

High-Level 15th Environmental Sustainable Transport Forum, 24-26 October 2023, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants of the EST Forum, colleagues and supporters of sustainable transport in Asia,

On behalf of the Government of Malaysia, I am very pleased to [invite you](#) to the High-Level 15th Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia, which will take place on 24-26 October 2023 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Under the theme of “Investing in Sustainable Transport, Heartbeat To Sustainable Economic and Social Development in the SDG Era” the Forum will focus on the benefits of developing a sustainable transport infrastructure.



H.E. Loke Siew Fook, Minister
Ministry of Transport
the Government of Malaysia

Malaysia has put in place its National Transport Policy 2019-2030 to make transport a true lever of economic competitiveness, social inclusivity, and to reduce the negative impacts on the environment. The nation-wide expansion of mass rapid transit systems as well as the introduction of clean energy sources for transport are essential cornerstones of our approach.

We are convinced that we need to develop our common understanding to advance sustainable transport for all, and we are keen to learn from other countries in the region.

The Ministry of Transport, Government of Malaysia will host this High-Level Forum which we are jointly organizing with the Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan, Asian Development Bank, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (tbc), United Nations Centre for Regional Development UNCRD of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs UN DESA.

Since the adoption of the Aichi 2030 Declaration in 2021, this will be the first in-person Forum and will bring together ministers and high-level government representatives from the EST Forum participating countries in Asia as well as a wide range of other stakeholders working on sustainable transport in the Asian region.

I am very much looking forward to welcoming you all to Malaysia.

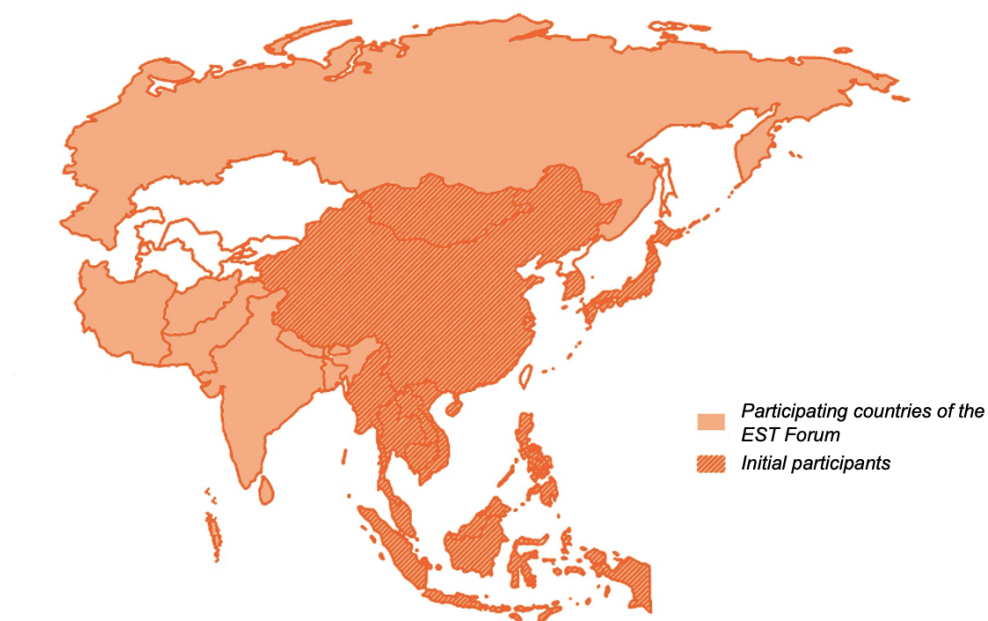
[Watch the Announcement of Transport Minister of Malaysia](#)

[Express your interest to attend the 15th EST Forum](#)

The Asian EST Initiative and EST Forums: catalyzing national and local action

The Asian EST Initiative was established in 2004 and aims to promote Environmentally Sustainable Transport in Asia through a range of activities in the regional approach by supporting policy, planning and capacity development in developing countries in Asia. It is a collaborative effort of the Ministry of the Environment, the Government of Japan, other governments of the EST countries, relevant national and international organizations and the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD). The EST Initiative now consists of 25 countries in Asia; one of its key features is the Regional EST Forum.

Countries participating in the EST Initiative



Since its inception, the EST Initiative has organized 14 High-Level Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forums. These forums provide a unique space for regular high-level policy dialogue on transport and the environment in Asia.

Since 2005, the annual EST Forums have been the venue where high-level government decision-makers from Asian countries meet to discuss how to achieve safe, reliable, efficient, people and environment friendly and sustainable passenger and freight transport in Asia.

The EST Forums uniquely bring together multiple line ministries and agencies in the areas of transport, environment, health, urban development, and energy.

[Visit the Asian EST Initiative and the Regional EST Forum website](#)

[Access the EST Forum Brochure](#)



History of the EST Forum in Asia

The Aichi 2030 Declaration: adopted by 21 EST countries in 2021

The Aichi 2030 Declaration on Making Transport in Asia Sustainable is a non-legal, non-binding declaration adopted in 2021 at the 14th Regional EST Forum in Aichi, Japan. It contains time-bound goals and strategies guided by the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. This makes the Aichi 2030 Declaration one of the first efforts to translate the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement at the sectoral and regional levels.

Goals of the Aichi 2030 Declaration



1A: Climate Change Mitigation



1B: Resilience (adaptation)



1C: Air Pollution



2: Road Safety



3: Economic Sustainability



4: Rural Access



5: Urban Access



6: National Access and Connectivity

With its Goals and Strategies, the Aichi 2030 Declaration demonstrates an unprecedented regional commitment towards the realization of safe, secure, reliable, affordable, efficient, people-centric, clean and low-carbon passenger and freight transport in Asia.

The High-level 15th EST Forum will review the following three goals from the Aichi 2030 Declaration in detail: 1A: Climate Change Mitigation, 2: Road Safety, 6: National Access and Connectivity. The other goals will be reviewed in detail in upcoming EST Forums.

[Consult the Aichi 2030 Declaration](#)



Adoption ceremony of the Aichi 2030 Declaration

First Asia-Pacific Rail Summit as a pre-event to the 15th EST Forum

The first Asia-Pacific Rail Summit (APRS), which serves as integrated pre-event to the High-Level 15th Regional EST Forum will take place on October 23 in Kuala Lumpur; it will be jointly organized by the Ministry of Transport, Government of Malaysia, International Union of Railways (UIC), UNCRD and ADB.

The APRS sessions will cover 4 main themes:

- 1 Railway contribution to the Aichi 2030 Declaration, the UN SDGs and the Paris Agreement
- 2 Railway and Gender Equality
- 3 Railway Funding and Investment
- 4 Railway policy debate

The intended outcome document will be the 2030 UIC Asia-Pacific Vision for Sustainable Rail Development, which will be a contribution towards updating the UIC Asia-Pacific Vision 2050.

Updates from the UNCRD Secretariat on activities in support of the implementation of the Aichi 2030 Declaration

UNCRD-ADB Side Event at ITF Leipzig: Linking Regional Policy Approaches and Knowledge Management in Asia. UNCRD and ADB hosted a joint side event on 25th May at the 2023 International Transport Forum in Leipzig, Germany. The event introduced the Aichi 2030 Declaration to a wider audience and highlighted the role of the ADB initiated Asian Transport Outlook (ATO), in tracking the implementation of the Aichi 2030 Declaration.

[See the ITF side event report](#)

Regional Capacity Building Workshop for EST Forum Participating countries in Manila. UNCRD in collaboration with ADB and the Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan (MOEJ), jointly organized the Regional Capacity Building Training Workshop for EST Countries on “*Implementation of, and Country Reporting on Aichi 2030 Declaration*” at ADB Headquarters on 22-24 March 2023. During the three-day training workshop, 63 participants from 20 countries learnt from experts and exchanged good practices in road safety, the economic sustainability of road and rail infrastructure, national, urban and rural access, air pollution and climate change.

[Read about the workshop](#)



Participants of the Regional Capacity-Building Workshop, ADB Headquarters Manila

International Transport Policy Support Activities in EST Forum Participating Countries: Scope and Alignment with the Aichi 2030 Declaration. UNCRD commissioned a mapping of the thematic and geographic scope of policy and capacity-building support activities carried out by international organizations and their alignment with the Goals and Strategies of the Aichi 2030 Declaration. The report and its findings support the planning of future policy support and will help enable the EST Forum participating countries to achieve the Aichi 2030 Declaration.

[Access the Mapping Report and Database](#)