

# 3<sup>rd</sup> International Forum on Low Carbon Cities

29 August 2023

## REPORT OF THE FORUM

1. UNESCAP and Incheon Metropolitan City, in collaboration with Green Climate Fund, CityNet, Climate Change Center, ICLEI East Asia, Incheon Institute, Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress, and Local Government Association for Climate and Energy Transition, jointly organized the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Forum on Low Carbon Cities on 29 August 2023. Joined by about 350 participants and featuring 25 speakers from local governments, academia, international organizations, civil societies and the private sector, the deliberations highlighted best practices of city climate action planning, low carbon solutions in energy, transport and building sectors, green financing, and stakeholder engagement.

### [Opening Session]

2. The Forum was opened by **Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana**, Under Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, who called for cities to take the lead in climate action through sharing knowledge and taking innovative approaches. This is followed by welcoming remarks by **Mr. Park, Deok-soo**, Vice Mayor of Incheon Metropolitan City, who demonstrated Incheon's strong commitment to moving towards carbon neutrality.
3. **Mr. Lee Chang Hoon**, President of Korea Environmental Institute, and **Ms. Ou Boqian**, Secretary General of the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat, delivered congratulatory remarks stressing the vital roles and responsibilities of cities in taking urgent and concrete actions towards low carbon development.
4. **Mr. Yoo, Yeon-chul**, Executive Director of United Nations Global Compact Network Korea and Former Deputy Minister and Ambassador for Climate Change of the Republic of Korea, delivered a keynote speech. He highlighted the need for accelerating climate actions of cities and the need for concerted efforts of cities together with all stakeholders, including national governments, the private sector and citizens.
5. The opening session is concluded with the introduction of the Forum by **Mr. Ganbold Baasanjav**, Head of East and North-East Asia Office, ESCAP.

## **[Session 1] Roles of Cities and City Networks in Local Climate Actions**

6. In the first session, moderated by **Ms. Park, Hyun-jung**, Deputy Director of the Institute for Climate Change Action, representatives from Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, ICLEI East Asia and CityNet, presented local policies and plans to support the SDG13 Climate Action and sought collaborative opportunities in promoting local climate actions.
7. **Ms. Kang, Min-kyung**, Research Fellow, Incheon Carbon Neutrality Center, presented Incheon's strategy to respond to the climate crisis and realize carbon neutrality by 2045. This is to be achieved by implementing various initiatives on raising public awareness, engaging citizens and the private sector, implementing a greenhouse gas and energy target management system, and fostering collaboration across various sectors.
8. This was followed by the presentation of **Ms. Tatiana Naumova**, Head of the Official Events and Protocol Division of Moscow, the Russian Federation, on Moscow's experience in city-led climate actions. She introduced the city's efforts in environmental protection and climate action, highlighting its activities to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and to enhance urban sustainability. In addition, Moscow has invested significantly in public transportation, including electric buses and an extensive metro system, while also focusing on energy efficiency and the construction of energy-efficient housing. The city has also undertaken initiatives in waste management, water conservation, and green spaces, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to addressing environmental issues and promoting sustainable urban development.
9. **Ms. Nozomi Shimazu**, a representative of the Global Environment Policy Office of Kyoto, Japan, introduced Kyoto's rich cultural heritage and its historical efforts in combatting global warming, culminating in a net-zero goal by 2050. She presented Kyoto's decarbonization policy as an example of how cities in Japan move towards carbon neutrality. Stressing the need to enhance international cooperation, she demonstrated Kyoto's efforts to combat climate change, actively participating in global networks. It was also highlighted to engage citizens in environmental actions.
10. **Mr. Xuan Xie**, Programme Officer at the ICLEI East Asia secretariat, introduced the Regional Roadmap for Building and Construction in the Greater Bay Area of China. He also presented how ICELI can support city climate actions to facilitate stakeholder engagement and foster cross-sectoral collaboration translating global knowledge into actionable local climate

initiatives, bridge international processes with on-the-ground implementation, and encourage attendees to explore the roadmap further to gain comprehensive insights into their climate action initiatives.

11. **Mr. Chris DiGennaro**, Program Officer at CityNet Secretariat, introduced CityNet and its mission to promote sustainable urban development in the Asia-Pacific region. He presented CityNet's support to facilitate capacity-building workshops and city-to-city cooperation. The Urban SDG Knowledge Platform shares best practices and knowledge for sustainable urban development among cities, providing free online courses for members. CityNet SDG Awards incentivizes cities to share their best practices for sustainable urban development on the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform.
12. **In the Q&A session**, the panelist from the Official Events and Protocol Division of Moscow underlined the significance of promoting public transport usage among citizens in the context of climate change policymaking. Moreover, the panelist from CityNet highlighted the importance of adaptation through initiatives such as workshops to facilitate knowledge exchange among cities. Panelists also recommended policymakers focus on economic recovery alongside addressing climate concerns and actively seek strategies to enhance the synergy between economic development and climate adaptation through capacity-building workshops.

## **[Session 2] Technology and Innovation for Local Climate Actions**

13. Moderated by **Mr. Bapon Shm Fakhruddin**, Water Resources Management Senior Specialist, speakers in the second session included experts from the Investment and Production Division of the Ministry of Energy of Mongolia, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Fudan University, the Green Climate Fund, and the Green Transition Initiative Secretariat of K-Water. They joined the discussion specifically on presenting Technology and Innovation for local climate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to climate change, utilizing all applicable technologies and taking innovative approaches.
14. The session began with a presentation **by Mr. Enkhtuvshin Ganbaatar**, Director of the Investment and Production Division of the Ministry of Energy, Mongolia. He highlighted Mongolia's policies, such as tax benefits and incentives, encouraging small-scale renewable energy production in households, the construction of solar and hydropower plants, as well as a battery storage system to enhance energy efficiency and reduce emissions. He also introduced improvements in the heating system aimed at reducing coal usage and

improving air quality in Ulaanbaatar. He stressed Mongolia's efforts to align with regional initiatives in combating climate issues and to achieve significant carbon reductions by 2030.

15. This was followed by a presentation of **Ms. Junko Akagi**, a policy researcher at the Kitakyushu Urban Centre, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies. Kitakyushu developed a comprehensive climate action plan called "Tucson 21" to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. She highlighted that the city has implemented energy-related policies focusing on green growth, as more than 60% of emissions in Kitakyushu come from the industrial sector. Kitakyushu Model for 100% Renewable Energy initiative includes electrification of official vehicles, disaster response enhancements, and cost-sharing projects to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with the goal of becoming a hub for decarbonized electricity and hydrogen supply.
16. **Ms. Xingxing Cai**, a lecturer in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the Fudan University, presented the wetland ecosystem restoration project in Shanghai, specifically the mangrove plantation. She highlighted the importance of wetlands, their benefits to human settlements, and their roles in coastal safeguarding, biodiversity, and climate regulation. The project aimed to restore wetlands through a comprehensive plan, including measures such as reinforcing salt marsh vegetation, promoting fish habitats, and addressing climate change impacts on mangroves, such as migration and cold tolerance adaptations.
17. **Mr. Amgad Elmahdi**, Water Sector Lead at the Green Climate Fund, presented how GCF supports a paradigm shift towards decarbonization in urban water areas. The presentation highlighted the importance of financing climate action, and the critical roles of GCF in catalyzing and leveraging finance for climate projects, including those in the water and sanitation (WASH) sector. He emphasized the need for a paradigm shift in the WASH sector, focusing on sustainable and resilient infrastructure, circular economy principles, climate-resilient innovations, and transitioning to low-carbon WASH practices.
18. **Mr. Dongkyun Kang**, Director of Green Transition Initiative (GTI) Secretariat of K-Water, delivered a last presentation, introducing how GTI can support achieving global carbon neutrality and addressing climate change. He shared the collaborative effort between the Republic of Korea and Indonesia, with a mission to promote eco-friendly green infrastructure in response to climate change. The initiative includes raising joint funds, utilizing various resources, and collaborating with governments, international organizations, and multilateral development banks to reduce carbon emissions. He also introduced its green infrastructure projects to contribute to global carbon reduction and a sustainable

future.

19. **In the Q&A session**, the panelist from the Green Climate Fund underlined the importance of the circular economy and income generation through investments in project planning. The panelist from the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies noted that the key to successfully reaching 100% renewable energy is adopting a multi-stakeholder approach and engaging various key players from the public and private sectors. Panelists also encouraged participation in carbon neutrality initiatives, by making partnerships with organizations, cities and countries.

### **[Session 3] Public-Private-Citizen Engagement towards Low-Carbon Cities**

20. The last session, moderated by **Mr. Park, Hyeon**, Professor of International School of Urban Sciences at the University of Seoul, focused on Public-Private-Citizen Engagement towards Low-Carbon Cities. Experts from Seoul Institute, Samsung Electronics, Tencent, Climate Campaign of Mongolia, Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress, and a youth representative shared their experiences and their perspectives on how we should strengthen our coordination and collaboration with various stakeholders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to climate change.
21. The session began with a presentation by **Mr. Kim, Mookhan**, a Research Fellow at the Seoul Institute, about the changing governance of Seoul towards a low-carbon city. He highlighted the necessity of public-private citizen engagement and partnerships for effective urban climate change mitigation, promoting low-carbon metropolises. He introduced a citizen-led energy programme and the importance of institutionalization of civil governance. With the 'Energy Independence Neighborhood' programme driven by citizens, the city has achieved community-level reductions in energy consumption.
22. The next presentation was made by **Mr. Chung, Junsung**, Business Development and Partnership Manager for Samsung, on creating home energy management solutions utilizing the Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI). He introduced how Samsung is making efforts to build a sustainable future, in cooperation with other stakeholders, emphasizing data-driven energy management and carbon reduction, particularly in partnership with utility agencies and other organizations.
23. **Mr. Liuchuan Tong**, Senior Strategy Manager, Tencent, introduced Tencent's carbon neutrality strategy, ranging from meeting Tencent's corporate net-zero target to enabling a low carbon transformation in China. The presentation introduced Tencent SSB (Sustainable

Social and Battery) to promote carbon neutrality, prioritizing positive social impact over short-term profits. He shared a pilot project involving solar rooftop installations, plans for a larger-scale initiative, and the advance payment of green electricity certificates to boost project returns. He emphasized the need for market-oriented approaches, and collaboration among diverse partners, including financial institutions, industry stakeholders, local governments, and residents.

24. This was followed by an intervention by **Ms. Zolzaya Enkhtur**, founder and managing director of Climate Campaign, Mongolia. She introduced creative urban design solutions, educating young architects and urban planners with international best practices and planning principles. Creative 100 urban design project focuses on engaging youth in urban design and raising awareness about climate change by conducting workshops and training programmes. She emphasized the need for local governments to listen to and collaborate with young people in shaping urban environments.
25. **Ms. Liu Xueye**, analyst at the Institute for Global Decarbonization Progress (iGDP), China, introduced its efforts in the field of industry decarbonization and green finance. She highlighted China Carbon Neutrality Tracker, an online database covering national and sub-national carbon neutrality actions and policies. She also shared the decoupling of economic growth from carbon emissions in mega-cities like Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin, emphasizing their decreased per capita carbon emissions and ambitious decarbonization targets. She also presented a case study from Shanghai, showcasing its successful subsidy policy for renewable energy, resulting in increased solar power installations, including the world's largest solar PV station.
26. The last presentation was made by **Mr. Lee, Kwon-Pyo**, a youth representative, studying environmental science and ecological engineering at Korea University. He shared his experience of making efforts for a zero-waste society and the circular economy a part of youth culture, as a leader of a "Trash Transformer" team of the U-Savers programme of the Climate Change Center. This included monitoring waste separation and conducting interviews to evaluate universities' efforts to reduce plastic waste. In addition, he stressed the need to encourage the participation of universities and future generations to adopt sustainable practices, expand climate initiatives, and continue to raise awareness.
27. **In the Q&A session**, the panelist from Climate Campaign, Mongolia, underlined data-driven energy management and carbon reduction, particularly through collaboration with utility agencies and organizations. The youth representative from Korea University highlighted the importance of engaging college students in climate initiatives to amplify their societal

impact on policy and decision-making. Panelists also emphasized the importance of people-public-private partnerships, including local governments and private corporations, for the successful implementation of climate actions.

**[Closing]**

28. **Mr. Ganbold Bassanjav**, Head of ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office, commended the insightful presentations of all speakers and panelists from various cities, institutes and organizations, and expressed sincere gratitude to the co-organizers as well as all the audience and participants for their engagement in forum's constructive discussions. Noting ESCAP's commitment to promote concerted efforts of various stakeholders in North-East Asia and beyond, he called for continued collaboration of all partners and participants for the transition towards zero-carbon society.