

# Asia and the Pacific Regional Multi-Stakeholder Consultation for Stockholm+50

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## Meeting Overview

Fifty years after the UN Conference on the Human Environment – a watershed gathering that brought the issue of the environment to the forefront of the global agenda – countries will convene once again this summer for Stockholm+50, a high-level meeting that aims to accelerate action on sustainable development. Drawing inspiration from the original 1972 UN Conference, which led to a flurry of activity, including the establishment of new environmental ministries, the passage of environmental legislation around the world, and the birth of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) itself, Stockholm+50 aims to do no less. Its goal is to spur progress to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – a shared vision to end poverty, rescue the planet, and build a peaceful world, by 2030. The conference will convene from 2-3 June 2022 in Stockholm, Sweden.

In preparation for Stockholm+50, the Asia-Pacific, along with other regions, engaged in multi-stakeholder consultations to give voice to and facilitate the engagement of as many stakeholders as possible and ensure a bottom-up mapping of key initiatives and actions needed to accelerate and implement the SDGs.

The Asia and the Pacific Regional Multi-stakeholder Consultation for Stockholm+50 took place over two days in a virtual format that allowed for a lively, fluid conversation involving over 300 hundred participants from around the region. Light on pre-written statements but heavy on interactive discussion, the programme was explicitly participatory, and gave space to a multitude of unique voices in productive, solutions-focused dialogue.

Each day started with a short plenary session with different stakeholder representatives to

help contextualize the working group discussions that followed. The working groups were highly interactive and open to interventions from all audience members. This interactivity was enhanced by the use of “jamboards” – virtual whiteboards where participants could pin virtual sticky notes as a way to answer questions from the facilitators. Facilitators also frequently used instant polling to get reactions from participants and help direct the discussions.

During the two days, discussions touched on key issues for the region, in particular intergenerational dialogue and youth. Much attention was given to environmental education and awareness raising, and to reorienting current economic, social, and environmental trajectories to reach the SDGs. The interactive, open format also ensured that dozens of different topics were introduced, ranging from blockchain technology to indigenous knowledge and Gross National Happiness. The wide cross-section of ideas discussed mirrored the diversity of the Asia-Pacific region itself, both in terms of its people and the challenges it faces going forward.

More than 200 participants joined the consultation each day via Zoom, and many others via YouTube livestream.

## Opening Remarks

The Swedish Ambassador to Thailand Jon Åström Gröndahl welcomed participants to the consultation from all corners of the region, and reminded participants that the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm had placed environmental concerns at the forefront of the international agenda. He said that Stockholm+50 will set the scene for adjusting the direction towards achieving a healthy planet for the prosperity of all, and that the Asia-Pacific region’s inputs and suggestions for success are crucial.



Ambassador **Jon Åström Gröndahl**, Swedish Ambassador to Thailand

Dechen Tshering, Regional Director, UNEP Asia and the Pacific, reminded participants that 50 years after the first conference in Stockholm, the environment is much worse off than it was then, and that the Asia-Pacific region is at the forefront of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. She added that UN reports show that the region is only likely to achieve 10% of the 2030 Agenda's Goals and targets by 2030 unless the current unsustainable development trajectory is changed. She highlighted the "5Rs" (reimagine, regenerate, rebalance, renew, and recover) and the "3Is" (interconnectedness, implementation, and intergenerational equity) and their role in supporting this change.

Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), said the world is still far from achieving the healthy environment envisioned at the first Stockholm conference. He highlighted data from the 2022 Asia Pacific Regional SDGs Progress Report showing the regression against the SDG targets and lack of progress on the environment, regional challenges of air pollution, and the risk of mass extinction of species. He emphasized the importance of Nature-based Solutions, urgent investment to address the multiple and integrated environmental challenges, and the importance of effective multilateral and multi-stakeholder processes and collective action.



**Dechen Tshering**, Regional Director, UNEP Asia-Pacific

## Multi-Stakeholder Panel Discussions

### Plenary one: "Reflecting on the 50 years of environmental action in Asia-Pacific and setting the vision for the next 50 years"

Antoinette Taus, actress, singer, host, and National Goodwill Ambassador for the Philippines, facilitated the plenary. She emphasized the importance of focusing the event on voices, actions, hope, collaboration, and partnerships in the context of capturing the region's inputs to the seminal Stockholm+50 meeting later this year.

Participants from across the region highlighted key messages, including:

#### Key Messages

Participants highlighted:

- The importance of collective action and stakeholder mobilization, including different forms of indigenous and traditional knowledge systems;
- The need to recognize and deal with conflicts of interest through both voluntary and binding forms of governance;
- The need to address the decades-old clash between environmental objectives and economic systems, which poses a "systemic" barrier to change;
- The need for global solutions to planetary problems;
- The need for breaking down sectoral silos; and
- The importance of incorporating indigenous knowledge into solutions.

Chee Yoke Ling, Executive Director, Third World Network, Malaysia, said environmental and economic agreements remain at odds with each other, and the region cannot progress as long as trade regimes undermine government commitments to the environment. She said to effectively address environmental challenges, we need to deal with poverty and inequality, and called for an approach that recognizes and addresses both social and environmental dimensions across countries.



**Chee Yoke Ling**, Executive Director, Third World Network, Malaysia

Wali Haider, Farmers Constituency and Co-chair of Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism, noted that the 2030 Agenda recognizes the contradictions between the environment and economy only in a limited manner, because it still does not tackle systemic issues upfront. He said Stockholm+50 may be the last chance the world has for meaningful change, citing recent SDG progress reports, which suggest that, at current rates, global targets would only be reached by 2065. Haider highlighted “systemic” barriers to progress, including increased sovereign debt, militarization, illicit financial flows, shrinking ODA and access to trade, and investor-state dispute settlement clauses in trade agreements that have increased “corporatization” in the region.

Rubina Adhikai, Thematic Facilitator, Children and Youth Major Group, UNEP, shared details about the Stockholm+50 Youth Task Force, which has developed a youth handbook and policy statement, aimed at enhancing capacity leading up to Stockholm+50. She said that while there has been much to celebrate since the UN Conference on the Human Environment, there are also failures to be acknowledged, and that it is critical that Stockholm+50 be more than “just another gathering.”



**Rubina Adhikai**, Thematic Facilitator, Children and Youth Major Group, UNEP

Cielito Habito, Professor, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines, said it is a natural tendency of human beings to work and think in silos, but in order to face the problems ahead, a more holistic view is needed. To provide an example of siloed thinking, he drew from his experience as a former cabinet minister in the Philippines, noting that oftentimes, other cabinet members seemed to think and act “as though their sectors were the top priority.”

Jiten Yumnam, International Coordinating Committee of the International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self Determination and Liberation, talked about how indigenous knowledge is important in the administration of land, forests, and biodiversity. Since indigenous knowledge is nature-based, he said, it creates strong, sustainable relationships between people and nature.

During the question-and-answer session, panelists discussed:

- Pledges for action that Farmers want to bring to Stockholm+50, including: ensuring polluting countries take responsibility for their share of environmental degradation; sharing best practices for food production; and using “development justice” as a framework to reduce inequality.
- Pledges for action that Children and Youth want to bring to Stockholm+50, including: ensuring global justice and fairness in access to vaccines and healthcare; aligning recovery plans with environmentally sound, green jobs and low-carbon technology; criminalizing “ecocide”; and adopting participatory and inclusive decision making at every level.
- Policies required in the next five years to address the triple crisis of climate, biodiversity loss, and pollution of all forms, including: collating and disseminating information and knowledge; facilitating linkages and partnerships; linking funders with worthy initiatives; and sustaining discussions that bridge sectors and disciplines.
- Pledges for action that Indigenous Peoples and their Communities want to bring to Stockholm+50, including: ensuring accountability of the private sector; and sharing solutions that contribute to conservation that Indigenous Peoples have been practicing for generations.

## Plenary two: “REIMAGINE: Intergenerational dialogue on visions of the future for a healthy planet and prosperity for all”

Antoinette Taus facilitated the plenary, beginning with a set of audience polls. The results indicated participants were overwhelmingly optimistic that the Asia-Pacific region is capable of taking bold actions to ensure a healthier planet in the future, but a plurality felt the progress was proceeding too slowly and should speed up.

Key messages from the plenary included:

### Key Messages

Participants highlighted:

- Ensuring the future of work for youth will require a clean, healthy, sustainable environment.
- There is an urgent need to correct the world's economic, social, and environmental trajectories through a just and equitable transition.
- Giving indigenous communities a platform to share their knowledge and practices, “in their own words, from their own mouths,” is necessary.
- Creating new narrative for a positive vision of the future.
- Intergenerational equity is paramount in addressing the triple crisis.

Clarence Gio Almoite, Asia-Pacific Regional Facilitator, Children and Youth Major Group, UNEP, said at about 2 billion, young people make up 16% of the world's population. Regarding the future of work, he called for scaling up opportunities to enable young people to succeed. He said youth are aware that they will need to be retrained many times throughout their careers, and noted challenges associated with rapidly changing technologies.

Gio Almoite recalled that regional governments championed intergenerational cooperation and equity during the recently concluded resumed fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5.2). He called for more meaningful engagement with young people to further accelerate implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development.



**Wardarina**, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Thailand

Wardarina, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Thailand, talked about climate justice, gender justice, and development justice. She said Stockholm+50 comes at a time when there is an urgent need to address the root causes of the world's unsustainable trajectory, including the profit- and market-driven, business-as-usual framework of the global capitalist economy. She emphasized that a wider understanding of intersectional power relations is critical for advancing women's leadership and empowerment.

Wardarina further noted multi-stakeholder partnerships must be built on consent and trust to achieve the solidarity necessary for working towards a healthy planet for all.

Emmanuela Shinta, Founder, Ranu Welum Foundation, Indonesia, said there are many misconceptions about Indigenous Peoples that inhibit awareness about their sustainable ways of living. She identified a need to amplify a new narrative around Indigenous Peoples as active members of societies with contributions to make, so that they can be included in policymaking efforts as part of a bottom-up approach. Shinta highlighted the importance of trust when working with women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples, which, she said, is attained by working in partnership and basing responses on what the local people need and want.

Krushil Watene, Associate Professor, Massey University, New Zealand, spoke about how belief systems of indigenous communities can provide insights for rethinking and reorganizing relationships with the natural world, which are instructive for broadening concepts of social and environmental stewardship across generations. She explained that to create a new narrative for a positive vision of the future, it is important to consider development and law alongside nature. Laws, she said, can be used to recognize the importance of strengthening human-nature relationships. This includes recognizing local

peoples' roles as stewards, and including their different values, knowledge, and philosophies. Local indigenous communities, Watene noted, are not passive, but active, engaged, and able to be part of reforms.

## Parallel Working Groups on the Leadership Dialogues

### Working Group on Leadership Dialogue 1: “REGENERATION: A healthy planet for the prosperity of all”

This Working Group focused on the themes of:

- Transforming the relationship with nature;
- Sustainable consumption and production and fighting pollution; and
- Social justice and intergenerational equity.

The co-facilitators noted that regionally, there is diminishing biodiversity and worsening environmental problems. Therefore, they said, it is important to look into factors that have led to these challenges. The co-facilitators hoped that the discussion can move from reflections on the process to concrete actions.

Working Group participants discussed the following questions:

- How can we restore and regenerate a positive relationship with nature?
- What good practices and pathways could be scaled up to enable a move to a healthy planet?
- What are the actions that could be taken to scale up the change towards a healthy planet, including policies or structures that should be in place to take such actions?
- How could marginalized and vulnerable groups benefit from policies and initiatives designed to restore a more sustainable and resilient



Working Group co-facilitator **Theresa Mundita Lim**, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity



Working group co-facilitator **Joan Carling**, Asia Indigenous People Pact

- relationship with nature that mitigates nature risks?
- How can we safeguard the rights of nature and people, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities, environmental defenders, women, youth, and future generations?
- What are the new or prioritized set of metrics and indicators needed for tracking progress towards a healthier and more prosperous planet?

### Key recommendations from the working group on regeneration

On restoring and regenerating a positive relationship with nature:

- Recognize that the maritime industry is heading towards decarbonization, and there is a need to build capacity for seafarers to implement these changes.
- Consider legislation similar to laws implemented in the EU that aim to restore ecosystems by 2030.
- Shift to viewing nature not just as a carbon sink, as is often the case in the UN climate process, but rather as a unity of ecosystems.
- Incorporate nature-based solutions in national action plans and financing schemes.

On actions towards a healthy planet:

- Make sustainability, which is currently outside the curriculum, the purpose of education.
- Integrate and place a “sustainability purpose” at the core of politics, industry, and business, rather than making it an add-on or peripheral to the main goals and values.
- Urgently address the transboundary issue of air pollution.
- Avoid haphazard planning (such as in road building, for example), and ensure there is better investment in planning ahead.
- Rethink consumption, including packaging, meat consumption, and consumption of non-local or non-seasonal foods.

On scaling up:

- Mobilize the masses to help implement good policies by educating people at an earlier age.
- Support better enforcement, and regulation, especially of chemical pollution.

On ensuring benefits for marginalized and vulnerable groups:

- Identify vulnerable and marginalized groups so that they can be supported as policies are developed.
- Reward Indigenous Peoples economically for their knowledge and work as guardians of nature.
- Governments should give equal rights to everyone to express their opinions so that policymakers can incorporate those ideas into policy responses.
- Provide support to scientists from developing countries to participate in global meetings.

On safeguarding the rights of people and nature:

- Endorse international human rights instruments in domestic legislation.
- Make sure that people understand they have rights and are aware of them so they can use their voices to demand those rights.
- Understand that people's rights emerge from nature, not the other way around. This understanding is fundamental.
- Criminalize the destruction of nature.

On new or prioritized metrics:

- Track progress towards a healthier planet using a happiness index, since this incorporates aspects like health and wellbeing.

## **Working Group on Leadership Dialogue 2: "RECOVERY & REBALANCE: A sustainable and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic"**

This Working Group focused on the themes of:

- Recovery actions in key COVID-19-affected sectors;
- Innovation and digital technologies; and
- Global and South-South cooperation.

Co-facilitators framed the discussions around the need for promoting more sustainable lifestyles in the region, noting that Asia-Pacific continues to face challenges with regard to



Working Group co-facilitator **Aida Karazhanova**, UNESCAP

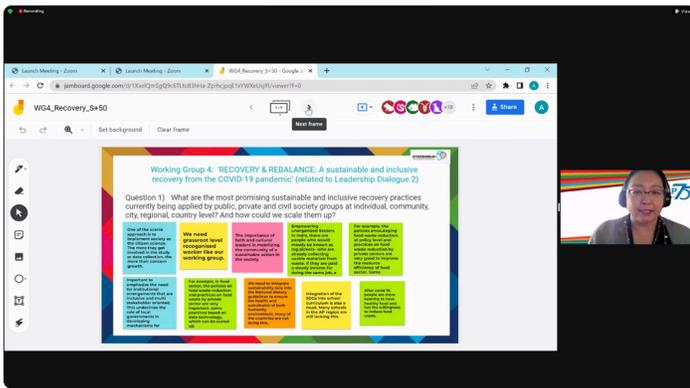
widening educational opportunities, as well as scaling and making digital technology more accessible to meet its environmental goals, all of which will have implications for building back better from COVID-19.

Participants discussed the following questions:

- What are the most promising sustainable and inclusive recovery practices currently being applied by public, private, and civil society groups at individual, community, city, regional, and country level? How could we scale them up?
- What recovery and pre-existing practices need to be changed to ensure an inclusive and sustainable recovery?
- How do we ensure that all countries/communities can benefit from opportunities stemming from a sustainable and just transition?
- How can we create better performing industries and supply chains for a just transition to more sustainable economies? Which sectors are the most critical?
- What are some of the commitments and "responsible" principles that need to be followed by key industry sectors and by finance and investment institutions?



Working Group co-facilitator **Jana Zilkova**, Head of Mission in Mongolia, Caritas Czech Republic



Working Group co-facilitator **Aida Karazhanova**, UNESCO, introduces answers in the jamboard to the question on recovery and rebalance.

- What are the decent green jobs of the future? What are the new skills needed? What is needed from business? From government? From academia? From civil society? From the greater public?

### Key recommendations from the working group on recovery and rebalance

On sustainable and inclusive recovery practices:

- Expand opportunities for citizen science, including recognizing the importance of participatory approaches.
- Widen development finance for disadvantaged and marginalized groups.
- Support crowd funding, especially for young entrepreneurs interested in social impact initiatives.
- Recognize the role of faith-based organizations and cultural leaders in mobilizing community actions.
- Promote community forestry and other Nature-based Solutions as a means of improving livelihoods.
- Increase digital access, especially among those located in remote and isolated communities.
- Integrate the SDGs into school curricula to better engage with young people on sustainability issues.
- Leverage new data technologies, such as machine learning and digital mapping systems, in order to tackle key environmental issues, including food waste and plastic pollution.
- Make use of green financing incentives and impose penalties to encourage high-emitting industries to curb their emissions and reduce solid waste.

On an inclusive and sustainable recovery:

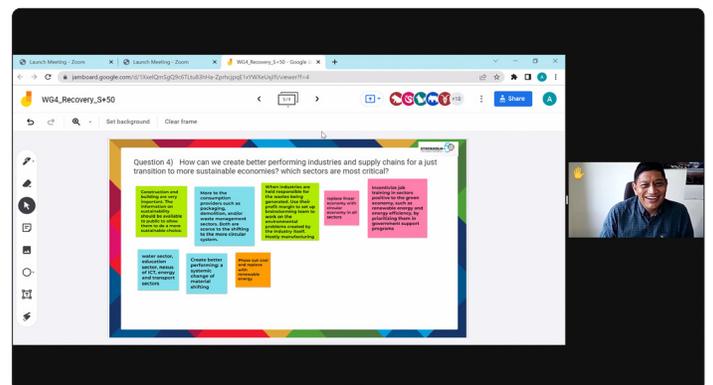
- Shift away from linear systems of production and consumption, starting with progressively phasing out single-use items.
- Engage directly with parliamentarians and legislators on matters of critical environmental concern.
- Supplement scientific information with community-sourced data.

On a sustainable and just transition:

- Widen access to digital technologies as a means of complementing conventional classroom-based learning.
- Introduce data centers and digital monitoring solutions to raise public awareness about key health and environmental challenges.
- Expand job training in green sectors, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency, and prioritize these in government support programmes.
- Strengthen capacity development, innovation and access to more finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- Promote decentralized governance systems that prioritize multi-stakeholder dialogue and “people-centered” development to ensure no one is left behind.

On creating better performing industries and supply chains:

- Adopt nexus approaches that address environmental issues in multiple sectors, such as energy, transport, and water.
- Divest from fossil fuels and support the expansion of renewable energy.
- Enforce the “polluter pays principle,” including by mandating companies to address environmental damages.



**Basanta Shrestha**, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, contributes to the jamboard, highlighting mountain ecosystem needs.

- Make use of carbon pricing tools, including through the use of smart contract platforms for mitigating emissions.
- Introduce green business training into secondary and tertiary educational curricula.

On commitments and “responsible” principles:

- Integrate eco-design principles across all manufacturing, supply, and retail operations.
- Use “internet of things” and digital dashboards to simultaneously manage energy- and water-related challenges.
- Steer investments towards green job sectors to advance a just transition.

On decent green jobs of the future:

- Focus on the education sector to promote green skills and competencies.
- Fund research and development on environmentally friendly products and technologies.
- Support start-ups in the information technology sector to carry out more systematic analysis of environmental challenges and solutions.

### **Working Group on Leadership Dialogue 3: “RENEWAL: Accelerating the implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development”**

This Working Group focused on the themes of:

- Scaling-up finance;
- Governance and institutional reform;
- Collective action and strengthened cooperation; and
- Digital transformation.

The co-facilitators provided introductory comments for the more than 40 participants



Working Group co-facilitator **Pooja Rangaprasad**, Society for International Development



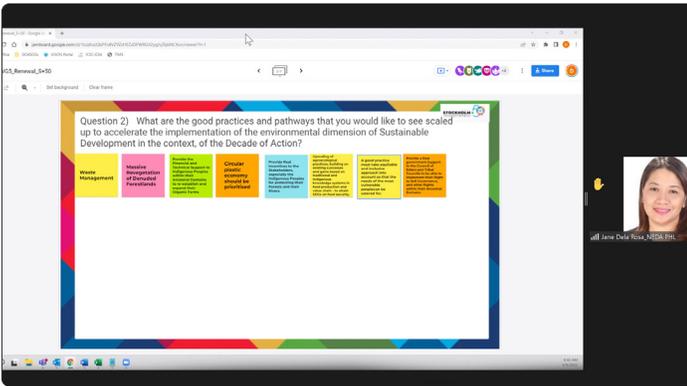
Working Group co-facilitator **Manjeet Dhakal**, Co-chair of the Least Developed Countries Group, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

in attendance. They noted the need for financing for development that is based on true global consensus and support for people and the planet. In addition, they recommended “democratization” of global economic governance and “decolonization” of the global economy, particularly as it relates to climate finance, debt generation, and the tax system. The co-facilitators warned that while environmental concerns have persisted over the past 50 years, climate financing has not achieved the USD 100 billion per year target. They expressed concern about the inclusiveness of technology, and the digital divide.

The co-facilitators highlighted the need to coordinate governance and bring the discussions of the original UN Conference on the Human Environment and Stockholm+50 to a common objective. They said this Working Group provides a place to reflect on what has worked well and what needs to be done.

Participants discussed the following questions:

- What are the biggest challenges we are facing in implementing the commitments of the 2030 Agenda and other environmental commitments?
- What are the good practices and pathways that you would like to see scaled up to accelerate implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development in the context of the Decade of Action?
- How do we transform governance and legal systems to ensure that they maintain long-term economic stability and ecological and social wellbeing for all?
- What measures are needed to align public, private, and development finance with existing commitments and priorities?



**Mary Jane dela Rosa**, National Economic and Development Authority, the Philippines, raises a comment about using data for monitoring progress.

- What type of partnerships with the UN and beyond are needed to accelerate a green and sustainable economic transformation that leaves no one behind?
- What capacities and technologies are needed to improve human wellbeing in harmony with nature?

### Key recommendations from the working group on renewal

On addressing challenges in implementing commitments of the 2030 Agenda:

- Use better measures, such as supply chain tracking, to ensure that agriculture is sustainable.
- Empower Indigenous Peoples, including through free, prior, and informed consent.
- Recognize fossil fuels as the biggest driver of climate change that undermines all 17 SDGs.
- Mobilize resources, which are currently inadequate, to respond to the needs of local populations. Currently more is spent on defense and the military than to address the basic needs of the 2030 Agenda.
- Understand the need for political commitment of governments to enforce environmental commitments.
- Focus on SDG integration, with all the SDGs being linked, and collaborate with all stakeholders.
- Shift away from the traditional approach of economic development, which still dominates public finance allocation for climate action.

On good practices to implement the environmental dimension of sustainable development:

- Prioritize the involvement of young people who are eager to take action, empower them, and value their opinions.
- Promote and scale agricultural practices already in place in Asia, including by focusing on locally-based food sovereignty and strengthening local communities' ties to nature.
- Work towards more inclusive climate actions that can cater to the needs of the most vulnerable groups.
- Establish legislation and metrics, such as on circular economy and waste management, which allow the government to take regular action on the issues. In addition, citizens can then use laws to hold the government accountable.
- Conduct systematic data collection and monitoring since many targets and indicators do not have reliable data. Digitalization can also be helpful.

On transforming governance and legal systems:

- Consider how we measure progress to go beyond the legacy metrics of economic stability and wellbeing, such as GDP, and take into account social and ecological aspects.
- Pursue values of harmony between humans and nature.
- Consider elements and institutions that are outside the usual discussion on sustainable development but have an impact, for example the World Trade Organization and corporations.
- Think about instruments, such as a UN legally binding treaty on human rights, or those that hold transnational organizations legally accountable.
- Develop foresight in terms of how risk, uncertainty, and crises are dealt with in governance systems.
- Promote flexibility in implementing globally agreed environmental goals through development and use of actions that are compatible with available resources and capacity of different countries and economies.

On aligning public, private, and development finance:

- Recognize differences in public and private finance, look at how wealth is taxed, and challenge the assumption that the private sector is the solution.
- Understand that climate financing is skewed towards mitigation and there is not enough for

adaptation, and more public finance still goes to fossil fuels than to address climate change.

- Support countries who are very dependent on fossil fuel revenue and need to transition away.
- Understand that the most powerful ministry in many developing countries is finance, and not the environment ministry.
- There is a need for a “whole-of-government approach” that is also linked with the education system. Consider prioritization of three sectors – health, environment, and education.
- Note that in climate finance, countries experiencing similar issues can have more targeted and pragmatic investments, and there can be more targeted investment in regions.

On partnerships to accelerate a green and sustainable economic transformation that leaves no one behind:

- Have a different kind of cooperation and partnerships, which are led and centered on people, are more collaborative, and account for those currently left behind.
- Move beyond GDP as a measure, with the UN helping build countries’ capacity to do so.
- Consider the power dynamics of and participation in multi-stakeholder partnerships and platforms, and challenge the way corporations can capture them.

On capacities and technologies:

- Remain aware that technology is not magic, and consider who has control of and access to it, in addition to who benefits and who is marginalized.

The co-facilitators provided wrap-up comments, expressing appreciation for the broad participation, the sharing of diverse experiences, and the exploration of solutions. They said it is important to keep the conversation going.

## Parallel Working Groups on High-impact Sectors

### Working Group 1: “End plastic pollution for a healthy planet and wellbeing”

This Working Group focused on three key themes:

- Best practices for zero plastic pollution;



Working Group co-facilitator **Sibing Yang**, China Tianying Inc.

- Innovation and circularity in the plastic sector; and
- Behavioral change.

Co-facilitated by Yasuhiko Hotta, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), and Sibing Yang, China Tianying Inc., the Working Group considered comments from the audience on five key questions:

- How can the Asia-Pacific region promote regional and multi-stakeholder cooperation to address transboundary pollution while overcoming barriers?
- How can the region create better incentives for industries, including SMEs, to reduce single-use plastic products?
- What are the best practices to raise regional ambition and inspire behavioral change in citizens/consumers to end plastic pollution?
- What best practices and initiatives can be scaled up or replicated?
- What are the specific actions that participant or participant constituency can take to mitigate plastic pollution?

The co-facilitators noted that East Asia and the Pacific is one of the major plastic waste-



Working Group co-facilitator **Yasuhiko Hotta**, IGES

producing regions in the world, accounting for approximately 57 million tons per year, according to the World Bank. Although there are many ways to deal with plastic waste, they said, not all of them are adequate, and dumping or landfilling should be avoided.

Given that UNEA-5.2 agreed to negotiate by 2024 a legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, the Working Group identified key barriers, or “gaps,” that need to be addressed in the Asia-Pacific region:

- The information and knowledge gap;
- The policy and governance gap;
- The technical capacity gap; and
- The markets and finance gap.

### **Key recommendations from the working group on ending plastic pollution**

On regional leadership:

- Continue the strong political commitment and good momentum in the Asia-Pacific region on reducing plastic waste and position it as a leader in helping to mainstream the issue.

On incentives:

- Put a price on plastic bags rather than distributing them for free, to incentivize a reduction in consumption.
- Engage brand owners to play a role in reducing plastic consumption by spreading the message and influencing consumer behavior towards creating a circular economy and reinforcing positive beliefs among customers.
- Label plastic products in much the same way that cigarettes are labeled as “harmful to your health” to further incentivize reduced consumption and remind consumers of the negative impacts.
- Further mainstream an Extended Producer Responsibility approach, which adds all lifecycle costs of a product to its market price, to help realize the circular economy.
- Stop focusing solely on plastic pollution as a single issue and instead demonstrate the links between plastic pollution and other forms of pollution, making it easier for industry and SMEs to tackle the problem.

On monitoring:

- Monitor how countries reduce plastic so that we can determine the degree of progress in the region.

On cooperation and communication:

- Harmonize efforts within government to take advantage of the expected significant funding and support for plastic pollution prevention. National action plans could serve as a hub for coordinating different initiatives.
- Communicate any proposed regulations to the public well in advance as ambition continues to rise towards a legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution.

On plastic waste trading:

- Remember that the circular economy should refer to a “localized” circular economy, so that waste is not just shipped to other countries.
- Note that not all plastic waste can be recycled, and plastic waste exports often include low-quality plastics that end up in landfills.
- Exporting countries need to take steps to be responsible for managing their own waste.

On different types of plastics:

- Price unnecessary disposable plastic products, such as cutlery, at a higher rate to discourage use.
- Draw a distinction between essential plastic items versus non-essential plastic items that end up harming the environment.

### **Working Group 2: “Sustainable food systems for an inclusive recovery”**

This Working Group focused on three key themes:

- Sustainable agriculture;
- Food security; and
- Green jobs.

Co-facilitated by Marci Rose Baranski, UNEP, and Sridhar Dharmapuri, Food and Agriculture



Working Group co-facilitator **Marci Rose Baranski**, UNEP



Working Group co-facilitator **Sridhar Dharmapuri**, FAO

Organization of the UN (FAO), the Working Group welcomed comments from the audience on five key questions:

- What would you like to see Stockholm+50 consider on agrifood systems?
- How do we increase the productivity of smallholders while using fewer resources, in light of the need to feed more than 5 billion people in the Asia-Pacific region by 2050?
- What measures are needed to further accelerate the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups, such as women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples, among others, to ensure a fair and transparent food system transformation?
- How can we promote access to affordable, safe, and nutritious food and also reduce consumption of unhealthy foods that are rich in salt, sugar, and fat?
- How can we generate employment or green jobs and promote the use of nature-friendly inputs, practices, and materials from production to consumption?

### Key recommendations from the working group on sustainable food systems

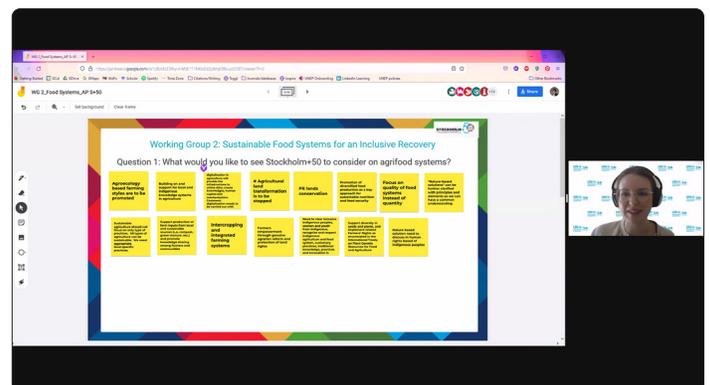
On agrifood systems:

- Promote agroecology-based farming systems building on and supporting local and indigenous knowledge systems in agriculture.
- Focus on quality instead of quantity when it comes to food systems.
- Develop key standards and use tracking software to ensure supply chains are sustainable, and markets and producers are connected. Take into account the digital gap persistent in the region and note that digitalization needs to be carried out with clear rules on ownership and use of the data and knowledge.

- Implement better tracking techniques along the value chain to ensure agricultural commodities meet the demand for deforestation-free agricultural products in the EU and the US.
- Ensure that small-scale farmers are part of the solution and that their productivity is also raised. Promote diversified food production as a key approach for sustainable nutrition and food security.
- Recognize, at the policy level, that many small-scale farmers are already climate resilient. Acknowledge that communities, Indigenous Peoples, and others are coming together to engage governments, and the UN needs to help facilitate that engagement.
- Further clarify the concept of Nature-based Solutions to have a common understanding of the principles and elements involved and to avoid its “capture” for non-sustainable means and ends.
- Restructure government support to farmers by rewarding farmers for outcomes, such as enhanced ecosystem services, instead of rewarding them for outputs such as yields.

On increasing food production:

- Improve infrastructure to reduce food loss, and harness digital technologies for smarter food production and transport.
- Discuss Nature-based Solutions from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples’ human rights.
- Provide real alternatives to pesticide use.
- Harness good practices that have come out of the pandemic such as urban gardening and farming, and promote food production in communities and households. Provide financial



Working Group co-facilitator **Marci Rose Baranski**, UNEP, introduces the jamboard where participants answer questions raised during the session.



**Alice Hughes**, China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation, intervenes on the question about food systems.

and technical support to local community projects to make communities more resilient.

On inclusion of the most vulnerable to ensure a fair and transparent food system transformation:

- Enable and support direct links between consumers and producers and between rural and urban communities to allow for shorter and more resilient value chains.
- Promote and support urban farming as key to ensuring food security and strengthen local markets.
- Address forest resources and inclusion in the context of a long-standing struggle of Indigenous Peoples in the region.
- Proposals on the promotion of digitalization in agriculture should take into account those who are left behind – “the bottom billion” without access to digital infrastructure or basic services, such as electricity and education.
- Develop best practices for using emerging technologies like blockchain for data logs.
- Recognize that dependence on digital technologies comes with environmental and social costs, including those associated with the extraction of minerals and rare earths to produce digital gadgets and infrastructure, and the massive use of energy by blockchains.
- Strengthen the voice and “real” participation of farmers in development plans and actions at the national level to enable their recognition as stakeholders.
- Ensure that disaster risk reduction frameworks are aimed at keeping food production systems resilient so they can recover from disasters.

On access to healthy diets:

- Reduce food waste and work towards normalizing less processed and healthier foods.

Use examples of how governance has been used as a driver in other countries to make unhealthy consumption choices unattractive and thereby improve people’s diets.

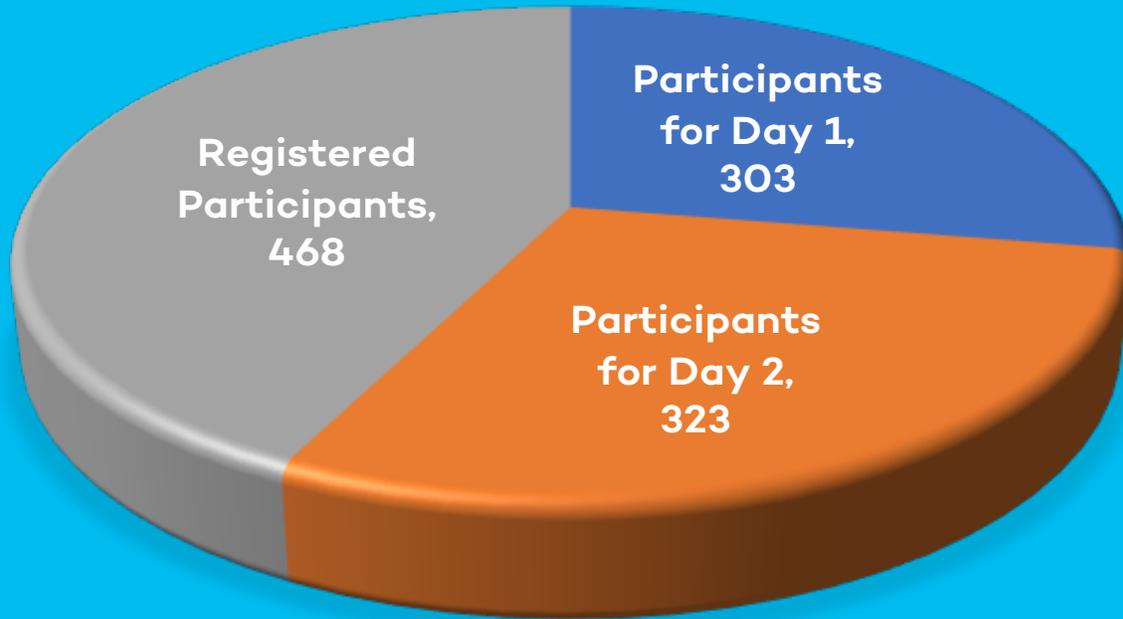
- Label fast food, indicating the high levels of sugar, salt, and fat. Consider also choice editing to encourage healthier diets.
- Work with restaurants, hotels, schools, and others to promote healthy and seasonal diets.
- Enforce laws on farming control to encourage farming that is beneficial for biodiversity and the natural environment.
- Promote and upscale local food production and diversified farming, including urban farming.
- Adopt policies for local procurement of sustainably produced and healthy foods in schools and government institutions.
- Ensure that the poor, the marginalized, and those already left behind do not further suffer from tradeoffs made in government policies and decisions.
- Promote urban agriculture and backyard gardening and support the production of diversified foods at local levels.
- Address barriers like business industry lobbying, which halts the switch to more healthy and sustainable consumption choices.
- Support healthy food production through regulation.
- Create a mechanism to work with both “indigenous science” and modern science.

On green jobs and nature-friendly inputs:

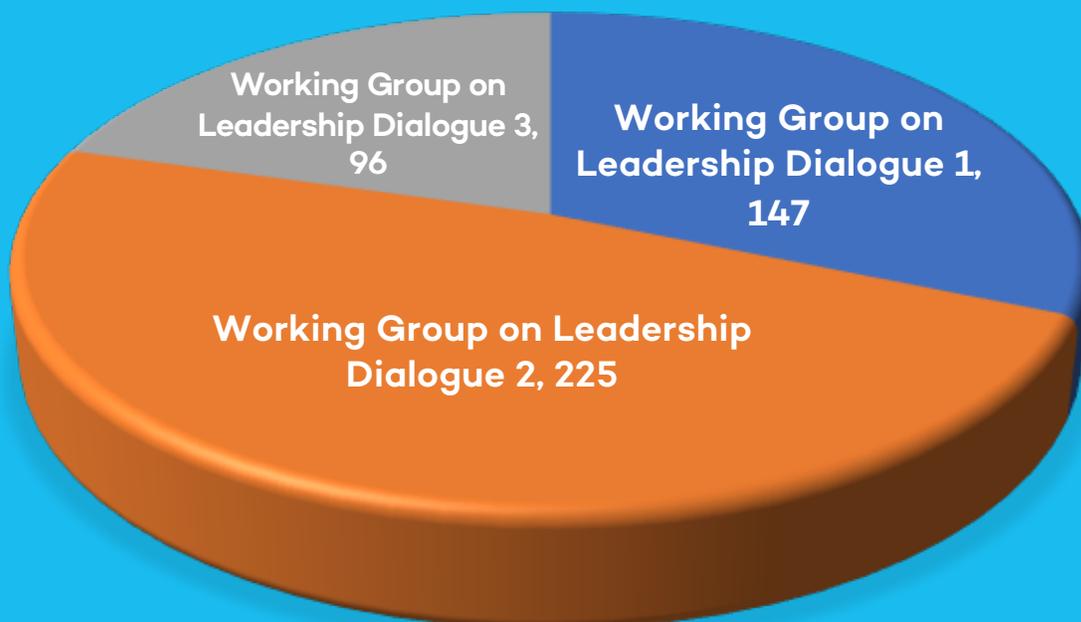
- Incentivize the greening of SMEs by defining what would constitute a green job, including a set of criteria.
- Validate and promote local seeds, knowledge, and practices.
- Promote the circular economy in the food system.
- Focus on the better or more regulated use of information and communication technology and digital platforms “at the nexus of sectors,” including water systems, agriculture, and supply chains.
- Align future employment changes with the principles of just transition.
- Encourage policymakers to shift their focus to agroecology, which has multiplier effects for employment at every stage of agricultural production, and helps reduce cost and the carbon footprint.

# Annex 1

Number of Participants of the Asia-Pacific Consultation



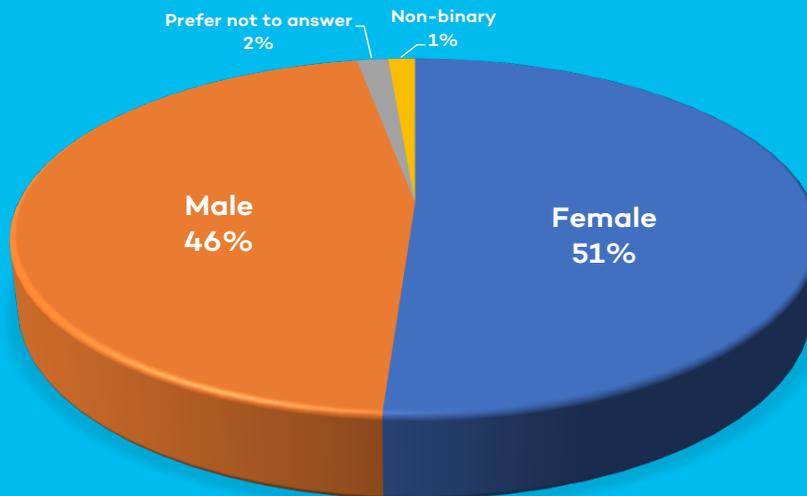
Number of Registered Participants of the Working Groups on the Leadership Dialogues



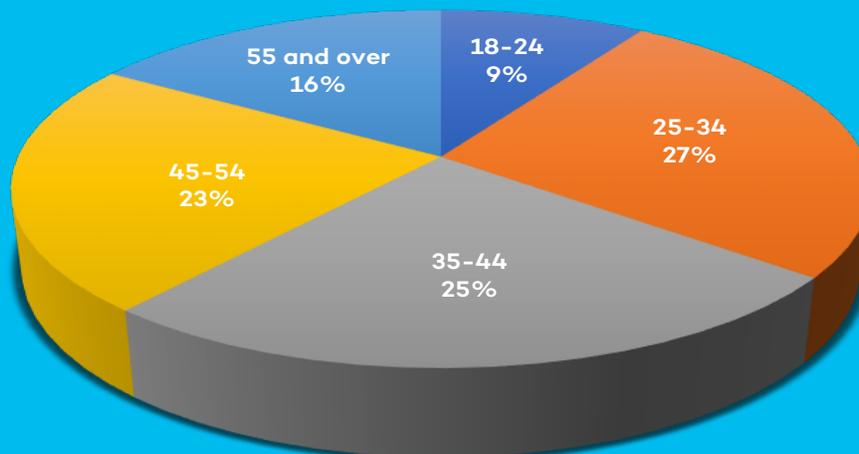
## Number of Registered Participants of the Working Groups on High-impact Sectors



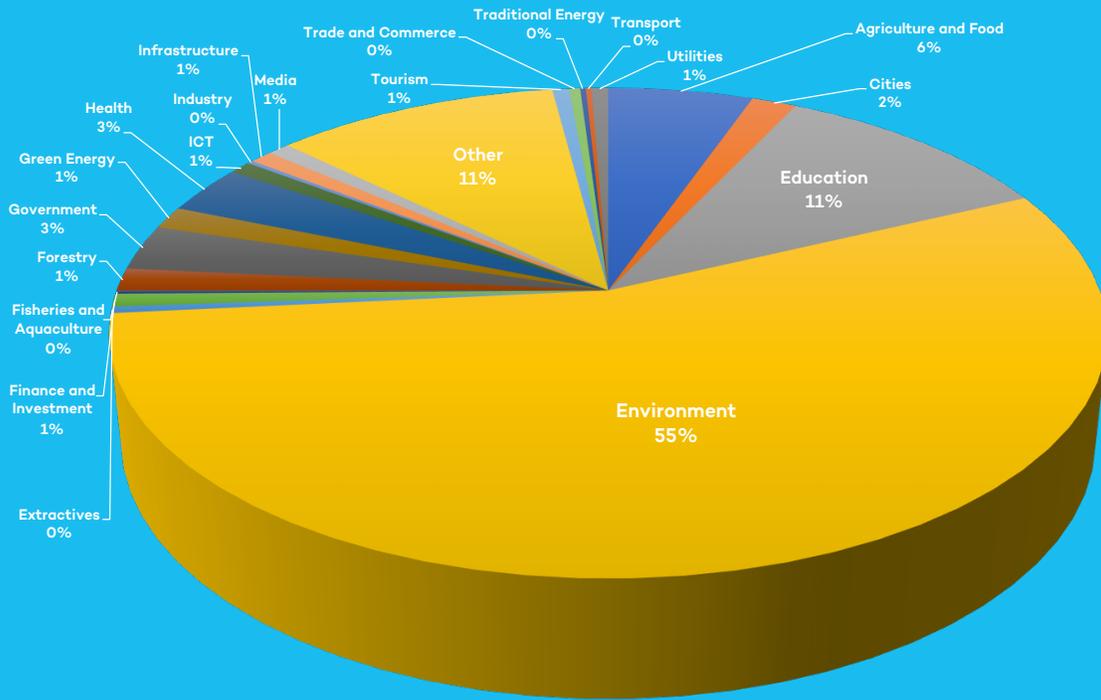
## Gender of Participants of the Asia-Pacific Consultation



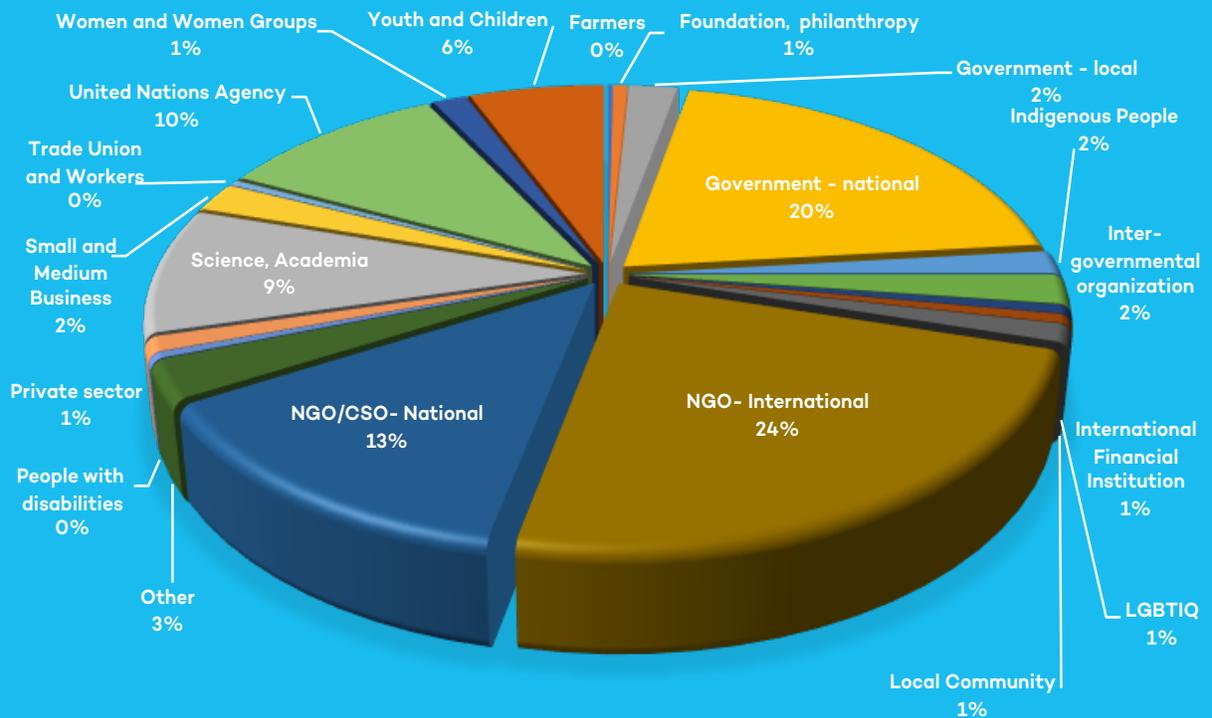
## Age Range of Participants of the Asia-Pacific Consultation



## Number of Participants from Each Sector



## Participants' Affiliations



# Annex 2



## Asia and the Pacific Regional Multi-stakeholder Consultation

Towards Stockholm+50 a  
healthy planet and prosperity  
for all

4-5 April 2022



GO 4 SDGs



### Programme

**DAY 1: 4 April 2022, 09:00 – 11:30 (UTC+7, Bangkok)**

**9.00-9.20:**

- 1. Welcome:** Ms. Antoinette Taus (Facilitator), Singer & Actress, National Goodwill Ambassador, Philippines
- 2. Opening remarks:**
  - Ambassador Jon Åström Gröndah, Swedish Ambassador to Thailand
  - Dechen Tsering, Regional Director, UNEP Asia and the Pacific
  - Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary, UNESCAP

**9.20-10.30:**

- 3. Plenary one: Multistakeholder Panel Discussion** "Reflecting on the 50 years of environmental action in Asia-Pacific and setting the vision for the next 50 years"

#### Focus areas:

- Regional overview of progress towards achieving environmental dimension of the SDGs
- Challenges and systematic barriers for implementation as well as inclusive participation
- Actions (best practices for replication and scaling up, solutions, pledges, initiatives)

Panelists:

- Chee Yoke Ling: Executive Director, Third World Network in Malaysia
- Wali Haider, Farmers constituency, Co-chair, Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism
- Ms. Rubina Adhikai, Thematic Facilitator, Children and Youth Major Group of UNEP
- Cielito Habito, Professor, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines
- Jiten Yumnam, International Coordinating Committee of the International Indigenous People's Movement for Self Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL)

**10.30-11.30:**

**4. Parallel Working Groups on high-impact sectors**

(Starting with Setting the Scene by the facilitators)

Working Group 1: End Plastic Pollution for a Healthy Planet and Wellbeing

Key themes:

- Best practices for zero plastic pollution
- Innovation and circularity in the plastic sector
- Behavioral change
  
- Co-facilitators: Mr. Yasuhiko Hotta (IGES), Ms. Sibing Yang (China Tianying Inc.)

Working Group 2: Sustainable Food Systems for an Inclusive Recovery

Key themes:

- Sustainable agriculture practices
- Food security
- Green jobs
  
- Co-facilitators: Mr. Sridhar Dharmapuri (Food and Agriculture Organization), Ms. Marci Rose Baranski, (United Nations Environment Programme)

## **DAY 2: 5 April 2022, 09:00 – 11:30 (UTC+7, Bangkok)**

### **9.00-10:00:**

- 1. Welcome and Summary of day 1:** Ms. Antoinette Taus (Facilitator), Singer & Actress, National Goodwill Ambassador, Philippines Facilitator
- 2. Plenary Two: 'REIMAGINE** Intergenerational dialogue on visions of the future for a healthy planet and prosperity for all'
  - Mr. Clarence Gio Almoite, Asia-Pacific Regional Facilitator, Children and Youth Major Group of UNEP
  - Ms. Wardarina, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Thailand
  - Ms. Emmanuela Shinta, Founder, Ranu Welum Foundation
  - Ms. Krushil Watene, Associate Professor, Massey University

### **3. Open Dialogue**

### **10.00-11.30:**

- 5. Parallel Working Groups on topics of Leadership Dialogues**  
(Starting with Setting the Scene by the facilitators)

Working Group 3: 'REGENERATION: A healthy planet for the prosperity of all'  
(related to Leadership Dialogue 1)

Key themes:

- Transforming relationship with nature
- SCP and fighting pollution
- Social justice & intergenerational equity
  
- Co-Facilitators: Ms. Theresa Mundita Lim (ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity), Ms. Joan Carling (Asia Indigenous People Pact (AIPP))

**Working Group 4: 'RECOVERY & REBALANCE: A sustainable and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic'**

Key themes:

- Recovery actions in key COVID-affected sectors
- Innovations & digital technologies
- Global and South-South cooperation
  
- Co-Facilitators: Aida Karazhanova, Economic Affairs Officer, (ESCAP), Jana Zilkova, Head of Mission in Mongolia, (Caritas)

**Working Group 5: RENEWAL: Accelerating the implementation of the environmental dimension of Sustainable Development**

Key themes:

- Scaling-up finance
- Governance & institutional reform
- Collective Action & strengthened cooperation
- Digital transformation
  
- Co-Facilitators: Mr. Manjeet Dhakal, (Co-chair of UNFCCC LDC group), Ms. Pooja Rangaprasad, (Society for International Development)

Visit the website and webstreaming of the Asia-Pacific Consultation at:  
<https://www.stockholm50.global/processes/regional-multi-stakeholder-consultations/asia-pacific>