Intergovernmental Ninth Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia

in conjunction with:

Regional Seminar on Safe, Climate Adaptive and Disaster Resilient Transport for Sustainable Development & Regional Dialogue on Transport and Climate Change organized in the context of the Regional EST Forum in Asia

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Ministry of the Environment Japan

EST for Resiliency – Building Safe, Smart, Low-carbon and Resilient Cities in Asia

Organized by:

Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MOPIT), Nepal
Ministry of the Environment (MOE), Japan
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP)
United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)

Chair:

Hon. Mr. Bijaya Kumar Gachhadar,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Physical Infrastructure and Transport, Nepal

Partners

Adenauer Foundation, Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT), German International Cooperation (GIZ) and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Supporting Organizations

World Health Organization (WHO), EMBARQ (The World Resources Institute's Center for Sustainable Transport), International Recovery Platform (IRP), Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), SAFER-Vehicle and Traffic Safety Centre, University of Gothenburg and The Youth Community of Nepalese Contractors (YCNC)

1. BACKGROUND

Asia is one of the most rapidly urbanizing regions in the world. Two third of the world's megacities are found in the region, and the urban population in Asia is rising faster than ever before. According to ADB, every year, around 44 million people are being added to the population of Asian cities and towns i.e. equivalent to 120,000 people a day. If the present trend continue, between now and 2050 the population of Asia is projected to increase by 24% (UN DESA, 2013), and Asia would become 80% urban (World Urbanization Prospect, 2014). The significant population growth in Asian cities are placing large stress on transport and mobility in urban areas. Vehicle fleets across Asian cities are doubling every 5 to 7 years (ADB, 2012); and energy demand is increasing by 2.7% annually (Energy Outlook for Asia and the Pacific, 2013). Because of the rapid motorization, most of the Asian cities face massive transport related socio-economic and environmental problems including traffic congestion, air pollution, and traffic accidents, among others.

Furthermore, Asia and the Pacific is one of the most prone regions to natural disasters and climate change impact. According to recent report published by UN, in Asia and the Pacific region 5,139 natural disasters occurred between 1970 and 2014 period, which is around 43% of the total disasters experienced globally. The majority of developing countries and cities have not made disaster and climate resilience a major part of their policy and transport infrastructure and services, many of Asian developing countries and cities are highly vulnerable to natural disasters and climate impacts. In addition, most of the Asian developing countries and cities lack state-of- the art early warning systems, strong enforcement of building codes, land-use planning, people-and environment-friendly transport system and climate and disaster resilient transport infrastructure and services. Consequently, Asian countries and cities bear unprecedented damage to both human life and economy during natural disasters and extreme events. In the last 45 years about 2 million people died and 6 billion people were affected by natural disasters in Asia and the Pacific. Within the same period of time, the region suffered US$1.15 trillion in economic damage, which is 40.7% of global total (UN ESCAP, 2015).

At the same time, our climate is changing, and global warming is happening. Climate change has been identified as the critical challenge of this century. According to Global Commission on the Economy and Climate (GCEC), if the current emission trends continue as usual, the resultant increase in average global temperature could exceed 4°C by the end of century (New Climate Economy Report, 2014). This is well above the maximum increase of two degrees Celsius coming out the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Over the past several decades, Asia and the Pacific region has experienced an increase in annual mean temperature as well as variability of rainfall pattern and extreme weather events. All of these have had an adverse impact on Asian countries and cities. For instance; in year of 2011 alone Asia lost about US$ 300 billion due to disaster events, according to Climate Change in Asia (2013). In the year of 2013, according to the UN, climate induced disasters caused 18,744 fatalities in Asia and the Pacific (UN 2015). According to a recent study published by ADB and UK Aid, South Asia could lose about 1.8% of its annual GDP due to climate change impact by 2050, and progressively up to 8.8% by 2100 under the business-as usual scenario.

Asia countries and cities need urgent attention to cope up with the treat of climate change and associated extreme weather events and natural disasters. They need to build their cities and towns in a manner that is more safe, resilient, liveable and sustainable. This requires Asian countries to strengthen their policy, planning, and development to better cope with disaster risks and extreme climate events. They will need to increase investments in disaster and climate resilient infrastructures and services.

It is important to understand that climate change is not a single external event to which countries/cities can make isolated interventions to adapt. It is rather an evolving process of change of which rapid motorization/urbanization is an integral part. Resilience-based actions are needed to ensure that cities can perform well and efficiently now as well as in the future.

Sustainable Transportation is the lifeline of any city and country; it plays an important role not only in production and distribution of goods and services but it also has significant impact on social, economic, and environmental aspects. An inclusive, safe, efficient and people and-environment-friendly transport system supports economic growth, human productivity and national development by allowing human interaction, exchange of knowledge, innovations, technologies, and product and services. All of these contribute to making our cities safe, smart, resilience, liveable and sustainable.

1.1. Are Asian Countries and Cities on the Path of Resiliency?

Disaster resiliency is defined as the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions (UNISDR, 2009). IPCC 5th Assessment Report (2014) recognize two overarching attributes towards the climate resilient pathways – (a) actions in order to reduce climate change and its impacts, including both mitigation and adaptation, and (b) actions to assure that effective risk management institutions, strategies, and choices can be identified, implemented, and sustained as an integrated part of development processes.

Given recent trends in GHG emissions and projections of climate vis-à-vis increasing frequency and magnitude of natural disasters across the world, transformative policies, institutions, programmes in transport sector are necessary to put the countries and cities in the path of resiliency. Rising traffic accidents and air quality deterioration significantly reduce the social, health and economic resilience of people, community, cities and countries. Asian countries and cities should consider integrated transport policy options and measures in achieving better synergy in their efforts towards climate mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction, road safety and improved air quality. Learning lessons from the recent disasters (2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, 2011 Great Flooding in Thailand, 2015 Nepal Earthquake, etc.), Asian countries and cities should consider building critical transport facilities and infrastructures in high risk or disaster prone areas to ensure efficient mobilization of humanitarian assistance and services (safe evacuation/ relocation/ relief supplies, etc.).

Further, in many of the Asian developing countries, urban growth is unplanned, unstructured, and poorly managed. Such unmanaged expansion of urban growth leads toward inefficient and sprawled patterns of urban development. This is largely unsustainable, and imposes a range of significant economic, social and environmental costs.

The cost of environment degradation, largely driven by sprawling cities is enormous and reportedly reduces India's GDP by 5.7% amounting US$ 80 billion annually (Tewari et al., 2014). A study conducted in 50 cities worldwide estimates that about 60% of growth in energy consumption is directly related to urban sprawl (Bourdic et al., 2012).

Beijing's annual economic loss for traffic congestion amounts to an estimated US$ 11 billion, according to a survey conducted by Peking University's National Development Research Institute.

The total social cost of motorized transport including air pollution and traffic congestion costs Beijing up to 15% of its GDP (Creutzig and He, 2009). Traffic congestion in Metro Manila costs the Philippine economy US$ 3.27 billion a year in lost productivity due to wasted hours and higher freight costs (DOTC-Philippine, 2013). It is estimated that road congestion cost Asian countries 2-5% of their GDP annually.

In South-East Asia and Western Pacific, air pollution contributed to estimated 2.6 million premature deaths in 2012 (WHO, 2013). According to joint study conducted by the Transport Corporation of India and the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, India faces an annual loss of US$ 9.7 billion due to congestion, slow speed of freight and waiting times at toll plazas. The OECD estimates that the social cost of outside air pollution in China and India combined is 1.9 trillion annually, including the value of health impact and lives lost.

Almost 90% of the traffic death occurs in low and middle-income countries with claim less than half of the world's registered vehicle fleet (WHO, 2013, IMHE/WB, 2014). Road accidents cost Asian countries 1-4% of their GDP (Global Status Report on Road Safety, 2013). Studies show that Asian countries especially emerging economies like People's Republic of China, India, Indonesia, and Russian Federation have the highest number of traffic fatalities. In 2010, around 674,992 people were killed on the roads of these four countries (282,576 people in China, 273,835 in India, 65,335 in Indonesia, and 33,379 in Russian Federation) which is 54.43% of the global total (WHO, 2013; IMHE/World Bank, 2014). With only 1% of the world's motor vehicles, India accounts for 15% of all traffic fatalities, according to World Bank. According to Government of India, improving safety standards on India's highways could boost economic output by 4%. On average around 80 people died each day on Thailand's roads in 2014. The estimated economic lost due to road accidents could cost to Thailand more than 4% of its GDP. A regional study conducted by UNCRD and Safer-Vehicle and Traffic Safety Centre, Sweden shows that the traffic injuries alone cost estimated to US$735 billion to EST member countries which is equivalent to 3-4% of their GDP (Wismans et al., 2014).

According to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, approximately 33% of the edible parts of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally, which is about 1.3 billion tons per year (FAO, 2015). Studies show that poor rural transport infrastructure and services, distribution networks and lack of cooling facilities result in post-harvest waste losses of 30-40% in developing countries. Significant food loss and waste also occurs in the food supply chain from agricultural production down to household consumption. In Asia and the Pacific region, between 15-50% of fruits and 12-30% of grains are lost between the producers and the market (Global Food Losses and Waste, 2011). According to the report Global Food, Waste Not, Want Not, 40% of fresh food produce in India is lost annually from field to market. India is also losing up to 50% of fruits and vegetables in the supply chain before reaching the consumer due to lack of efficient transport system and storage facilities. The total value of lost perishable food costs the Indian economy around US$4.5 billion a year (A Tank of Cold: Cleantech Leapfrog to a more food secure world, 2014). This problem is also common to most of the other Asian developing countries.

1.2. Needs to Build Resilient, Liveable and Sustainable Cities in Asia

Cities are the engine of economic growth, accounting for about 80% of global economic output (Seto and Dhakal, 2014). Some 150 of the major cities in the world produce 41% of global GDP with only 14% of the global population (Floater et al., 2014). In recent decades, Asian cities have taken a leading role in the promotion of innovative approaches to economic growth, improving living standards and poverty eradication. However, the major challenge is to maintain these achievements, protecting cities from the threat of environment degradation, natural disasters, climate

change and global warming. It is therefore essential for Asian countries to build their cities and towns in a more resilient, liveable and sustainable manner.

Resilient cities are those cities which support the sustainable development idea with greater resilience in its institutions, infrastructure, social, economic and environmental assets. Resilient cities have the capacity to reduce vulnerability to disaster risk and extreme climate events, and respond fast, efficient and in creative ways to disasters, and have the ability to adopt well to changing circumstances in order to increase long-term sustainability. Resilient cities can attract more investment opportunities and provide predictable benefit to investor under a wide range of circumstances that increase the reliability of investment returns and asset values.

In recent years Asian developing countries and cities have experienced unprecedented damages to both human life and economy as the result of major disasters. In year of 2011 alone Asia lost about US$ 300 billion due to natural disasters (Climate Change in Asia, 2013), most of it by developing countries. The April 2015 devastating earthquake with a magnitude of 7.9 that hit Nepal recently killed more than 8,659 people, injured 21,952, completely destroyed 5,00717 houses across the country (MOHA-Nepal, 2015). According to the preliminary estimations, the damage caused by Nepal earthquake is more than US$ 7 billion, equivalent to about 35% of the country's GDP (Nepal Government, 2015). The recovery and reconstruction costs could exceed US$10 billion, half of national GDP (MoF-Nepal, U.S. Geological Survey). According to the Asian Development Bank, Nepal will needed to spend four times more annually than it currently does on infrastructure through 2020 to attract investment.

It is essential therefore, for developing countries to adopt and ensure resilience in their policies, programmes and development to recover rapidly from these disaster events and climate impacts with minimal loss of life, minimal damage to buildings and infrastructure lifelines, and minimal business disruption.

Benefits of Resilient Transport Infrastructures and Services

Resilient transport policy, planning, infrastructure development can help countries in many ways, such as:

- enhancing cities' ability for efficient and fast evacuation and relief distribution;
- improve the ability of cities and communities to withstand disaster and climate change impacts;
- facilitate cities' development pathway for energy efficiency and energy security through low-carbon transport options;
- will induce necessary road safety measures and previsions of people-friendly transport infrastructures;
- disaster risk reduction and enhance adaptability;
- long term cost benefits for the governments by reducing future maintenance and reconstruction cost; and
- attracts international investment and business opportunities.

The Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Initiative can play a key role in facilitating a shift towards developing and designing resilient cities, especially their transport systems. An efficient and smart transportation system can ensure faster rescue and evacuation, efficient recovery efforts and relief operations. Environmentally sustainable transport systems help to scale up the

capacity of countries and cities for emergency response and manage urban mobility more efficiently and effectively during and after the disaster. If countries would decide to build resilient transport infrastructure and services, they can significantly reduce economic losses in the long run and at the same time, their cities and communities would be better equipped to cope up with disaster events and climate impacts.

In the Third Finance for Development Conference held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 13 to 16 July 2015 member countries agreed that *"current policy, finance and investment pattern are not delivering the future we want"* therefore it is important for "*strengthening official finance, unlocking the transformative potential of people and the private sector while ensuring the investment pattern support sustainable development, and by strengthening national and international policy environments."* Recognizing the importance of the resilient cities and transport infrastructure the conference further called for – *a new initiative to ensure sufficient investment in sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including transport, communication, water and sanitation and energy, in all countries.*" and urged the international community "*to increase its support to projects that foster regional integration, regional and multilateral development banks, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to address gaps in trade and transport related regional infrastructure".*

In September of this year, the United Nations hosted a 70th Session of UN General Assembly to adopt an ambitious and transformative post-2015 development agenda, including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Open Working Group (OWG) has proposed 17 SDGs and 169 targets for consideration of the General Assembly. Sustainable transport features prominently in several of the proposed goals and targets. The proposed Goal 11 is related to ***Sustainable Cities and Human Settlement***- *Make Cities and Human Settlements Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable*. Under this Goal, the target 11. 2 recognizes the importance of the transportation and state that *"By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons."* Likewise other goals and targets call for action on Road Safety, Infrastructure development, or energy efficiency.

The international community is expected to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on reduction greenhouse gas emissions to limit the global temperature increase to 2°C above pre-industrial levels in United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP21 in Paris. Several of the countries that have submitted their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) have included actions on transport and climate change as part of their proposed actions on climate change. The resulting agreement in Paris is expected to include a substantive section on adaptation on climate change.

Taking into account these three processes, it is therefore an opportune time for Asian countries and cities to start planning and take action to make resilient cities by adopting EST policies, planning and investment which significantly helps to make our cities and communities more liveable and sustainable.

The Nepal EST Forum provides an important opportunity to generate Asia-wide regional consensus on how Asia's transportation sector and system should be reformed to consider more low-carbon transport solutions which can help meet 2 degree scenario vis-à-vis the need for resilient

transport policy, planning and development as the international community and the Conference of the Parties move towards COP21 to be held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015.

The Nepal EST Forum, under the theme of *"EST for Resiliency – Building Safe, Smart, Low Carbon and Resilient Cities in Asia*", will call for innovative ideas and smart solutions (policy, planning, institutions, infrastructure, financing and collaboration/partnership) for building inclusive, safe, smart, low-carbon, resilient, liveable and sustainable cities and communities in Asia and the Pacific. It will also provide unique opportunity to discuss various resilience tools, standard, models, and technologies to realize the resilient cities and communities in Asia and the Pacific.

2. ASIAN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INITIATIVE, REGIONAL EST FORUM IN ASIA

As a key component of the Asian EST Initiative, a regular Regional EST Forum in Asia has been organized since 2005 as a high-level intergovernmental policy forum, providing a strategic knowledge platform to address policy and institutional challenges concerning multi-sectoral socio-economic and environmental issues related to transport, inviting 24 member countries as well as international organizations, development banks, donors, NGOs, and other key stakeholders. It has successfully brought together the environment, transport, and health ministries to promote an integrated approach to deal with the region's transport and related sustainable development issues.

The Regional EST Forum comprises of: (a) high-level government representatives (mainly from the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Urban Development, and Ministry of Health); and (b) a subsidiary expert group of expert members in twelve thematic EST areas as described in Aichi Statement (2005). Currently, the participating countries include the member nations of ASEAN, North East Asian countries, South Asian countries and Russian Federation.

There have been eight high–level Intergovernmental Regional EST Forum from 2005 to 2014 organized, and the participating countries adopted the Aichi Statement (2005), Kyoto Declaration (2007), Seoul Statement (2009), Bangkok 2020 Declaration (2010), Bali Declaration (2013) and Colombo Declaration (2014).

Past Regional EST Forums in Asia

3. REGIONAL EST FORUM IN ASIA & ITS IMPLICATIONS IN OTHER REGIONS

Encouraged by the Regional EST Forum in Asia, Latin American countries launched the first Foro de Transporte Sostenible para América Latina (FTS, Sustainable Transport Forum for Latin America). The Forum was co-organized by UNCRD, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and Ministry of Transport of Columbia in Bogotá, Colombia on 23-24 June 2011. As a key outcome of the inaugural Forum, Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela) endorsed the *Bogotá Declaration*, which include 23-Goals for comprehensive environmentally sustainable transport in Latin America for the time frame up to 2020.

With the successful replication of Asian EST Forum in Latin America, the Africa Sustainable Transport Forum was launched with joint effort of the World Bank, UNEP, UN HABITAT, and others, and First Ministerial and Experts Conference on Sustainable Transport in Africa was held in October 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya.

4. THE NINTH REGIONAL EST FORUM IN ASIA

The integrated event of Ninth Regional EST Forum in Asia, which in addition to the 9th Regional EST Forum will also include the Regional Seminar on Safe, Climate Adaptive and Disaster Resilient Transport for Sustainable Development and the Regional Dialogue on Transport and Climate Change will be held on 17-20 November in Kathmandu, Nepal. The outcome of the Regional Seminar and the Regional Dialogue will provide meaningful technical input to policy consultations at the Regional EST Forum.

4.1 Ninth Regional EST Forum

The Ninth Regional EST Forum, under the theme ***"EST for Resiliency – Building Safe, Smart, Low Carbon and Resilient Cities in Asia***", provide a strategic platform to discuss policy, institutional, technological and financial opportunities in transport sector to realize the resilient cities and communities in Asia and the Pacific. The outcome of the Kathmandu EST Forum will aim to address the role of EST in the context of natural disaster, food security, climate change, livability and sustainability, among others. The Forum will also provide ample opportunity to discuss and share the progress and achievements made by the countries towards achieving the EST goals under the Bangkok 2020 Declaration. The outcome of the Ninth Regional EST Forum will provide substantial input to the policy consultations at the Regional EST Forum.

The objectives of the Ninth Regional EST Forum in Asia are to –

- Identify and discuss how to build inclusive, safe, smart, low-carbon and climate and disaster resilience cities and communities in Asia;
- Discuss and address various policy options, institutional measures, technological interventions, financing mechanisms, partnership arrangement to realize safe, smart, low-carbon and resilient transport infrastructure and services;
- Address potential contribution of EST toward resiliency, energy efficiency, the low-carbon transport, and health and climate benefits;
- Discuss and understand about the adaptation, resilience and mitigation approach from the view point of natural disasters and climate change impacts;
- Discuss the potential role of intra/inter connectivity for resiliency and food security;
- Address railway as a low-carbon sustainable transport solution in post-2015 era;
- Review countries' initiatives, progress, achievements, and best practices in addressing the Bangkok 2020 Declaration (2010-2020);
- Discuss how the Asian EST Initiative can contribute in post 2015-development era and the COP21 process; and
- Bring together governments, experts, donors, international organizations, the private sector, academia, NGOs and other stakeholders to share their expertise, experiences and best practices in various thematic areas of EST as underlined in Aichi Statement (2005) and Bangkok 2020 Declaration.

4.2 REGIONAL SEMINAR ON SAFE, CLIMATE ADAPTIVE & DISASTER RESILIENT TRANSPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

While the Asia-Pacific region is continuously growing, the rapid motorization in the region has generated adverse transport related socio-economic and environmental problems including traffic accidents, air pollution, and congestion. Road traffic accidents in the region accounted for over 777,000 of fatalities, an invaluable loss to the society as well as the economy. The sector is also one of the largest non-renewable energy consumers and GHG emitter. Recent disasters have caused tremendous damage to transport infrastructure and operations. The recent 2015 Nepal earthquake damaged many roads and transport system, Thailand floods in 2012 submerged many roads while the 2011 Japan earthquake damaged roads, railways and airports. Transport system in coastal areas is highly vulnerable to rises in sea levels due to climate change. Thus the region also faces huge challenge in enhancing resiliency of transport systems to the impacts of climate change and disasters as these would have substantial impacts on their design, construction and operation. In this regard, a safe, climate adaptive and resilient transport system can play a crucial role in reversing these adverse trends and enable faster rescue and evacuation, facilitate relief operations and recovery, restoration and building back better.

This seminar will serve as a platform to create awareness and enhance knowledge in the development of safe, climate adaptive and resilient transport system. The seminar will include the discussion on recent initiatives and mandate as well as the sharing of experiences among member countries in improving road, rail and maritime safety. The seminar will also discuss concept and best practices in how transport sector can be made climate adaptive and disaster resilient so that it can play a crucial role in all three phases of disaster management; pre-disaster phase (through planning and designing), during the disaster phase (rescue and evacuation) and post-disaster phase (recovery efforts and relief operations). The seminar will also provide an opportunity for member countries to discuss issues and challenges as well as the way forward to make transportation system safe, sustainable, inclusive, climate adaptive and resilient.

The regional seminar is part of ESCAP's ongoing efforts in providing capacity building to member countries to develop sustainable and inclusive transportation system and contribute towards sustainable development of the region.

4.3 REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON TRANSPORT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The transport sector is a significant and growing contributor to national greenhouse gas emissions, representing a global average share of 23% of emissions. Under a Business as Usual Scenario the share of transport CO2 emissions is expected to increase. At the same time, there is a growing body of evidence of the significant mitigation potential in the transport sector.

The transport sector is one of the key economic sectors that will be impacted by climate change and based on this is an important sector in terms of adaptation policy.

To promote the integration of transport in global discussions on Transport and Climate Change the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) and Michelin Challenge Bibendum (MCB) have established the Paris Process on Mobility and Climate (PPMC) as an open and inclusive platform. The PPMC gathers action on transport and climate change by the public and private sector as well as civil society and the development community, without giving preference to any of these four sectors. The PPMC facilitates the development of partnerships working on transport

and climate change with the aim to strengthen the collective voice of the sustainable transport community vis-à-vis the UNFCCC and COP21.

The PPMC works closely with the Lima Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) that was established by the Peruvian and French COP Presidencies, the Office of the UN-Secretary General and the UNFCCC to promote an active follow-up to the Climate Summit of Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. The actions on transport presented at the Climate summit in particular can result in scaling up public transport and make it the number one choice for travel; greater use of more efficient rail and public transport; accelerated introduction of urban electric transport; more fuel efficient passenger vehicles; and action plans on green freight. Collectively they can reduce the carbon footprint of at least half of all the passenger and freight trips made by 2025. These actions, together with possible new and additional commitments being developed on cycling, zero emission vehicles, water borne transport, urban mobility planning and greener roads will be key in implementing ambitious action on climate change. Evidence shows that actions such as these can result in savings of $70 trillion by 2050 as less money would be need be invested in vehicles, fuel and transport infrastructure reflecting the strong economic case for climate action.

Regional dialogues on sustainable transport are essential, given the observation from previous COP and climate change related meetings that transport stakeholders often are not in the position to participate in COP meetings, yet, the outcome of COP meetings and other climate change related forums is increasingly of relevance for transport stakeholders. Therefore, the objective of the Regional Dialogue on Transport and Climate Change is to provide transport and environment officials in the Asia-Pacific region an opportunity to discuss key topic areas as related to sustainable transport and climate change. This includes preparing national reports and inventories, raising pre-2020 ambition (e.g. via NAMAs and the LPAA Transport Action Area), and defining transport related post-2020 targets (i.e. via INDCs). Such a regional dialogue would also be an opportunity to determine how SLoCaT Partnership members can assist countries in the Asia Pacific region with the implementation of activities on transport and climate change in the context of both pre-2020 ambition and INDCs.

The Regional Dialogue on Transport and Climate is part of a series of national, regional and thematic Dialogues that will be conducted in the context of the PPMC in different parts of the world.

The Regional Dialogue will be organized by the SLoCaT Partnership, in the context of the Regional EST Initiative and will be supported amongst others by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

5. CO-ORGANIZERS AND SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

The high-level Intergovernmental Ninth Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia will be co-organized by the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MOPIT) of the Government of Nepal, Ministry of the Environment of the Government of Japan (MOE-Japan), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), and the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD).

The conference is supported by various international organizations and donor agencies such as Adenauer Foundation, EMBARQ (The World Resources Institute's Center for Sustainable Transport), German International Cooperation (GIZ), International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), International Recovery Platform (IRP), Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT), SAFER-Vehicle and Traffic Safety Centre, The Youth Community of Nepalese Contractors (YCNC), University of Gothenburg, and World Health Organization (WHO).

6. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Members and Associate member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and related experts will be invited to the ESCAP Regional Seminar on Safe, Climate Adaptive and Disaster Resilient Transport for Sustainable Development. The geographic coverage of the EST Forum encompasses 24 countries in Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Indonesia, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam) and Russian Federation. Other countries will participate as observers.

7. PARTICIPANTS

Participation in the Ninth Regional EST Forum in Asia is by invitation only. It is expected that approximately 500 senior government representatives, international experts and resource persons as listed below will be attending the conference.

- High-level government representatives and policy makers from the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Urban Development, and the Ministry of Health;
- Local participants including government officials from central, regional and local governments;
- Distinguished transport, environment and climate change experts and international resource persons;
- Representatives of relevant UN and international organizations, including international financial institutions, development banks and donor agencies; and
- Selected representatives of the private sector.

Participation in the UN Forum is free of charge. A limited number of travel supports will be available on a priority basis for nominated government representatives from the developing countries and invited experts/international resource persons. Unless otherwise stated in the official invitation, the participants are requested to kindly cover their own travel and accommodation costs through their organizations or external sponsorships.

8. SECRETARIATS

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