

# Common Outcomes of the Pre-CoP 21 Meeting of Asian Climate Change CSO networks and other organizations in Asia held on 5-6 November 2015, Hanoi, Vietnam

## BACKGROUND

Climate change has been labelled the “greatest challenge facing humankind today”, and this is not an overstatement – it has been made clear in the latest IPCC report on climate change that additional greenhouse gases in the earth’s atmosphere are leading to extreme and severe weather events which have and will continue to adversely impact people, their livelihoods, productive assets and ecosystems. With a projection of rising temperatures due to global warming that can trigger slow and rapid onset hazards with adverse impacts the submitted Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) makes clear that mitigation contribution from developed and developing countries have not been sufficient so far and predicts a temperature increase of at least 2.7 degrees Celsius by 2100. Vulnerable people and countries in Asia will bear the severe impacts of the changing climate.

This will put vulnerable communities currently suffering from extreme weather events associated with the changing climate and transboundary hazards at an even greater risk. Resilience, risk reduction and adaptation capacities of Asian governments and communities will be challenged and the risk for loss and damage remains high.

Asian governments have expressed their aspirations and contributions to both mitigation and adaptation actions under their respective INDCs. In the Southeast Asia region alone, in all but two countries commitment to climate action has become part of climate governance despite limitations in climate information, resources, financing, technology, and capacities.



Civil society organizations and communities have been, for years, working towards resilience, risk reduction, and effective and pro-poor adaptation in the face of uncertainties associated with climate change. Even the private sector has now- in the face of the “new normal”- recognized the need to transform their core business operations to the realities of climate change via initiatives such as the APEC. Academic and scientific research institutions such as CORDEX in SEA have come together to help various stakeholders better understand how the climate is changing in the region.

However, even with all these growing efforts and increased collaboration among various actors, Asia, on its own, will not be able to withstand the challenges resulting from a problem that most countries and people in the region have historically contributed little to.

Climate change does not recognize geo-political boundaries. The complexity of issues surrounding climate change puts the responsibility on Asia to demand for joint reflections and common cooperation beyond sectors, as well as effective and efficient actions among various stakeholders.

It is for these reasons that, we, a group of Asian CSO CC networks and other national and international organizations came together to better understand: how climate is changing in Asia; the different impacts of climate change in Asia; and how, together, we can embark on common actions to address climate change and increase the resilience of the region’s vulnerable communities, peoples, countries, cities and ecosystems.

Following a two-day meeting of CSO Climate Change networks and other organizations in Asia, the common outcomes below were formulated to inform our current respective or potential common policy research, advocacy and campaigns in the future:

# WHAT WE WANT IN PARIS AND BEYOND

## MITIGATION

Recognizing that

1. Many Asian countries are not major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions but have development needs that trigger the rising demand for energy and current dependence on fossil fuels;
2. There is an urgent need to keep the rise in temperature at no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2100;
3. Contributions to mitigation action must recognize principles of equity and, therefore, countries must contribute their fair-share at reducing emissions;
4. There are current regional and national policy actions in Asia that pave the way for energy efficiency and shift to renewable and clean energy. However, most Asian countries have limited resources, financing, technology, information, knowledge and capacity to pursue mitigation targets;
5. Not all renewable energy options are environmentally or economically sound and risks may not be effectively and efficiently addressed given the current technology, capacities and information;
6. There are not only transboundary impacts of the emissions, the failure to mitigate emissions, and the unsafe mitigation options but also transboundary injustice where failure to mitigate in one country can have economic and social impact on another; and
7. While mitigation actions arising from multi-lateral and bi-lateral arrangements and national actions may be good for the climate, they may not necessarily translate to the full application of climate justice where vulnerable communities are displaced as a result of mitigation efforts;

We call on our own respective governments and their respective bi-lateral, multi-lateral, regional affiliations and partnerships, various stakeholders, the parties to the UNFCCC to work towards the following goals:



**GOAL 1: BY 2050, ASEAN SHOULD ACHIEVE 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY (I.E. SOLAR, BIOMASS, WIND, TIDAL AND WAVE, MINI HYDRO)**

- All countries within ASEAN to internalize the external economic costs of fossil fuel generation by:
  - Obliging companies to have funds for whole life cycle of power plants (waste, possible disasters);
  - Disincentives for the use of conventional and unclean power plants;
- Halt any direct and indirect subsidies for fossil fuels and use these to subsidise renewable energy generation;
- Ensure that renewable energy is fed into the grid on a preferential bases
- Create access to energy production technologies, which should be independent from loans;
- Build up regional, national, and local capacity to use renewable energy technologies and to assess environmental and health impacts of renewable energy technologies;
- Enhance south-south exchange of mitigation information, knowledge and relevant technology, with the possibility of building a free sharing mechanism. (e.g. Tesla car company's open patents for their electric car technology);
- Implement mechanisms that ensure access to renewable, safe and unarmful energy especially for vulnerable groups, without removing incentives for energy efficiency (see example of Vietnam); All countries in ASEAN to agree on regional rules for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on energy to ensure that between countries with differing mitigation standards the higher standard for mitigation is to be applied.

**GOAL 2: FOSSIL FUEL RESOURCES MUST BE LEFT IN THE GROUND**

- Support businesses and employees currently working in the fossil fuel sector to switch to alternative sectors;
- Develop a package of policies and incentives for the development and use of alternative energy sources; and
- Encourage divestment from the extraction and use of fossil fuels (i.e. via environmental taxes).

**GOAL 3: ENERGY EFFICIENCY SHOULD BE PRIORITISED**

- Develop a binding legal framework on energy efficiency in the region;
- Craft an evidence-based communication plan on the cost-benefits of energy –efficient pathways for the public and private sectors;
- Provide incentives for research, development and the application of energy efficient technologies such as smart grids, smart city solutions etc.
- Develop policies for energy and resource efficiency in core business operations of currently heavily polluting industries, such as gold mining, manufacturing, etc. with the end goal of enabling cleaner industries and transforming economies within the region.

**GOAL 4: THE ASIAN VOICE IN INTERNATIONAL PLATFORMS FOR CLIMATE ACTIONS NEEDS TO BE STRENGTHENED**

- Invest in regional collaboration for sustained climate action across all sectors, scales and levels, i.e. not only among governments but among civil society organizations, the vulnerable communities and the private sector; and
- Plan for a possible joint SOA-CSO event at COP22 etc., if possible with government representation and ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change.

# ADAPTATION

Recognizing that

1. Climate change is already happening and the Asian region will suffer from its impacts if greenhouse gases (GhGs) continue to be emitted, communities continue to be exposed to climate-related hazards and the underlying root causes of vulnerabilities are not addressed;
2. The INDC contributions of 146 countries are not enough to keep the temperature from rising beyond 2 degrees Celsius by 2100;
3. There is existing assessment from the UK Met Office that the current global temperature has already risen by 1 degree Celsius;
4. There is an urgency for Asian countries to adapt to the projected effects of the changing climate based on evidence presented by such institutions as the IPCC, the CORDEX in Southeast Asia and other academic and scientific institutions;
5. There are countries who are now exposed to extreme weather events and slow-onset hazards that may not have time to adapt nor the capacity to develop resilience to manage their own risks;

We call on our own respective governments and their respective bi-lateral, multi-lateral, regional affiliations and partnerships, various stakeholders, the parties to the UNFCCC to work towards the following goals:



GOVERNMENT AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES MUST ENHANCE CAPACITY TO

GOAL 5: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT NATIONAL AND LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION (CCA)

ACTION PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

- Ensure CCA planning and implementation is inclusive, pro-poor, community-based, ecosystems-based and transboundary (the need for coordination across national borders e.g. Mekong region)
- Address knowledge gaps by harnessing a variety of knowledge sources including indigenous knowledge
- Support the generation of climate and scientific information and make this accessible to local communities in appropriate formats

- Ensure comprehensiveness and policy-plans coherence (across disaster risk reduction (DRR), development plans and climate change)
- Ensure people's participation at all levels; recognising the role of community based organisations (CBO) in local level adaptation actions and CSOs as articulators at the national, regional and international level

#### GOAL 6: PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENTS FOR ADAPTATION MUST BE INCREASED

- Climate finance to be available and more equitable between adaptation and mitigation with resources going to where climate action is most needed in the Asian countries;
- National governments to commit to invest in adaptation by ensuring that adaptation has a specific allocation in national budgets;
- Invest in new technologies, innovation and R&D that will assist in undertaking more effective adaptation – this should include merging modern technology as well as indigenous knowledge and practices;
- Provide clear mechanisms, at all levels, for direct access of adaptation funding for local authorities/communities and support them in accessing these funds; and
- Mobilize private sector resources for the financing of adaptation projects in terms that will not be disadvantageous to people and communities.

#### GOAL 7: GOVERNMENTS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES MUST ENSURE PROTECTION OF PEOPLE UNDER THREAT OF DISPLACEMENT DUE TO CLIMATE-RELATED IMPACTS

- Develop clear plans, guidelines/protocols on climate-related displacement based on principles of justice and human rights.

#### GOAL 8: INITIATIVES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AND ADDRESS ISSUES AROUND LOSS AND DAMAGE, ESPECIALLY ON THE WIDER IMPACTS TO LOSS OF LIVES, ASSETS, AND OF THE POTENTIAL EXTINCTION OF CERTAIN SPECIES MUST BE SUPPORTED

- Foster international and regional collaboration on enhancement of and access to relevant climate information; technology and actions for resilience order to avoid loss and damage;
- Promote collaboration in preparedness, resilience and risk management at the international, regional, national and local levels;
- Specifically enhance capacities of Asian communities and governments for effective and efficient climate action to avert economic and non-economic losses and damages; and
- Increase understanding of and develop new approaches for promoting just compensation for the loss and damage of ecosystems and assets due to climate change related impacts;

#### GOAL 9: GOVERNMENT AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES TO ENHANCE THE CAPACITIES TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE, CULTURALLY AND GENDER-SENSITIVE RESPONSIVE AND COMMUNITY-BASED CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION ACTION PLANS

- Integrate climate change adaptation into development plans and disaster risk reduction management; and
- Develop and implement clear guidelines to make adaptation action plans INCLUSIVE, CULTURALLY and GENDER SENSITIVE and RESPONSIVE, COMMUNITY-based and ECOSYSTEMS-based.

# CLIMATE FINANCE

Recognizing that

1. 8 out of 10 SEA countries are developing nations that face crises due to climate change impacts and who need to adapt to and mitigate climate change while pursuing their respective development aspirations;
2. Developing and least developed countries in Asia must be given a fair chance to develop under principles of equity;
3. The new regime of climate governance needs to recognize the exposure of climate financing to high levels of corruption which withholds critical funding from vulnerable countries and communities already at greater risks from climate change;
4. Communities and community-based and non-government organizations are often at the first line of defense on climate change and its related impacts, however many local entities and NGOs which can deliver effective projects addressing local needs can find themselves locked out of climate funding due to implementation standards that exclude communities and civil society organizations from becoming partners and co-implementors of climate action rather than just mere beneficiaries.

We call on our own respective governments and their respective bi-lateral, multi-lateral, regional affiliations and partnerships, various stakeholders, the parties to the UNFCCC to work towards the following goals:



**GOAL 10: FUNDING MUST BE MADE MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR COMMUNITIES AND NGOS THROUGH A TARGETED MECHANISM**

- Establish a mechanism for the Green Climate Fund to ensure that local entities and NGOs are able to access it. Lessons learned should be taken from existing mechanisms such as the Small Grants Program in the GEF.
- Capacity building for local entities/NGOs to comply with requirements for fund management.

**GOAL 11: DOMESTIC FUNDING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE SHOULD BE LEVERAGED THROUGH A COHERENT SYSTEM OF SUBSIDIES AND TAXES WHICH INCENTIVIZE ADAPTATION AND LOW-CARBON LIFESTYLES THAT GIVE ATTENTION TO THE NEEDS OF THE POOR THROUGH ENSURING “NO HARM” AND RENEWABLE ENERGY ACCESS.**

- Develop and implement comprehensive and practical financial policies to reward adaptation actions and low-carbon activities and punish high-carbon activities
- Increase the availability of financing for adaptation, resilience and risk-management for the avoidance of loss and damage and low-carbon alternative options to high-carbon activities. (e.g. financing for electric vehicles or reliable and frequent public transport)

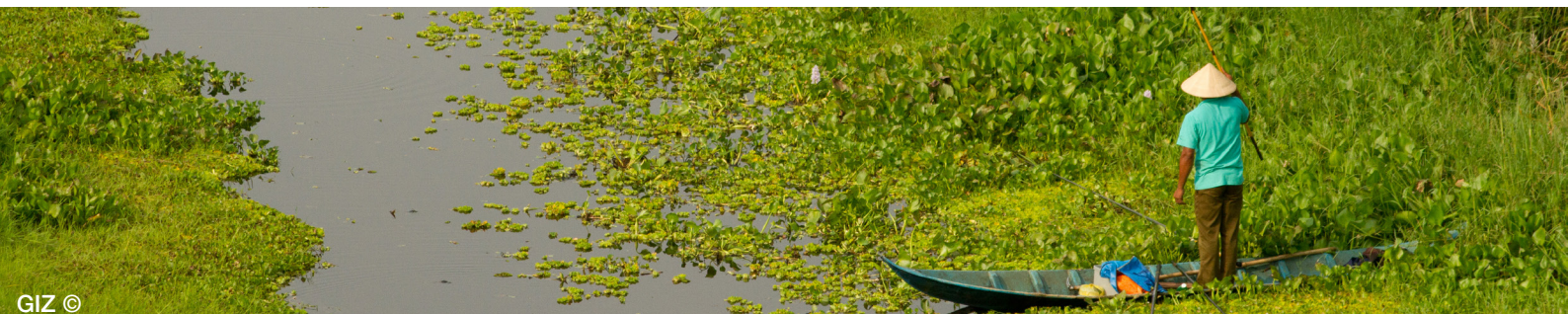
**GOAL 12: FUNDERS SHOULD ABIDE BY CRITERIA / STANDARDS FOR GOOD PRACTICE IN TRANSPARENCY WHEN DISTRIBUTING FUNDS TO HELP ENSURE THAT FUNDS ARE USED WHERE THEY ARE NEEDED**

- Ensure the accessibility of comprehensive information on and consideration for carbon footprints and impacts on adaptive capacities;
- Develop a more inclusive process of review, monitoring and evaluation (i.e. via CSO participation) for fund distribution; and
- Ensure the use of a commonly accepted reporting framework which enables donors to track if and how climate finance results in enhanced poverty reduction in the targeted countries, especially when it is ODA money.

**GOAL 13: CONNECTING SCALES OF GOVERNANCE FOR INCREASED IMPACT AND CLOUT BY**

- Ensure appropriateness and accountability of actions, giving consideration for national contexts, and defining concrete entry points/targets
- Identify appropriate regional and national platforms and defining clear pathways for action (ASEAN / APEC); and
- Engage in a global, regional and national climate finance transparency campaign.

# CROSS-CUTTING CONCERNS



THE PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC SHOULD UPHOLD CLIMATE JUSTICE THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMON BUT DIFFERENTIATED RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPECTIVE CAPACITY (CBDRRC), EQUITY, AND FAIR-SHARE.

- In the application of climate justice, developed countries must be able to facilitate a comprehensive package of support from developed countries which include technology transfer, climate finance, and capacity building that gives consideration to the suitability of the support to specific country-contexts and adherence to the principles of respect for human rights, gender – responsive participation, private sector participation and accountability;
- The technologies transferred from developed countries must be safe, low-risk, efficient, and sustainable by allowing access to appropriate information necessary for the operation and maintenance of any transferred technology for mitigation, adaptation and avoidance of loss and damage; and
- In all these, the application of climate justice must not only consider historical responsibilities related to emissions but also current emission contributions of both developed and developing countries within country and within regions.

ECOSYSTEMS WHICH PLAY A CRITICAL PART IN BOTH ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION MUST BE RECOGNISED AND PROTECTED

- Take into account the relevance of ecosystems not only as carbon sinks & carbon storages (i.e soil & biomass) but also in sustaining ecosystem services that can facilitate resilience, reduce loss and damage, enhance risk management and promote adaptive capacity and adaptation.

CLIMATE GOVERNANCE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT PROTECTING THE LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES, WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, IS CENTRAL TO THE EXISTENCE OF EVERY STATE AND GOVERNMENT THAT COMMIT TO THE UPHOLDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS

