¹² ADB. 2017. *Catalyzing Green Finance: A Concept for Leveraging Blended Finance for Green Development*. <https://www.adb.org/publications/green-finance-catalyzing-facility>. The document proposes a blended finance framework for governments and development entities to better leverage development funds for risk mitigation (not assets), generate a pipeline of bankable green infrastructure projects, and directly catalyze private finance. Countries have taken some proactive steps in both directions. The Shandong Green Finance Facility in the PRC was approved in late 2019, while Indonesia has established a Green Finance Facility for the SDGs.

A representative from NEDA, Philippines asked how ministries of finance can be encouraged to include the environment in their policies and plans. On this question, **Gem Castillo, Resources, Environment and Economics Center for Studies Inc.**, suggested that there is a need to present environment as capital and not a cost. Greater recognition of the value of the environment will help to avoid the tendency to depend too heavily on public funds to protect the environment. The key to making this transition is to move from funding to financing for the environment. **Anouj Mehta, ADB**, emphasized that ministries of environment should create innovative blended funds. **Jonathan Gilman, UNEP**, highlighted Myanmar, which has established a national environment fund that includes fines paid by polluters and payment for ecosystem services.

Next Steps in Strengthening Integration of the Environmental SDGs into Policies, Plans, and Programs

The session was facilitated by **Eric Zusman, ADB consultant**. He reiterated that the focus of the panel was on identifying where to go from here, and how to take forward some of the lessons from this TA project to developing member countries, ADB, international organizations, and other stakeholders. He reminded participants that it was promising that interlinkages, the circular economy model, and systems thinking are all featuring more prominently in discussions today compared to the past, and stressed that integration was not a quick fix but a process facilitated by means of implementation.

Suzanna Sumkhuu, NDA, Mongolia said that while planning is important, the policymaking process and institutional arrangements are in need of reform; governance is the mobilizer of any change; and there is a need to think differently about governance at different stages of the policy implementation cycle. She highlighted promising practices in the region that were shared during the workshop such as the Philippines developing green GDP as an indicator that could positively change the playing field.

She also said that the SDGs should not be viewed as a global process led by the UN, but rather a way to strengthen domestic policies, and that the SDGs are really a leverage point for integration since it is not possible to tackle only one SDG—they must be approached as a package. She also highlighted Indonesia's move from a sector to a more thematic development approach through its holistic, integrated, spatial approach, and stated that the frequently voiced argument that planning conflicts with the idea of a market economy merits more attention and scrutiny.

She stressed the regional learning potential from the cases shared at this workshop, and said that it will be countries who will ultimately achieve the SDGs, not development partners. In that regard, she called for better coordination among development partners when preparing and carrying out in-country projects.

She also highlighted the need to build capacity within ministries of planning and economy because they are the ones that have to understand the importance of the environmental SDGs. Moving forward, she added that an extension in Mongolia of this TA project could potentially focus on the science-policy interface, because even when data is created it is not certain that ministries will actually use it for decision making.

Smita Luthra Nakhooda, ADB, reminded participants that now, after 4 years, the SDGs are no longer completely new. It is all the more urgent then that countries and development partners come to grips with the SDGs and integrate them into their respective results frameworks. She shared that in Strategy 2030, ADB uses

operational priorities and Agenda 2030 to motivate work on integration; she also shared that ADB uses the country partnership strategies to identify the best areas for support for SDG implementation through its lending processes. She admitted that ADB cannot do everything but there are already many activities where the SDGs could lead to more sustainable outcomes. For instance, when working on infrastructure, ADB needs to consider how to deliver infrastructure that is more sustainable.

In terms of data, she agreed with the general notion that the environment lacks good data, and called for more strategic partnerships with national statistics offices. In that regard, she shared that ADB has a capacity building program for statistical offices on disaggregating data for the SDGs. She also suggested that going forward, ADB needs to get better at forging meaningful partnerships with non-state actors to facilitate better data generation. She ended her intervention reflecting on the challenges of integration, saying that it requires “giving up a bit of your own turf.”

Rikke Munk Hansen, UNESCAP, said that although data comes up frequently, concerns are often articulated in vague terms that make it challenging to formulate concrete resolutions. There is a need to become more literate in data and use the terminology consistently. She also said that data and policy people need to get more specific about what they need. For this to happen, those working on data and policy need to collaborate more. While the 2030 Agenda has helped prompt a discussion on integration in the statistics community, it is necessary to ensure that the information remains robust and independent. She also shared that chief statisticians are strongly committed to the principles underpinning the SDGs such as leaving no one behind to promote a “whole of government” approach. Going forward, she said there needs to be more political support for updating data work. This updating is important because statistics offices often produce the same statistics they produced 50 years ago, and that statistics offices need to be ready for change. In terms of planning, she also highlighted the importance of setting targets that can actually be monitored. She ended with some thoughts on the need for professionals from all sectors to get out of their comfort zones. In this context, there is a need for environment-related discussions to take place outside the traditional environmental field, most importantly for those people who are working on SDG 8. She also highlighted discussions about a possible partnership between UNEP, ADB, and UNESCAP on strengthening data for the 2030 Agenda that would be one of the results of this workshop.

Jonathan Gilman, UNEP, highlighted in his intervention examples of how ministries of planning are addressing an integrated approach. He said that there is a need for environmental focal points in ministries of finance and planning. Towards that end, UNEP is undertaking a regional review of what these offices are doing and bringing regional environment offices and staff together to share experience and build capacity. UNEP is also developing national green finance assessments with the International Monetary Fund and central banks to create national road maps for green finance. Moreover, UNEP is the UN custodian of 19 environmental indicators. To support work on these indicators, UNEP has just developed a methodology and will roll out training on it.

The floor was then opened for additional comments from the participants. One participant highlighted the importance of data disclosure and mentioned in this regard the Extractive Industry Disclosure Initiative—a platform for extractive industries to share information. Another participant highlighted that environmental policy could be addressed in other sector policies. For example, Viet Nam is no longer approaching recycling from an environment point of view but as an industrial policy. This shift in orientation has made it easier to create jobs and increase government support. In that sense, the argument for more environmental action should come from outside the environment, including human health. Finally, one participant highlighted that since the Agenda 2030 is universal, all countries are developing toward achieving the SDGs no matter their level of GDP. He therefore suggested changing the terminology that ADB uses in its operations with its member countries from “developing member countries” to simply use “member countries.”

Closing Session

Eric Zusman, ADB consultant, facilitated the closing session. The floor was opened for comments and questions from participants reflecting on next steps to further strengthen the integration of environment-related SDGs into policy and planning, now that Agenda 2030 is going into its decade of implementation.

Appendixes

Group photo of the workshop participants. Developing member country officials, civil society, academe, private sector, regional development partners, and other stakeholders participated in the regional workshop.

APPENDIX 1

List of Participants

NAME	MINISTRY/AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY
Md. Abdul LATIF	Bangladesh Planning Commission	Bangladesh
Tashi NAMGAY	National Statistical Bureau (NSB)	Bhutan
Kinga WANGMO	Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC)	Bhutan
Sona LONG	National Council for Sustainable Development (NSCD)	Cambodia
Sovanndy POCH	Ministry of Planning (MOP)	Cambodia
Wahyuningsih DARAJATI	National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS)	Indonesia
Devesh SHARMA	Central University of Rajasthan (CURAJ)	India
UYANGAA Burenduuren	National Statistics Office (NSO)	Mongolia
BATKHISHIG Gurjav	Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)	Mongolia
SUZANNA Sumkhuu	National Development Agency (NDA)	Mongolia
BATZORIGT Yunden	National Statistics Office (NSO)	Mongolia
Leah ALEJANDRO	Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	Philippines
Luz Teresa BASKINAS	WWF	Philippines
Glynda BATHAN	Clean Air Asia	Philippines
Virginia BATHAN	Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)	Philippines
Thomas BELL	Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)	Philippines
Senen T. BRIONES	Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	Philippines
Faith Lea CABRERA	Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)	Philippines
Gemma Marie CARNACETE	INSIGHT 2, ILO	Philippines
Gem B. CASTILLO	Resources, Environment, and Economics Center for Studies, Inc. (REECS)	Philippines
Concolacion P. CRISOSTOMO	Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)	Philippines
Mary Jane DELA ROSA	National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)	Philippines
Bert FABIAN	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	Philippines
Christine GARCIA	Nestle Philippines	Philippines
Hideki KAGOHASHI	International Labour Organization (ILO)	Philippines
JuHern KIM	Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI)	Philippines
Diane L. MAHARJAN	National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)	Philippines
Particia MARCELO-MAGBANUA	Coca-cola Foundation	Philippines
Libertie MASCULINO	Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)	Philippines
Ricardo Simon MISA	INSIGHT 2, ILO	Philippines

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Table continued

NAME	MINISTRY/AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY
Ny-Ann NOLASCO	The Purpose Business	Philippines
Patricia Camilla RABAT	Nestle Philippines	Philippines
Grazyna PULAWSKA	Asia-Europe Foundation	Singapore
Loraine GATLABAYAN	SWITCH-Asia	Thailand
Jonathan GILMAN	UNEP	Thailand
Rikke Munk HANSEN	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)	Thailand
Thitiwat KAEW-AMDEE	National Statistical Office (NSO)	Thailand
Peter KING	Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)-BKK	Thailand
Aneta NIKOLOVA	UNESCAP	Thailand
Teerapong PRAPHOTJANAPORN	UNESCAP	Thailand
Albert SALAMANCA	Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)	Thailand
Nichanan TADKAEW	Office of Natural and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)	Thailand
DANG Phung Loan	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MONRE)	Viet Nam
KIM ThiThuy Ngoc	Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment (ISPONRE)	Viet Nam
TRAN Thi Phung Hoa	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MONRE)	Viet Nam
Linda ADAMS	Asian Development Bank (ADB) Staff	Philippines
Preety BHANDARI	ADB Staff	Philippines
Ka Seen Gabrielle CHAN	ADB Staff	Philippines
Leslie A. CRUZ	ADB Staff	Philippines
Aaron DENNIS	ADB Staff	Philippines
Bruce DUNN	ADB Staff	Philippines
Haidy EAR-DUPUY	ADB Staff	Philippines
Beatrice GOMEZ	ADB Staff	Philippines
Young Uck KANG	ADB Staff	Philippines
Katrina JAYME	ADB Staff	Philippines
Duncan A. LANG	ADB Staff	Philippines
Thierry Jean Michel LIABASTRE	ADB Staff	Philippines
Lin LU	ADB Staff	Philippines
Emma MARSDEN	ADB Staff	Philippines
Manhinthan J. MARIASINGHAM	ADB Staff	Philippines
Anouj MEHTA	ADB Staff	Philippines
Josefina MIRANDA	ADB Staff	Philippines
Smita Luthra NAKHOODA	ADB Staff	Philippines
Felix NiiTetty OKU	ADB Staff	Philippines
Stephen S. PETERS	ADB Staff	Philippines
Sanath RANAWANA	ADB Staff	Philippines
Deborah B. ROBERTSON	ADB Staff	Philippines
Christopher TABUNGAR	ADB Staff	Philippines
Jinmiao XU	ADB Staff	Philippines

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Table continued

NAME	MINISTRY/AGENCY/ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY
Susumu YONEOKA	ADB Staff	Philippines
Yongping ZHAI	ADB Staff	Philippines
Lisa ANTONIO	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Agustin ARCENAS	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Charina CABRIDO	ADB Consultant	Philippines
LE Duc Chung	ADB Consultant	Viet Nam
Tanya CONCEPCION	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Jon Alan CUYNO	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Dianne April DELFINO	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Hazel Monica LALAS	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Eva Ella McGOVERN	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Simon OLSEN	ADB Consultant	Japan
Anna OPOSA	ADB Consultant	Philippines
NGUYEN Phong	ADB Consultant	Viet Nam
BOLOR Radnaabazar	ADB Consultant	Mongolia
Ellen REYNES	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Erin Jan SINOGBA	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Partick SCHROEDER	ADB Consultant	United Kingdom
Katharine THODAY	ADB Consultant	United Kingdom
Bulganmurun TSEVEGJAV	ADB Consultant	Philippines
Jeff WEBER	ADB Consultant	Cambodia
Eric ZUSMAN	ADB Consultant	Japan

APPENDIX 2

Program

**Asian Development Bank
TA 9245 Regional Knowledge-Sharing Workshop:
Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific
27–28 November 2019,
Multi-Function Hall 3, ADB Headquarters, Philippines**

Objective

To disseminate the findings and technical guidance materials developed during phase 1 of the ADB Technical Assistance on *Supporting the Implementation of Environment-Related SDGs in Asia and the Pacific*; to disseminate knowledge, experiences, and lessons from the phase 2 in-country subprojects from Mongolia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, and other relevant case studies; and to agree on the next steps in taking forward this agenda.

Background Documents

Stocktake Report, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/481246/environmental-dimensions-sdgs-stocktake-report.pdf>

Tool Compendium, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/481446/environmental-dimensions-sdgs-tool-compendium.pdf>

2018 Regional Workshop Materials, <https://events.development.asia/learning-events/1st-regional-knowledge-sharing-workshop-strengthening-environment-dimensions-sdgs>

2019 Regional Workshop Materials, <https://events.development.asia/learning-events/2nd-regional-knowledge-sharing-workshop-strengthening-environment-dimensions-sdgs>

Outputs

Workshop Proceedings

Developing Member Country Case Studies

Policy Brief

Key Personnel

Lead Facilitators: Eric Zusman, Emma Marsden

Documenters/Rapporteurs: Simon Olsen, Katherine Thoday, Lisa Antonio, Alan Cuyno

Mongolia/Viet Nam Workshop Support: Bolor Radnaabazar, Le Duc Chung, Phong Nguyen

Administration: Tanya Concepcion, Dianne Delfino

Detailed Agenda

	Session	Format	Facilitator/ <i>Rapporteur</i>	Presenters/Panelists
DAY 1				
8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Registration			
9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Day 1 Introduction/Welcome Session		Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant/ <i>Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant</i>	Bruce Dunn, ADB Emma Marsden, ADB
9:45 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.	Importance of Integrating the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs into Policies, Plans, and Programs	Presentations and Q&A	Emma Marsden, ADB/ <i>Katherine Thoday, ADB Consultant</i>	Aneta Nikolova, UNESCAP Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant Simon Olsen, TA9245 Jonathan Gilman, UNEP
10:55 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.	Coffee (15 mins)			
11:10 a.m. – 12:00 noon	Integrating the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs into Policies, Plans, and Programs: Challenges and Opportunities for DMCs and ADB	Panel Discussion	Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant/ <i>Katherine Thoday, ADB Consultant</i>	1. Jonathan Gilman, UNEP 2. Wahyuningstih Darajati, BAPPENAS, Indonesia 3. Smita Luthra Nakhoda, ADB 4. Bruce Dunn, ADB
12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch (1 hour)			
1:00 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.	Means of Implementation: Enabling Policies and Regulatory Frameworks: Role of SCP and Circular Economy in delivering the environmental dimensions of the SDGs and other SDGs	Presentations and Q&A	Emma Marsden, ADB/ <i>Lisa Antonio, ADB Consultant</i>	Patrick Schroder, ADB Consultant Diane Maharjan, NEDA, Philippines
2:10 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.		Panel Discussion	Gina Pulawska, ASEF/ <i>Lisa Antonio, ADB Consultant</i>	1. Yongping Zhai, ADB 2. Preety Bhandari, ADB 3. Loraine Gatlabayan, SWITCH-Asia 4. Ny-Ann Nolasco, The Purpose Business 5. Anna Oposa, Save Philippine Seas 6. Jeff Weber, ADB Green Business and Supply Chain Consultant
3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Coffee (15 mins)			

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Table continued

	Session	Format	Facilitator/ <i>Rapporteur</i>	Presenters/Panelists
3:15 p.m.–4:15 p.m.	Integrating the Environment Dimensions of the SDGs into Policies, Plans, and Programs: 1. SDG 12 on SCP – links to energy, transport, water, urban sectors, and CC mitigation etc. 2. SDG 14 on Life under Water – links to the ADB ocean action plan etc. 3. SDG 15 on Life on Land – links to the ENR sector, natural capital etc. 4. Role of Public Procurement and Private Sector	Breakout Session	Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant/ <i>Alan Cuyno, ADB Consultant</i> Emma Marsden, ADB Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant	Bert Fabian, UNEP and Katherine Thoday, ADB Consultant Anna Oposa, Save Philippine Seas and Deborah Robertson, ADB Chin Cabrido, Consultant, ADB and Duncan Lang, ADB Lisa Antonio, ADB Consultant and Jeff Weber, ADB Green Business and Supply Chain Consultant
4:15 p.m.–4:45 p.m.	Report Back on Breakout Session	Interactive Discussion	(same as the above)	(same as the above)
4:45 p.m.–5:00 p.m.	Wrap-up Session		Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant/ <i>Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant</i>	
5:00 p.m. onward	Cocktail			

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Table continued

	Session	Format	Facilitator/Rapporteur	Presenters/Panelists
		DAY 2		
8:30 a.m.–8:45 a.m.	Registration			
8:45 a.m.–9:15 a.m.	Day 2 Introduction		Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant/ Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant	
9:15 a.m.–9:55 a.m.	Means of Implementation: Enabling Policies and Regulatory Frameworks/ Institutional Architectures: addressing the environmental dimensions of the SDGs in socioeconomic policies/importance of environmental data to inform policy development	Presentations and Q&A	Emma Marsden, ADB/ Lisa Antonio, ADB Consultant	Suzanna Sumkhoo, NDA, Mongolia
9:55 a.m.–10:45 a.m.		Panel Discussion	Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant/ Lisa Antonio, ADB Consultant	1. Aneta Nikolova, UNESCO 2. Devesh Sharma, Central University of Rajasthan, India 3. Peter King, IGES 4. Kinga Wangmo, GNH Commission, Bhutan 5. Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant
10:45 a.m.–11:00 a.m.	Coffee			
11:00 a.m.–12:00 noon	Means of Implementation Environment Indicators, Data, Monitoring and Evaluation: improving environmental data collection and management for monitoring and reporting on the environment dimensions of the SDGs	Presentations and Q&A	Emma Marsden, ADB/ Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant	Kim ThiThuy Ngoc, ISPONRE, Viet Nam Uyangaa Burenduuren and Batzorigt Yunden, NSO, Mongolia
12:00 noon–1:00 p.m.	Lunch			
1:00 p.m.–1:50 p.m.	Means of Implementation Environment Indicators, Data, Monitoring and Evaluation: continued	Panel Discussion	Rikke Munk Hansen, UNESCO/ Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant	1. Teerapong Praphotjanaporn, UNESCO 2. Joseph Mariasingham, ADB 3. Gurjav Batkhishig, MET, Mongolia 4. Virginia Bathen, PSA, Philippines
1:50 p.m.–2:00 p.m.	Means of Implementation: Finance	Presentation	Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant/ Katherine Thoday, ADB Consultant	Jonathan Gilman, UNEP
2:00 p.m.–2:40 p.m.		Panel Discussion		1. Jonathan Gilman, UNEP 2. Anouj Mehta, ADB 3. Lin Lu, ADB 4. Gem Castillo, Resources, Environment and Economics Center for Studies, Inc.

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	Session	Format	Facilitator/Rapporteur	Presenters/Panelists
2:40 p.m.–2:55 p.m.	Coffee			
2:55 p.m.–3:55 p.m.	Next steps in Strengthening Integration of the Environmental SDGs into Policies, Plans and Programs	Interactive Discussion with Panel	Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant/ <i>Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant</i>	1. Smita Luthra Nakhooda, ADB 2. Jonathan Gilman, UNEP 3. Rikke Munk Hansen, UNESCAP 4. Suzanna Sumkhuu, NDA, Mongolia
3:55 p.m.–4:30 p.m.	Day 2 Wrap Up/Closing Session		Eric Zusman, ADB Consultant/ <i>Simon Olsen, ADB Consultant</i>	

ADB = Asian Development Bank; ASEF = Asia-Europe Foundation; BAPPENAS = Ministry of National Development Planning (Indonesia); CC = Climate Change; DMCs = developing member countries; ENR = Environment and Natural Resources; GNH Commission = Gross National Happiness Commission (Bhutan); GES = Institute for Global Environmental Strategies; ISPNRE = Institute of Strategy and Policy on Natural Resources and Environment; MET = Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Mongolia); NDA = National Development Agency (Mongolia); NEDA = National Economic and Development Authority (Philippines); NSO = National Statistics Office (Mongolia); PSA = Philippine Statistics Authority; Q&A = question and answer; SCP = sustainable consumption and production; SDG(s) = Sustainable Development Goal(s); TA = Technical Assistance; UNESCAP = United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme.

APPENDIX 3

Evaluation Survey Summary

After the workshop, participants were requested to complete a brief evaluation of the event. The evaluation is part of the normal workshop arrangements of Asian Development Bank (ADB), and helps to compile feedback to improve their organization and implementation of knowledge exchange workshops.

In total, the workshop had more than 90 participants, of which 27 responded to the questionnaire. Seventeen were from national governments, four from international organizations, one from civil society, one from academia, two from ADB, and two from “others.” Figure A3.1 shows the breakdown of participants.

Figure A3.1: Breakdown of Respondents

ADB = Asian Development Bank, NGO = nongovernment organization.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

Overall, more than half of the responding participants rated the workshop *very good* while eight participants rated it *excellent* and five rated it *good* (Figure A3.2).

Figure A3.2: Feedback on Rating of Workshop

Source: Asian Development Bank.

Participants were asked whether they came away from the workshop with a new idea or approach that they will pursue further. Their responses are illustrated in Figure A3.3.

Figure A3.3: Feedback on New Ideas or Approaches to be Pursued

Source: Asian Development Bank.

Participants were also asked whether they met partners at the workshop they would not have met otherwise. Most of the respondents answered Yes (Figure A3.4).

Figure A3.4: Feedback on Partners Met

Source: Asian Development Bank.

When asked to share their impressions of the benefits of the workshop, responses were varied, with most (70%) responding that they had a “greater awareness on the importance of adequate environmental data;” 67% a “deeper understanding of the challenges of implementing the environment-related sustainable development goals (SDGs);” and 63% on “networking opportunities with other stakeholders.” Figure A3.5 shows the ranking of other responses.

Figure A3.5: Feedback on Most Interesting/Relevant Sessions

SDG = sustainable development goal.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

Figure A3.6 shows the responses when participants were asked which sessions they found the most interesting and/or relevant to their work.

Figure A3.6: Feedback on Benefits of the Workshop

Source: Asian Development Bank.

Figure A3.7 shows the participants' feedback about the structure of the workshop program.

Figure A3.7: Feedback on Structure of Workshop Program

Source: Asian Development Bank.

Participants also shared suggestions on topics not covered but which should be considered for future workshops. The responses are as follows:

- the tools or monitoring framework;
- more details on how to evaluate the progress of the related SDG targets;
- more exchange of country experiences instead of panel discussions;
- more on green finance with involvement of private sector as well as in data collection, process, and sharing;
- capacity building activities on tracking progress of SDGs;
- the circular economy model, the SDGs and business, the Philippines sustainable consumption and production action plan road map;
- economic aspects—how that could change along with the need for environmental data and policy change; and
- how to use environmental indicators to better inform policy.

Overall, the evaluation can be said to be positive, although only roughly one-third of participants answered the evaluation questions. This would need to be taken into account for future workshops to ensure that evaluations are distributed in time for a greater number of participants to respond. Additionally, significant effort was made throughout the workshop to create an informal atmosphere to enable candid information sharing and discussions. Organizers felt that such an approach is helpful to allow participants' honest opinions on the various implementation challenges of Agenda 2030 and the environment-related SDGs coming to the fore.

Strengthening the Environment Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific

Knowledge-Sharing Workshop Proceedings

In November 2019, policymakers and representatives of civil society and international organizations gathered in Manila, Philippines, to discuss challenges and opportunities for implementing environment-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Asia and the Pacific. They discussed in-country experiences of the subprojects, the stocktake findings, and the compendium of tools and approaches, and identified the next steps to integrate SDGs 12, 14, and 15 into country development plans, policies and programs. They also reflected on outcomes and lessons from an Asian Development Bank technical assistance project designed to support these efforts. These proceedings provide a summary of the workshop discussions and findings.

About the Asian Development Bank

ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Established in 1966, it is owned by 68 members—49 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.

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