



Issue 1 : February 2024

Urban-Act IKI

Regional Newsletter



Joint Action
for climate-
friendly and
resilient cities.



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for Economic Affairs
and Climate Action

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by the German Bundestag

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Management Prospective

Welcome to our first Urban-Act newsletter, where we provide you with key updates on our joint effort under the IKI Urban-Act initiative and turn the spotlight to the latest developments on sustainable and climate-sensitive urban development in the Asia-Pacific region.

As countries and cities grapple with the urgent need for climate action, multi-level partnerships, targeted knowledge transfer and effective networks are required to remove the technical and institutional barriers and unlock financing opportunities for a low-carbon and resilient urban transformation. As we navigate the intricate landscape of multi-level climate action, the Urban-Act project exemplifies the potential when local, regional, and national entities converge to address the pressing challenges of our time.

In this edition, we bring you exclusive insights into the milestones achieved by the Urban-Act project in 2023 at the regional, country and city level. We share on recent policy developments related to climate change and urban development in our partner countries and highlight notable publications and partnerships in our project environment as well as our upcoming event of 2024.

Our newsletter serves as a platform to showcase the Urban-Act project's progress, lessons learned, and the collective experiences gained from navigating the complex interplay between urban development and climate change. Join us as we explore the transformative journey of Urban-Act, demonstrating how its initiatives are contributing to the creation of sustainable, livable cities that inspire positive change.

Stay informed, inspired, and engaged as we chronicle the ongoing narrative of Urban-Act's impact on the urban climate agenda in the Asia-Pacific Region. Together, let's amplify the message that concerted efforts at all levels, partnerships and collaboration are essential for effectively building a resilient and sustainable future for our cities.

Heinrich Gudenus
Project Director

About Us

Integrated Urban Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities (Urban-Act) is a regional project funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) over the period April 2022 to September 2026. This regional project aims to support the transformation towards low-carbon and resilient urban development in Asia-Pacific while also contributing to countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Urban-Act is implemented in China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Regional project partners include the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), the TU Dortmund University and the University of Stuttgart, as well as national consortium partners in each of the 5 partner countries.

Project Partners

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As historic loss and damage fund victory kicks off COP28, cities and regions celebrate direct access to critical funding

**SPECIAL
FEATURE**



COP28UAE
Climate Action Supporter

Local and regional governments are the first responders to losses and damage incurred by climate change. They are also the architects of building back better. A significant achievement at COP28, where the operationalising Loss and Damage fund critically includes direct access for subnational governments.

[Read to learn more from CITIES & REGIONS IN THE UNFCCC PROCESS](#)



A successful dialogue of the Sino-German Climate Partnership at COP 28

At COP 28, a successful Sino-German Dialogue took place as a side event at the German Pavilion. The focus of this event was on the development of renewable energy in China and Germany. The dialogue was jointly hosted by the German Environment Agency (UBA) and the Chinese National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC), with support from GIZ. [Read to learn more](#)



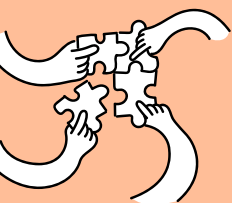
Urban-Act
Integrated Urban Climate Action
for Low-Carbon & Resilient Cities

**Join us
throughout 2024 !**

Climate Conscious Cities: Urban-Act Webinar Series

How transformative were outcomes at the COP28 for climate finance and cities?

Throughout 2024, the monthly Climate Conscious Cities: Urban-Act Webinar Series will provide the opportunity for practitioners and policymakers to meaningfully exchange in dialogue and impactful ideas and increase practical knowledge of low-carbon and climate-sensitive urban development.



To kick start a crucial year for urban climate action, the Urban-Act project conducts the Climate Conscious Cities: Urban-Act Webinar Series.

At the inaugural webinar titled **"Climate finance – Where are we after COP28? Barriers and opportunities for cities."** was held on 31 January 2024.

How transformative were the outcomes at COP28 for climate finance and cities? What were the key barriers and opportunities that emerged from COP28 in unlocking finance for city-level climate action? What pathways are emerging for action in 2024?

Find out more details and the schedule throughout 2024 here. [Climate Conscious Cities: Urban-Act Webinar Series | ESCAP \(unescap.org\)](#)



Upcoming events 2024

JANUARY

**Urban-Act Webinar Series:
Climate Conscious Cities**
Monthly event throughout 2024
Online via Zoom
<https://unescap.org/node/37541>
[More information](#)

FEBRUARY

11th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD11), Bangkok
20–23 February 2024
(Side event : UCLG ASPAC)
[More information](#)

**Financing Local Actions for SDG13:
Enabling Frameworks to Accelerate
City Climate Finance in Asia-Pacific**
21 February 2024 | 16:30–17:45 Bangkok time
[More information](#)

APRIL

**First Session of 2024 UCLG ASPAC
Executive Bureau Meeting,
North Minahasa Regency, Indonesia**
23–25 April 2024

MAY

Regional Training: Multi-level climate action
May 2024
[More information](#)

**World Water Forum
Bali, Indonesia**
18–24 May 2024
(Side event : UCLG ASPAC and UCLG)
[More information](#)

Urban-Act Webinar Series:

*Note that unless indicated otherwise, all webinars will be one hour in length from 13:00 – 14:00 Bangkok time (GMT+7).

China	14:00 – 15:00 (GMT+8)
India	11:30 – 12:30 (GMT+5:30)
Indonesia (Jakarta)	13:00 – 14:00 (GMT+7)
Philippines	14:00 – 15:00 (GMT+8)
Thailand	13:00 – 14:00 (GMT+7)

31 January 2024

Climate finance – Where are we after COP28?
Barriers and opportunities for cities

28 February 2024

Innovating for the waste management and climate nexus – Integrated Resource Recovery Centres and other innovations

27 March 2024

An untapped frontier? Matchmaking and city to city exchange for climate financing

24 April 2024

Climate-sensitive urban planning – Challenges and opportunities of setting the right frameworks to enable climate action

29 May 2024

Developing an assessment methodology and scorecard for national governments and cities: The Urban-Act EFC

26 June 2024

Forecasting and financing the future – Climate-sensitive budget planning and forecasting

[More information: Climate Conscious Cities](#)

Save the Date!



© GIZ/Tooptong

ENABLING FRAMEWORKS IS NEEDED TO SUPPORT CITIES ACCESS TO CLIMATE FINANCE

Asian-Pacific cities are at the forefront of facing the adverse impacts of climate change and exposed to varied institutional, financial, and knowledge barriers to mobilise climate finance. The Urban-Act project, on the sidelines of the Eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-8) and in collaboration with CCFLA, will develop an Enabling Framework Condition assessment tool to assess the enabling environments of cities for accessing climate finance.

Following the methodology elaboration, Urban-Act project partners together with over 60 participants, confirmed the critical importance of enabling cities access to climate finance through highlighting examples of relevant government regulations from the Philippines, local government experiences in the city of Medan, Indonesia; challenges in accessing climate finance faced by cities in India; innovative approaches to consolidated transboundary urban project finance through inter-municipal collaboration of six cities in the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT); and finally, examples of financing instruments and mechanisms according to international climate finance institution standard.

[Read full article](#)

[Eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum \(APUF-8\) Summary Report](#)



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URBAN-ACT COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS AT APUF-8

China: Zhanjiang City presented its sustainable urban development strategy and concept that holistically encompass their transportation hub (expressways, water channel port, international airport, highways), rising manufacturing industries in line with their low-carbon priority (new energy automobile and new energy battery).

Indonesia: Medan City shared strategies and initiatives on attracting urban climate finance by utilising and developing climate data and risk assessments, comprehensive climate action plans, public-private-partnerships schemes, community engagement and international partnerships. Padang City strongly emphasised the need for people-centric smart technologies for low-carbon cities development, particularly in developing community-based early warning systems.

Philippines: The Philippines affirmed its commitment to urban climate resilience such as through its inaugural Philippine Urban Forum in 2023 and emphasising the significance of multilevel climate governance and collaboration to effectively address climate change and urban challenges.

Thailand: Thailand acknowledged that meaningful partnerships and international collaborations, such as through Urban-Act, alignment with the New Urban Agenda and SDGs' decade for action in the Asia-Pacific region, can strengthen Thailand's ability to deal with complex urban issues.

India : Urban representatives from India presented at Urban Climate Action where the speaker called for addressing the intricacies of informality as a pivotal step in rendering climate solutions more pragmatic and accessible at the grassroots level, as well as Urban Digitalisation plenaries and recommended long-term, cohesive people-centred policy development to guide projects and initiatives to create digital change that narrows access gaps in a socially differentiated and pro-poor environment.

CLIMATE -RELATED POLICY NEWS

Global Policy News



Crucial new developments in mitigation and adaptation are needed, yet many Asian cities struggle to secure sufficient funding. Globally, there is a US\$6–\$12 trillion gap in annual funding for climate and resilience investment. Of the funding that does come in, only 10% goes to adaptation projects, highlighting a real need to address human vulnerability in cities. So how can cities draw from greater sources of private and public investments for climate action? [Read to find out.](#)

MATCHMAKING FOR GREEN CITIES? ACCELERATING CLIMATE FINANCE IN URBAN AREAS

Author Attribution : ESCAP and CCFLA

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND INCLUSIVITY TO RESHAPE ASIAN-PACIFIC CITIES

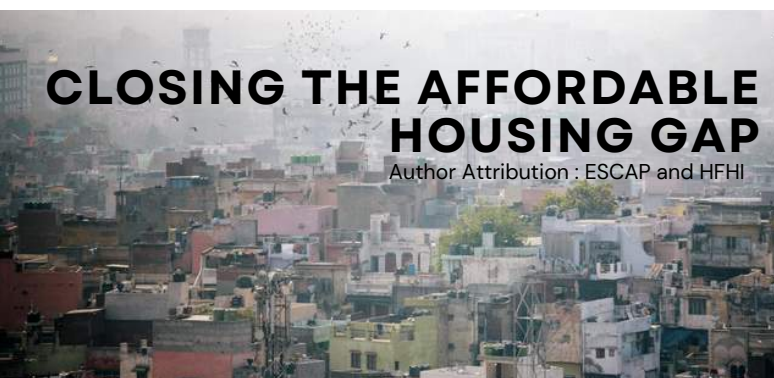
Author Attribution : ESCAP and HFHI



Revenue in the internet market is estimated to reach \$436 billion by 2026, with smart cities accounting for 1/3 of the market – leading the transformation. Asian-pacific cities are adopting technologies and adding digital intelligence to urban systems. But for this digital shift to have a profound and positive impact on society and contribute towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it must be rooted in safety, trust, and inclusivity. [Explore digital practices for inclusive cities.](#)

CLOSING THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING GAP

Author Attribution : ESCAP and HFHI



Despite being a cornerstone of inclusive urbanisation, affordable housing is a challenge that often intersects with economic disparities and inadequate infrastructure. UN-Habitat estimated that 3 billion people worldwide will require adequate, affordable housing by 2030. Urban finance acts as a catalyst for developing and preserving affordable housing options within urban areas. It can facilitate partnerships between public and private entities to jointly invest in affordable housing projects. [Read to learn more.](#)

NEW GUIDELINE ON ACHIEVING CARBON NEUTRALITY

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ China (rewrite)


Eleven Chinese ministries collaboratively introduced the *Guideline on Building a Comprehensive Standard System* to meet China's dual carbon targets. It aims to tackle critical climate issues, such as setting precise carbon calculation, emission reduction strategies, carbon offset methods, and solutions for quantifiable and tradable carbon emissions – including the scheduled goals of carbon peaking and neutrality.

On 24 April 2023, eleven Chinese ministries, including the Ministry of Nature Resources (MNR), the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE), the China Meteorological Administration (CMA), the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development (Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development), and the Ministry of Transport (MoT), jointly released the *Guideline on Building a Comprehensive Standard System* to achieve China's carbon peaking and neutrality goals.

The Standard System comprises four primary subsystems: the foundational general standard subsystem, the carbon emission reduction standard subsystem, the carbon removal standard subsystem and the market-based mechanism standard subsystem. It further divides into 15 second-level subsystems, including low-carbon management and evaluation criteria, and green finance standard (GFS) as well as 63 third-level subsystems, including green and low-carbon evaluation and green finance rating assessment. This extensive system covers key industries and fields such as energy, industry, transportation, urban and rural construction, water conservancy, agriculture and rural areas, forestry and grassland, finance, public institutions and residents' lives, applicable in various business and life scenarios.

In addition to shaping and improving national and industrial standards, international standards for carbon peaking and carbon neutrality play a pivotal role in global climate change efforts. The Guideline underlines international cooperation in standard development through four key areas of focus:

1. Establish a working group for international standards cooperation.
2. Strengthen exchanges with institutions and countries along the "Belt and Road Initiative" and promote dialogues within the BRICS and APEC frameworks.
3. Participate in developing international standards such as GHG monitoring and accounting, energy transition, and green finance.
4. Promote alignment between domestic and international standards and encourage localization of the integration of applicable international standards. Develop foreign languages version of Chinese national, industry, and local standards.

[Download the Guidelines at the end of the page \(in Chinese only\)](#) 

Policy News from China



MONITORING NETWORK'S WORK PLAN FOR NATIONAL TERRITORIAL SPATIAL PLANNING

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ China (rewrite)

China has unveiled its Work Plan for the Construction of the National Territorial Spatial Planning Observation Network (2023–2027) to facilitate the digitisation and networking to realize intelligent-life-cycle management of territorial spatial planning. This marks as a significant milestone for China's journey towards digital territorial spatial planning.

On 5 September 2023, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) released the Work Plan for the Construction of the National Territorial Spatial Planning Observation Network (2023–2027). This work plan is designed to advance the “digitisation” and “networking” efforts, ultimately achieving “intelligent” life cycle management of territorial spatial planning. The Plan aligns with two key governmental documents: Overall Layout Planning for the Construction of Digital China (issued in 2023 by the State Council) and the National Outline of Territorial Spatial Planning (2021–2035) (approved by the State Council, but not yet released).

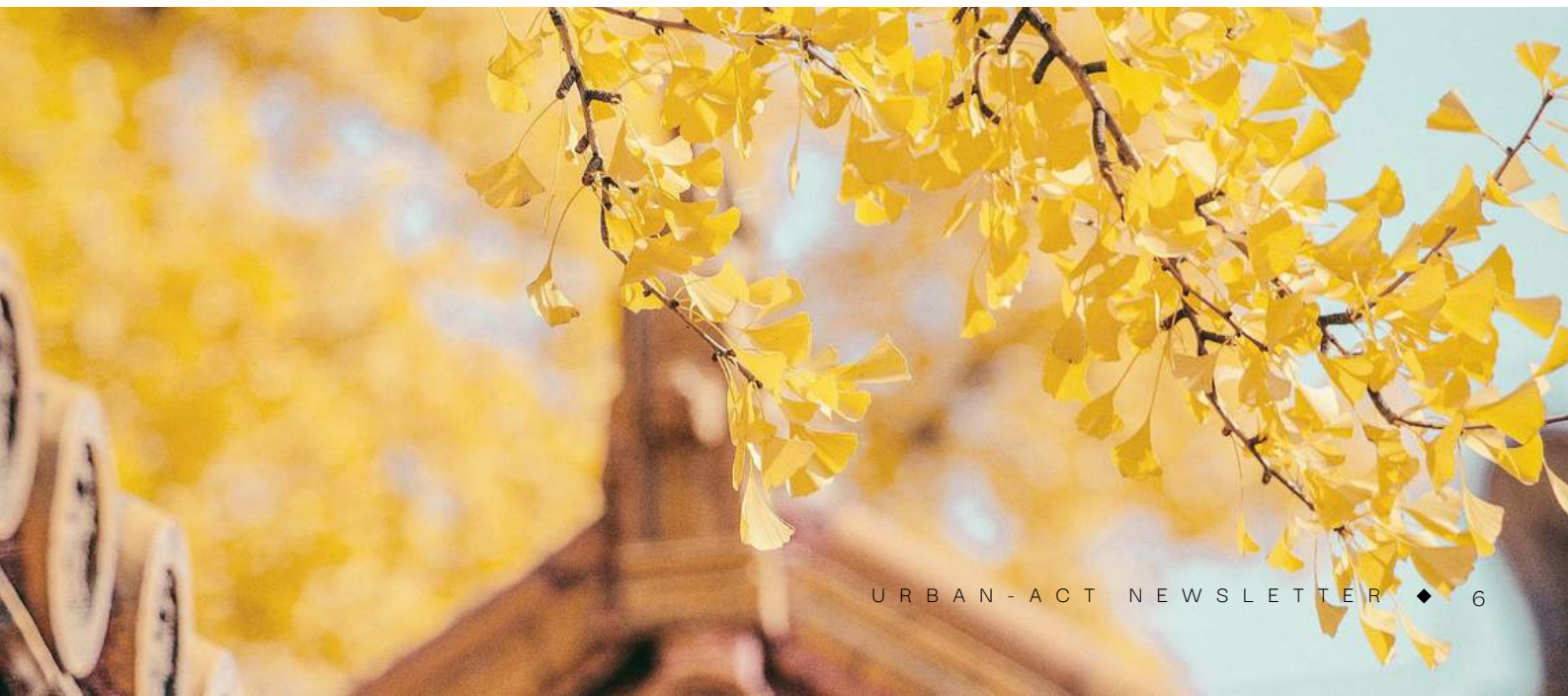
The Plan outlines the China Spatial Planning Observation Network (CSPON) – a requirement outlined in the National Outline of Territorial Spatial Planning (2021–2035) – as a crucial element in establishing a supervision system for the implementation of territorial spatial planning. It mainly encompasses three levels of construction networks: business linkage, information system, and open governance. According to the Plan, a basic framework for CSPON will be established, pilot projects completed, and a technically verified and scientifically

feasible construction plan defined by 2025. Additionally, technological requirements for network architecture, scenario functions, algorithm models, and data governance will also be standardised by 2025. Furthermore, CSPON will be fully established – forming an open governance ecosystem by 2027. It will feature connectivity between higher and lower levels, business collaboration, and data sharing.

The Plan emphasises the need for organised and effective implementation, urging provincial-level natural resource departments to formulate localised implementation plans. Furthermore, it calls for strengthening working guidance, promoting digital transformation in territorial spatial planning governance, enhancing supervision of planning and implementation, and preserving the scientific, coordinated, and authoritative nature of planning.

The work plan encourages provinces, cities, and/or districts to deploy and conduct CSPON pilot projects by exploring multi-level construction methods, paths, and policy mechanisms.

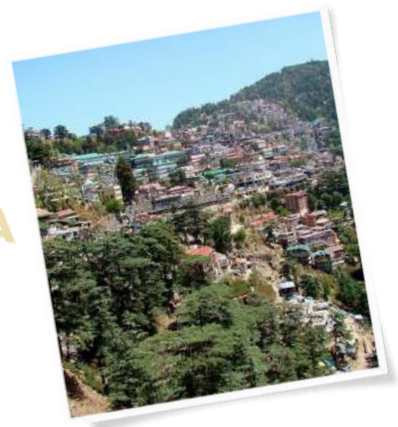
[Browse the work plan \(in Chinese only.\)](#)



Policy News from India

SUPREME COURT TERMS SHIMLA DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2041 ON REGULATING CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES, SUSTAINABLE

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ India (rewrite)



The Supreme Court of India has approved the Shimla Development Plan 2041 that is aimed at regulating construction activities in Himachal Pradesh's capital city, terming it Shimla. The Plan, which was approved in February 2022, was brought to the Supreme Court by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Act in May 2022 with the accusation of being illegal and warned of the damage to law, environment and public safety if the state continued to construct buildings that violate their verdict. The state government appealed to the Supreme Court, and in January 2024, the Court gave its approval to the Shimla Development Plan 2041, setting aside the previous orders of the NGT, stating that it was beyond the jurisdiction of the tribunal to direct the state government on how to formulate the development plan.

Find out more on what is happening on the ground :
[Draft development plan for Shimla Planning Area](#) ,
[Supreme Court clears Shimla development plan](#) /
[Latest News India - Hindustan Times](#)



News Policy from Indonesia

Entering 2024, Urban-Act remains dedicated to driving sustainable cities and climate resilience. A range of regional and national initiatives are planned, including training sessions on low-carbon urban action and participation in key events like the APFSD, AMF, and WUF. These platforms will foster dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration, solidifying Urban-Act's leadership in regional discussions on sustainable development and climate solutions. [Navigating a climate-resilient future: Urban-Act's Agenda in 2024](#)



STEPPING UP IN 2024 - IMPACT AND COLLABORATION

Author Attribution: Urban-Act/GIZ Indonesia





THAILAND STRENGTHENS FIGHT AGAINST WATER POLLUTION WITH UPDATED BUILDING REGULATIONS

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Thailand (rewrite)



Thailand has published a regulation in the Royal Gazette to improve domestic wastewater management and address water pollution. The regulation promotes the installation of wastewater treatment systems in smaller buildings, shifting from community-based centralized wastewater treatment systems.

In a significant move to address the pressing issue of water pollution, Thailand has recently introduced a groundbreaking regulation to improve domestic wastewater management. The announcement, titled 'Notification of the Ministry of Interior on water treatment system for buildings, enacted under the Building Control Act (1979),' was officially published in the Royal Gazette on 26 December 2023.

Water pollution has emerged as a significant environmental concern in Thailand, notably impacting the health and livelihoods of its citizens. The country's rapid economic growth and urban development have resulted in an increased population and expanded activities at the community level – including residential communities, tourism, trade, and services, all of which contribute to the aggravation of water pollution.

The newly introduced regulation departs from the past focus on community-based to centralised wastewater treatment systems. However, recognising the present changing landscape and demands, the Thai government has adopted the Building Control Act (1979) to promote installing wastewater treatment systems in smaller buildings.

The scope of this regulation encompasses a wide array of small-sized buildings, including detached houses, residential buildings, and shophouses. By encouraging the implementation of wastewater treatment systems in these structures, the government aims to enhance the effectiveness of treating wastewater at the source. This alleviates the burden on the state's centralised wastewater system and ensures that the wastewater drainage systems align with international standards.

The move is a proactive step towards mitigating the adverse impacts of water pollution on public health and the environment. Furthermore, it reflects Thailand's commitment to sustainable development and responsible urbanisation – seeking a balance between economic growth and environmental conservation.

[Browse the updated regulation \(in Thai only\) Royal Gazette](#)



THAILAND'S NATIONAL SPATIAL PLAN 2037 FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Thailand (rewrite)

Thailand's National Spatial Plan, known as NSP 2037, aims to guide sustainable development and address urbanisation challenges. The plan emphasises decentralised development, ecological preservation, and collaboration among stakeholders. By optimising land utilisation, protecting natural resources, and fostering regional economic hubs, the NSP 2037 seeks to create a balanced and resilient future for Thailand.

The Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning (DPT) announced the launch of its groundbreaking National Spatial Plan 2037, a comprehensive framework aimed at guiding the country's sustainable development and urban growth on 2 June 2023. The Plan, developed in collaboration with various stakeholders such as the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), departments under the Ministry of Interior (MoI), regional local authorities, and other relevant agencies, charts a transformative path for the nation's spatial organisation and management.

With the rapid pace of urbanisation and population growth, Thailand recognises the need for effective land use planning to address challenges such as environmental degradation, social inequalities, and inadequate infrastructure. The National Spatial Plan, known as 'NSP 2037', sets out a visionary roadmap to tackle these issues and create a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future.

The NSP 2037 envisions a balanced and equitable distribution of resources, development, and opportunities across the nation. It seeks to optimise land utilisation, enhance connectivity, and protect natural resources while fostering economic growth and improving the quality of life for all Thai citizens.

One of the key principles underpinning the plan is the promotion of decentralised development. By encouraging development in secondary cities and rural areas, the NSP 2037 aims to alleviate the burden on major urban centres and create regional economic hubs, reducing urban sprawl and enhancing regional cooperation.

Furthermore, the Plan emphasises the preservation and sustainable management of natural resources. Through the identification of ecologically sensitive areas, such as forests, wetlands, and coastal zones, the NSP 2037 aims to protect biodiversity, mitigate climate change impacts, and promote sustainable tourism.

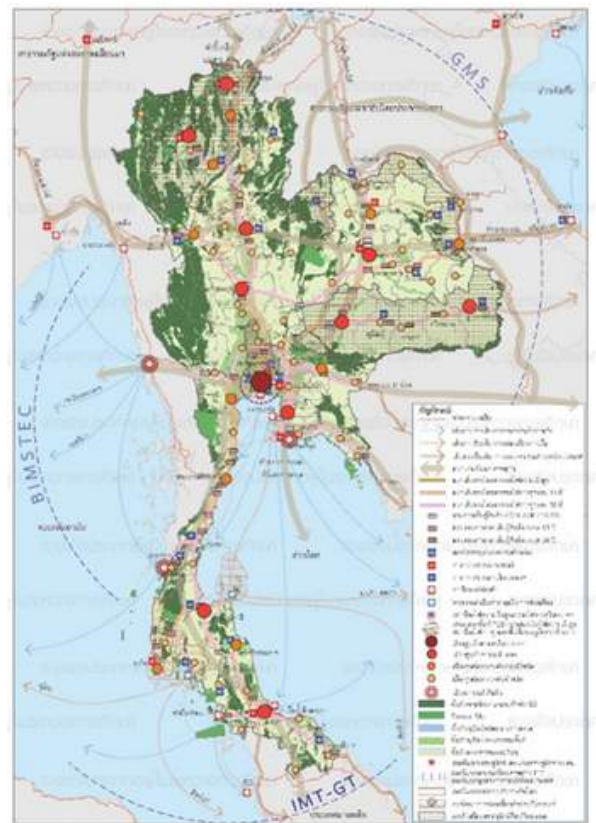
To ensure effective implementation, the Plan highlights the importance of collaboration between government agencies, private sector, and local communities. It calls for transparent decision-making processes, participatory approaches, and the integration of local knowledge to foster ownership and consensus among stakeholders.

“The National Spatial Plan is the policy plan that enables the integration of plans in every dimension and create innovation for sustainable development.”

Mr. Phongrat Piromrat,
DPT Director General.

The NSP 2037 provides a comprehensive framework for spatial planning at different scales – from national to regional and local levels. It includes strategies for urban development, infrastructure expansion, transportation networks, and social services provision with the intention of creating vibrant, livable, and well-connected communities across the country.

Thailand's National Spatial Plan marks a significant milestone in the nation's sustainable development journey. By addressing the challenges of rapid urbanisation, environmental degradation, and social inequalities, the Plan paves the way for a more balanced and resilient future. With its holistic approach and emphasis on collaboration, the NSP 2037 demonstrates Thailand's commitment to sustainable development and its determination to build a better nation for generations to come.



NSP 2037, DPT



Learn more about NSP 2037
(in Thai only)
nsplan2580.info
matichonweekend02-080623.pdf
dpt.go.th



PROJECT NEWS

Regional Project News

WORKSHOP ON TRANSBOUNDARY LOCAL PILOT FACILITATION PROJECT

Author Attribution : IMT-GT and ESCAP

A collaborative workshop focusing on the Transboundary Local Pilot Facilitation Project was organized in September 2023 to find a viable and promising sector for funding proposals. This event brought together representatives from 11 cities and regencies/districts in the Indonesia-Thailand-Malaysia growth triangle. The workshop identifies the Solid Waste Management sector as a priority need that is also aligned with sustainable urban mobility and greening urban areas – which is part of the focus of both IMT-GT and Urban-Act project.

[Read to learn more and see who is involved](#) 

URBAN-ACT ON THE ASEAN MAYORS FORUM 2023: BUILDING RESILIENT CITIES AND CLIMATE ACTIONS

Author Attribution : UCLG ASPAC

The 2023 ASEAN Mayors Forum (AMF) in Jakarta focused on catalysing regional growth through sustainable development in ASEAN cities. In partnership with GIZ and ESCAP, Panel Session 3 highlighted the Urban-Act project for low-carbon and resilient cities, featuring discussions with representatives from national and local governments. The session recommends fostering community engagement, strengthening data-driven approaches, encouraging follow-up actions on facilitating knowledge exchange, as well as recognising cities as climate leaders for meaningful participation in climate action planning and implementation.



Key Recommendations

1. Demonstrate commitment by prioritising long-term development planning (in line with the national development plan and nationally determined contributions (NDCs) target), ensuring sustained efforts and investments in climate resilience.
2. Foster vertical integration, cross-sectoral, and intergenerational involvement by actively engaging wider communities in climate emergency response, promoting inclusivity and collective actions.
3. Strengthen science-based information and data-driven approaches in city planning and decision-making to effectively address climate challenges.
4. Empowering ASEAN cities for climate resilience requires strong stakeholder cooperation, bridging the gap between national and sub-national levels. This calls for the active involvement of governments, private sectors, and communities that fosters collaborative efforts. To achieve this, unlocking urban climate resources (such as climate financing and capacity building) is needed.

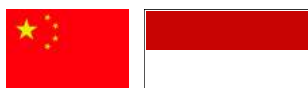
The AMF 2023 aimed to:

1. Promote inclusive economic growth including easy access to finance for ASEAN cities and local governments;
2. Accelerate digital transformation which can contribute to economic recovery in ASEAN cities and local governments;
3. Encourage climate action implementation to enhance the readiness of ASEAN cities and local governments to become more adaptive and resilient;
4. Highlight sustainable mobility for the development of ASEAN cities and local governments; and
5. Strengthen collaboration in the ASEAN region to localise the SDGs implementation.

Follow-up Actions

1. To facilitate peer-to-peer learning across the ASEAN cities that fosters knowledge exchange on successful climate resilience strategies.
2. To recognise cities as climate leaders by actively engaging them, thus ensuring their meaningful participation in climate action planning and implementation.

[Read to learn more ASEAN MAYORS FORUM 2023 PROCEEDING.](#)



Project News from China and Indonesia

CHINA-INDONESIA EXCHANGE PROGRAMME ON LOW-CARBON TRANSPORT

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ China and GIZ Indonesia



Urban-Act project successfully facilitated a visit of an Indonesian delegation to China in September 2023 to exchange knowledge and gain firsthand experience on China's low-carbon transportation planning in cities – which is aligned with the project's focus on climate-friendly urban planning. The Indonesian delegation comprised of local governments from Medan, Padang, and Semarang, as well as representatives from UCLG ASPAC, GIZ Indonesia and IESR. Cities with outstanding low-carbon transportation planning, Xiamen, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou, were the object of the exchange programme.



Group photo at a BRT station in Xiamen

In a groundbreaking collaboration, the Urban-Act project, joined forces with BMZ's Trico Fund project to host Indonesian delegation visiting China on an exchange programme. This six-day trip (10-15 September 2023), aimed to share China's knowledge and give firsthand experience on the cities' climate-friendly urban planning – showcasing Chinese cities low-carbon transportation planning.

Indonesia, a country known for its vibrant culture and lush landscapes, is the world's fourth most populous nation and therefore is facing the challenge to reduce its greenhouse gas significantly amidst its population growth. The transportation sector, closely intertwined with urbanisation and economic development, stands as the second-largest source of emissions in Indonesia. With rapid urbanisation complicating climate change mitigation, the decarbonisation of the transportation sector becomes crucial.

China, now the world's second-most populous country and the largest greenhouse gas emitter, has committed to ambitious climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2060. To fulfil these ambitious goals, China has embarked on low-carbon urban planning, with cities like Shenzhen and

Guangzhou leading the way in sustainable urban development. This has made Chinese cities as a good learning model for other countries, such as Indonesia.

Sixteen Indonesian delegation, comprising city governments of Medan, Padang, and Semarang, along with representatives from UCLG ASPAC, GIZ Indonesia and IESR, visited three well-developed cities in the southern part of China.

Their first stop was Xiamen, where they had exchanges with the city's Natural Resources Bureau on integrated transportation planning – taking a journey through its bus rapid transit (BRT) system. Xiamen has an innovative enclosed elevated BRT system with elevated urban greenway, to showcase a harmonious blend of environmental protection and eco-tourism.

The delegation's next stop was the electrifying city of Shenzhen, renowned for fully electrifying its public transportation. The delegation visited the Shenzhen Bus Group to learn more about the intelligent operation and management of new energy public buses. They also met with Streamax Technology Co., Ltd. to exchange ideas on technologies and applications that enhance the efficiency and safety of public bus transportation operations.



Meeting with Shenzhen Bus Group in Shenzhen



The delegation visited a BRT Station in Guangzhou



The final destination was Guangzhou, boasted as the world's largest BRT network. The delegation experienced how the BRT system is seamlessly integrated with metro stations and commercial buildings. They also explored the latest battery technologies for Chinese neighborhood electric vehicles (NEV) at the GAC Trumpchi plant.

Throughout their journey, the delegation engaged with local government departments, institutions, and enterprises – building networks with these local entities. The good practices and experiences from China will undoubtedly serve as a good reference for Indonesia on its journey towards a greener and more eco-friendly transportation system.

The Urban-Act project and the Trico Fund projects' joint efforts amplified the study tour's impact, opening doors to future collaborations between China, Indonesia, and Germany. This collaborative initiative also stands as an example of countries uniting in the pursuit of sustainable and low-carbon development.



Project News from China

EMPOWERING CITIES FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT FUTURES: KNOWLEDGE SHARING WORKSHOP ON URBAN SPATIAL PLANNING IN XI'AN

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ China



Knowledge sharing workshop in Xi'an

The Urban-Act project in China hosted a knowledge sharing workshop on *Urban Spatial Planning in the Context of Climate Change in Xi'an* to provide a platform for experts and practitioners to unveil key findings and exchange insights on the development of the urban spatial planning system in the context of climate change in China.

Urban-Act project in China collaborated with Tongji University and Xi'an Urban Planning and Design Research Institute to organize a knowledge sharing workshop on Urban Spatial Planning in the Context of Climate Change: Indicator System and Implementation Assessment in October 2023. The workshop aimed to facilitate the exchange of key findings and insights gained from ongoing project activities, with a specific focus on urban spatial planning system development in the context of climate change in China.

The workshop brought together 20 experts and practitioners from national research and city planning institutes of Beijing, Shanghai, Xiamen and Xi'an. The workshop introduced the concept of China Spatial Planning Observation Network (CSPON), a crucial support system for the digital, intelligent, and smart transformation of territorial spatial planning in China.

The workshop focused on two thematic sessions (indicator systems) on low-carbon and climate resilient urban spatial planning. On the indicator system for low-carbon urban spatial planning, participants explored technical ideas for developing the "objectives-strategies-indicators" framework based on spatial climate interaction, and approaches concerning incorporating carbon emission requirements into

policies, technical standards, and implementation evaluation networks for urban spatial planning. While for the indicator system for climate-resilient urban spatial planning, speakers shared their research on indicators for urban transportation and the city of Xi'an respectively.

In the upcoming project period, the Urban-Act project in China remains dedicated to realizing the project's activities and outcomes, contributing valuable insights to relevant ministries, supporting action to fulfill China's "dual carbon targets", and integrating climate change considerations into urban spatial planning systems.

CITY ENABLING ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE GOVERNANCE

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ China

The City Enabling Environment Assessment on Environmental and Climate Change Governance (CEE-ECG) learning forum was held successfully with around 40 administrators and practitioners from Asia-Pacific present. The Forum focused on knowledge exchange on low-carbon and climate-friendly resilient cities.

Urban-Act project in China, in collaboration with UCLG ASPAC, coordinated a Forum on *City Enabling Environment Assessment on Environmental and Climate Change Governance (CEE-ECG)* on 15 November 2023, at the sideline of the 9th UCLG ASPAC Congress.

The Forum highlighted two vital aspects of the Urban-Act project: results of the 2023 assessment of CEE-ECG and a panel discussion of pilot cities in addressing challenges and sharing solutions to climate change. Approximately 40 administrators and practitioners actively engaged in the Forum.



Learning Forum during the 9th UCLG ASPAC Congress



The assessment, led by UCLG ASPAC, evaluates the institutional environment of local governments in environmental and climate change governance context. Following results sharing, an enabling environment in Urban-Act project countries based on CEE scoring was presented – highlighting areas for improvement and further policy actions by focusing on best practices to promote CEE-ECG in project countries. For instance, China's strengths include making commitments and allocating financial resources to climate action, while areas of growth are in public participation and data sharing.

The panel session showcased cities' transformative journey towards sustainable urban development, emphasising challenges and lessons learned according to the CEE-ECG sub-criteria. The strategies for developing climate-friendly transportation in Xiamen and project cases on improving the mobility system, green freight system, and near-zero emission pilots were presented. Financing opportunities in China's green transition, such as green credits and bonds were also introduced at the workshop. Other cities, such as Shimla, Samarinda, Catbalogan City, and the Industrial Bank Research Institute's carbon finance research unit, also shared their experience.

Learn more on :

[Urban-ACT: Supporting Cities Building Enabling Environment for Sustainability - UCLG ASPAC \(uclg-aspac.org\)](https://uclg-aspac.org/)

[UCLG ASPAC in Urban-Act Project: Redefining Environmental and Climate Change Governance for Advancing Climate Actions - UCLG ASPAC \(uclg-aspac.org\)](https://uclg-aspac.org/)



Project News from India

LOCALISING CLIMATE-SENSITIVE URBAN PLAN AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



Stakeholder Workshop at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

Urban-Act project in India organised workshops to develop a climate-sensitive urban plan and its implementation strategy, which is customised to the developmental needs of Shimla, Coimbatore, and Goa city. Critical issues such as the Construction and Demolition waste management in Shimla and Stormwater Management in Panaji, were used as case studies to solve during the workshops.

Urban Act project in India, together with TERI, organised several one-day stakeholder workshops in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh on 2 November 2023, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu on 24 August 2023 and Goa, Panaji on 29 November 2023.

The workshops were designed to develop a localised climate-sensitive urban plan and its implementation strategy. This participatory planning provided a comprehensive understanding of the gaps and identified ways to find solutions for critical issues such as the Construction and Demolition waste management in Shimla and Stormwater Management in Panaji.

The workshops garnered significant participation of key stakeholders, such as CEOs and officials of Smart City SPVs, Commissioners and officials of the City Municipal Corporations, the Mayor of the city, officials from the Town Planning Departments, the Public-work departments, think tanks, NGOs, Resident Welfare Associations (RWA), and academia.



Stakeholder Workshop at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu



Stakeholder Workshop at Panaji, Goa



Project News from Indonesia

KICK-OFF MEETING AND LAUNCH OF URBAN-ACT PILOT CITIES IN INDONESIA

Author Attribution : UCLG ASPAC and Urban-Act/GIZ Indonesia

In August 2023, Urban-Act project in Indonesia launched its national programme and announced the pilot cities – marking a pivotal moment in addressing climate change in Medan and Padang. The cities' representatives shared their priorities, perspectives, needs, and support needed from Urban-Act project. National government, academia, and development partner representatives were also present to better integrate local action at the national and Asia-Pacific regional levels. [Read full article](#)



Urban-Act's Kick-Off Meeting and Launch of Pilot Cities in Indonesia was attended by key figures including Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi, Secretary-General of UCLG ASPAC; Heinrich Gudenus, Project Director of Urban-Act (GIZ Thailand); Omar Siddique, Project Coordinator of Urban-Act (ESCAP); and representatives from Bappenas, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Finance, along with academicians and development partners.

ENABLING CITIES TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS

Author Attribution : UCLG ASPAC and Urban-Act/
GIZ Indonesia

Workshop on Enabling Frameworks for Climate Finance in Indonesian cities was organised to share and discuss the methodology, opportunities, and challenges for its cities to access climate finance at national and subnational levels – including

regional challenges in accessing climate finance, national and subnational climate budget tagging, and experiences from Medan and Padang. Outcomes of the workshop included recommendation for better management of local water, policy assessment support at national and local levels, capacity-building projects in India, and long-term governance of the environment. [Read full article](#)



PADANG AND PADANG PANJANG (INDONESIA) FORGE MUNICIPAL PARTNERSHIP WITH HILDESHEIM (GERMANY)

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Indonesia

The Experts for Municipal Partnership has forged a collaboration between the city of Hildesheim and various municipalities in Indonesia for the period of 2024–2026. In particular, Padang City has requested support for its solid waste management and urban public transport sectors, while Padang Panjang City requested support focusing on improving its solid waste management.

The Experts for Municipal Partnership has forged a collaboration between the city of Hildesheim and various municipalities in Indonesia through a municipal experts programme. This dynamic partnership is geared towards enhancing municipal services and promoting responsive local governance. The team of experts is dedicated to developing practical solutions for pressing challenges such as climate change, inclusive urban development, sustainable practices, and effective waste management.

Over the next two years (2024–2026), the partnership plans to strengthen cooperation among municipalities, implement collaborative activities, attract new participants, and encourage inter-departmental synergy. Partner cities in Indonesia, including Padang and Padang Panjang, have been identified. Excitingly, both Padang and Padang Panjang have already expressed their keen interest in the partnership by submitting letters, outlining the specific issues they aim to address. Padang City's proposal focuses on urban public transport and the solid waste management sector, while Padang Panjang focuses on solid waste management. This collaborative effort signifies a significant step towards fostering sustainable and inclusive urban development in the region.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FORUM FOR CITIES PRIORITISING LOW-CARBON DEVELOPMENT

Author Attribution : GIZ Indonesia (rewrite)

[Read to learn more https://apeksi.id/kmf2023/](https://apeksi.id/kmf2023/) (in Bahasa Indonesia only) [Knowledge Management Forum 2023 – #APEKSInergi](#)



Knowledge Management Forum (KMF) 2023 facilitated sharing expertise on governance for sustainable financing in low-carbon cities, expanded networks with diverse stakeholders, discussed and explored solutions for climate change policy governance, urged local governments to prioritise strategic actions, and prepared recommendations for national government. The Forum's recommendations are expected to contribute to sectoral discussions in Indonesia's Second National Urban Forum (NUF).



URBAN-ACT AND ITS PARTNERS DELIVER TRAINING IN THE FIRST PHILIPPINE URBAN FORUM

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Philippines

A training session on “Sustainable Urban Governance: Building an Enabling Environment, Preparing Bankable Projects” was organized during the first Philippine Urban Forum 2023. The training focused on enabling factors for sustainable urban governance and developing climate-resilient urban investments with over 50 representatives attending the training.



GIZ through its Integrated Urban Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities (Urban-Act) project, together with United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific (UCLG-ASPAC) and the Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA), organised a training session as a parallel session to the Philippine Urban Forum 2023 (PhUF 2023) on 5-6 October 2023 in the Philippine International Convention Center. The Forum brought together urban planners, policymakers, and stakeholders from across the country to dialogue and collaborate on pressing urban issues facing the nation.

“Sustainable Urban Governance: Building an Enabling Environment, Preparing Bankable Projects” focused on enabling factors for sustainable urban governance and developing climate-resilient urban investments. Over 50 representatives from national agencies, local governments, academe, and civil society organisations attended the training session led by GIZ and

co-moderated by Urban-Act project partners – Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC) and Clean Air Asia.

UCLG ASPAC Regional Project Manager, Mr. Helmi Abidin, delivered the presentation on the results of the City Enabling Framework Assessment Report by Urban-Act project, focusing on enabling factors for environmental and climate change good governance in cities. CDIA Communications and Outreach Specialist, Ms. Analyn Rubenecia, and Capacity Development Specialist, Ms. Kathleen Jovellanos, discussed technical aspects of preparing and packaging bankable urban investments. The session concluded with an interactive exchange with the participants on their experiences and challenges in developing and implementing urban investments in their cities.

Watch the highlights of the Philippine Urban Forum in this [video](#) sponsored by GIZ.



PEOPLE-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT AT CLIMATE TALKS PHILIPPINES

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Philippines

At Climate Talks Philippines, GIZ Philippines highlighted the importance of also focusing on the people-centred development in urban transport – going beyond the conversation on hard infrastructure. “The pursuit of economic growth is important but should not come at the cost of the people and the earth. We need to strike a balance between providing for our social, environmental, and economic needs now, without taking away from providing for future generations.” Integrated urban climate action also means leaving no one and no place behind.



"Climate-smart Cities and Low-Carbon Transition: Building Climate-smart Cities in the Philippines and Germany" was organised by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany on November 17, 2023, as part of the Climate Talks Philippines series. GIZ Integrated Urban Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities (Urban-Act) project Chief Advisor, Ms. Patricia Mariano, served as a panellist and shared perspectives on inclusive and sustainable transport in relation to the objectives of climate-smart cities. Climate Talks Philippines was a side event in Mabuhay Germany 2023, a trade fair event by the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Inc. (GPCCI) that showcases sustainable technologies and practices as well as partnership initiatives between the Philippines and Germany.

As an urban sustainability advocate, Ms. Mariano highlighted the importance of shifting the focus of urban transport discussions to people-centred development, rather than solely on hard infrastructure – "The pursuit of economic growth is important, but should not come at the cost of the people and the earth. We need to strike a balance between providing for our social, environmental, and economic needs now, without taking away from providing for future generations." This is in line with the objectives of the Urban-Act project, which supports national and local government partners in ensuring that climate actions are developed with participatory measures, institutionalised through city plans and policies, and are integrated with gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) considerations.



Project News from Thailand



CHIANG MAI, KHON KAEN, AND PHUKET TO UNDERGO TRANSFORMATION TOWARDS LOW-CARBON AND RESILIENT URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Thailand

Three Thailand's cities – Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, and Phuket – have been identified as pilot for Urban-Act Project for their high potential to transition to low-carbon and resilient urban centres.

To support the transformation towards low-carbon and resilient urban development in Thailand, the Urban-Act project has chosen three pilot cities: Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, and Phuket. They were selected for their high potential for transitioning to low-carbon and resilient urban centres.

In the selection process, 13 cities were shortlist using UCLG ASPAC criteria. These cities then participated in a workshop to establish the framework for project implementation strategies.

In collaboration with the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Interior (OPSI), the selection process took place on 10 July 2023. Over 30 professionals from project implementing partners, including the Department of Public



Works and Town & Country Planning (DPT), the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning (OTP), the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), as well as Chulalongkorn and Thammasat universities and the Thai Meteorological Department (TMD), as the national partners, participated in the selection process.

As part of the pilot project, Chiang Mai, Khon Kaen, and Phuket city leaders and provincial administrators will be engaged closely for implementation. The entire process has been a catalyst for political commitment for Urban-Act project in Thailand, paving the way for active work in the pilot cities in 2024.

URBAN-ACT AT THE WORLD TOWN PLANNING DAY 2023

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Thailand

On World Town Planning Day 2023, Thailand's Minister of Interior emphasised the crucial role of urban planning in enhancing the quality of life – echoing the work of Urban-Act project in Thailand. Urban-Act project partners were actively involved and showed dedication to sustainable urban development by aligning with global efforts for resilience in the face of climate challenges.

In celebration of World Town Planning Day 2023, the Urban-Act project showcased a solid commitment to climate resilience at the academic seminar "Shaping the Future: Urban Planning for Climate Change Adaptation."

Hosted by the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning (DPT) on 8 November 2023, the event emphasised global dedication to resilient and sustainable urban development amid climate challenges.

Inaugurated by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior (MoI) Anutin Charnvirakul, the seminar drew vital stakeholders, including Netherlands Ambassador Remco van Wijngaarden, GIZ's Urban-Act project, academia, the private sector, and media.

Aligned with MoI's role as a political partner, the Urban-Act project showcased its dedication to sustainable urban development. Heinrich Gudenus, Project Director of Urban-Act, and Krzysztof Kaczmarek, Cities and Climate Change Technical Advisor from the Environment and Development Division of the



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) represented the project partners at the event.

Minister Anutin emphasised the timeliness of enhancing the quality of life through urban planning, focusing on clean energy, water storage design, and active transportation.

Phongrat Bhiromrat, Director General of DPT, echoed the sentiment, stressing that future cities must unite against climate change challenges for sustainability and resilience.

The seminar provided a platform for experts and academics to exchange insights on urban planning for climate change adaptation. This active joint-academic seminar underscores dedication to innovative solutions, paving the way for future cities in Thailand to be sustainable, resilient, and environmentally friendly.



THAI DELEGATION EXPLORES GERMAN CLIMATE-SENSITIVE URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Author Attribution : Urban-Act/GIZ Thailand

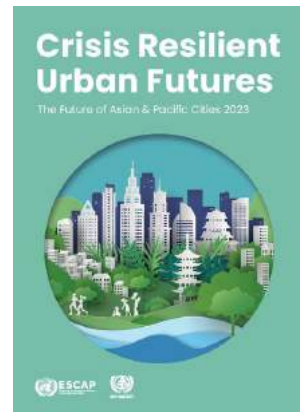
Urban-Act project in Thailand arranged a study trip to Germany to strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration in climate-sensitive urban development. The delegation explored the Tegel Project, which transformed an old airport into a smart city, the Old Town to observe mobile flood protection systems and many others. "Sponge City" concept emerged as a focal point for further study and its potential application in Thailand's next phase of climate-sensitive urban development.

More details: [Urban-Act Study Trip to Germany strengthens cross-sectoral cooperation on Climate-sensitive Urban Development – Thai-German Cooperation \(thai-german-cooperation.info\)](https://urban-act-cooperation.info)

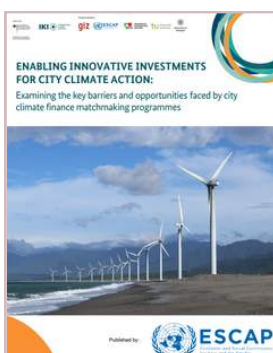


Notable PUBLICATIONS

Title	The future of Asian and Pacific cities 2023: Crisis Resilient Urban Futures
Author	ESCAP, UN-Habitat, Suwon City, Melbourne Centre for Cities, Asian Development Bank
Objective	The Future of Asian & Pacific Cities Report 2023 entitled, Crisis Resilient Urban Futures, is a comprehensive analysis and assessment of sustainable urban development in the Asia and Pacific region at a time of great disruption and uncertainty resulting from multiple interlinked global crises in a post-pandemic era. This report aims to provide valuable insights into the spatial, economic, social, environmental and governance aspects of cities, offering holistic policy recommendations towards a sustainable urban recovery from these crises.



Title	Eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-8) Summary Report Link to full details of APUF-8
Author	ESCAP
Objective	The report summarizes activities and output from the <u>Eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-8)</u> that was held from 23–25 October 2023 in Suwon, Republic of Korea. At the Forum, the <u>Future of Asian and Pacific Cities 2023</u> report was launched, as well as a <u>High-Level Communique on Sustainable Urban Development for Asia-Pacific</u> was agreed on by 20 member States.



Title	Enabling Innovative Investments for City Climate Action: Examining the key barriers and opportunities faced by city climate finance matchmaking programmes
Author	ESCAP
Objective	Matchmaking for climate finance refers to helping cities prepare 'bankable' climate action projects and connecting them with potential investors. This support is crucial to overcoming existing barriers to accessing climate finance at the city level. The report examines the key challenges faced by city climate finance matchmaking programmes and explores possible solutions and enabling conditions.



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