

SIXTH REGIONAL EST FORUM IN ASIA

Theme: "Sustainable Mobility"

New Delhi, India, 4 (Sat)-6 (Tue) December 2011

Concept Note

The poster is enclosed in a black border. At the top left is the State Emblem of India. To its right are the logos for UNCRD and the World Health Organization Regional Office for South-East Asia. Below the emblem, the text reads 'Urban Mobility India 2011'. To the right of this, it says 'Sixth Regional EST Forum in Asia'. A dark blue horizontal band contains the text 'Conference cum Exhibition on Sustainable Mobility' in white. Below this band, the text 'Organized by' is centered. Underneath, there are three columns of text listing the organizing institutions: 'Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India' and 'Institute of Urban Transport (IUT)' on the left; 'United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)' in the center; and 'World Health Organization (WHO)' and 'Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan' on the right. A rounded rectangular box contains the text 'VENUE: The Manekshaw Centre, Dhaula Kuan, New Delhi 110 070, India'. At the bottom, it states '3rd to 6th December 2011, New Delhi'.

1. Background - Towards Sustainable Mobility in Asia

While transport development along with rapid industrialization and urbanization has been considered essential for meeting Asia's socioeconomic needs for development, the lack of an integrated approach to deal with multisectoral transport issues, insufficient investment in public transport and non-motorized transport (NMT) facilities, and lack of transport demand management have given rise to a number of problems in the urban transport sector: uncontrolled motorization of private vehicles, worsening air and noise pollution, aggravating traffic congestion, increasing traffic deaths and injuries, and rising levels of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, just to name a few.

These current unsustainable transport practices in Asia contribute to worsening public health, reducing space for people, accelerating climate change, decreasing economic productivity, undermining social inequity, reducing green space, loosening community ties, and destroying natural habitats. Especially, considering the fact that the majority of people in Asian developing countries still largely depend on walking, bicycling, and public transport for their everyday travel, private-car-oriented transport development significantly decreases mobility for those who do not

have access to motor transport, are not qualified to drive a car, cannot afford motor transport, and do not want to drive motor vehicles.

Asian Transport Fact Sheet

- Motorization is growing rapidly, doubling every 5-7 years, especially in emerging economies.
- Forty-four million people are being added to Asia's urban population every year, placing considerable strain on urban mobility.
- Traffic congestion results in costs of 2% - 5% of Asian GDP.
- Annual road traffic deaths and injuries increase up to 0.32 million and 1.4 million people, respectively
- Road crashes cost 2% - 5% of Asian GDP.
- Energy use in the transport sector accounts for about 30% of total world energy.
- Transport accounts for approximately 25% of total CO₂ emissions.
- Transport significantly contributes towards air pollution, causing respiratory illnesses and premature deaths

(Source: adopted from ADB and WHO)

In this context, without urgently addressing the issues and implementing an integrated strategy towards promoting sustainable mobility in the urban transport sector, the above problems would greatly undermine human and environment security in Asia as well as exacerbate global climate change.

2. Regional EST Forum in Asia and the Bangkok 2020 Declaration

With this background and recognition of the important role of transport to sustainable development, the **Asian Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Initiative** was jointly launched by the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) and the Ministry of the Environment of the Government of Japan (MOEJ) in 2004. As a main activity of the initiative, the **Regional EST Forum in Asia** has been organized since 2005 in order to foster a common understanding across Asia on the essential elements of EST as well as the need for an integrated approach to deal with a range of social, economic, and environmental issues in the transport sector. The Forum provides a strategic and knowledge platform not only for sharing experiences and disseminating among Asian countries best practices, policy instruments, and technologies in the transport sector, but also for strengthening interministerial coordination at the national level as well as facilitating partnerships and collaboration between governments and international organizations such as development banks, and bilateral and multilateral donors.

At the Fifth Regional EST Forum in Asia held in August 2010 in Bangkok, twenty-two participating countries from Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia as well as a number of regional and international transport stakeholders unanimously agreed on the **Bangkok 2020 Declaration** in order to demonstrate renewed commitment to realizing a promising decade of actions and measures for achieving sustainable transport in Asia. It was the first time that Asian governments and other transport stakeholders endorsed a joint declaration which incorporates a comprehensive set of goals (20 EST goals) under different strategies within a clear time frame (2010-2020). Along with the official Meeting Summary of the Fifth Forum, the declaration has been submitted as a regional input to the nineteenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-19) held in May 2011. Reflecting a regional consensus, the **Bangkok 2020 Declaration** is also expected to serve as a recommended benchmark among Asian countries

for the decisions in overall transport policy, planning, and development. As a follow-up meeting to the Fifth Forum, the Sixth Regional EST Forum in Asia will provide an opportunity to not only discuss and share the progress made by countries towards achieving the goals under the *Bangkok 2020 Declaration*, but also to further discuss the effective implementation of the Declaration.

* *Bangkok 2020 Declaration* covers a comprehensive range of areas such as land-use and transport planning, mixed-use development, information and communications strategies, non-motorized transport, public transport, transport demand management, inter-city transport, fuels and technologies, standards, inspection and maintenance, intelligent transport system, freight, safety, health, air quality and noise, climate change, energy security, social equity, financing, awareness, and institutions and governance.

Learning from the regional cooperation and progress made in Asia through the Regional EST Forum, the Latin American region also initiated the Sustainable Transport Forum for Latin America (Foro de Transporte Sostenible para América Latina) and the first Forum was held in Bogotá, Columbia, on 23-24 June 2011. At this significant first forum, co-organized by the Ministry of Transport of Columbia, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and UNCRD, over one hundred participants, including senior government representatives, experts, and civil society participants from ten Latin American countries, agreed on the *Bogotá Declaration*, which outlines common goals on environmentally sustainable transport in Latin America up to 2020.

3. Urban Mobility India 2011

The Sixth EST Forum will be held in conjunction with the **Urban Mobility India (UMI) 2011 Conference and Exhibition** (3-6 December). The UMI-2011 is an annual flagship event of the Ministry of Urban Development of the Government of India (MOUD-India), attended by more than a thousand participants (mainly state and municipal policy makers and city planners). These two events are being organized as an integrated **“Conference cum Exhibition on Sustainable Mobility”**. As the second largest population and one of the emerging economies in the world, India faces a huge challenge in terms of urban mobility. It experiences the world’s fastest urbanizing rate and a rapid growth of personalized vehicles. In 2005, MOUD-India launched two significant and transformative initiatives to move India’s development trajectory onto a more sustainable path: (1) the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM) which has seen catalytic investment of over US\$10 billion in the urban sector, including transport across sixty-three mission cities; and (2) the National Urban Transport Policy which provides strategic guidance for an increasing number of regional and local initiatives to improve urban mobility across India’s states and cities. The integrated Conference (Sixth Regional EST Forum and UMI-2011) held under the common theme of Sustainable Mobility will provide an important venue for discussing sustainable transport policy options, measures, and technologies, and sharing experiences and best practices among Asian countries.

4. Sustainable Mobility for a Green Economy and Road Safety

The Sixth Regional EST Forum in Asia also aims to contribute to global processes towards achieving sustainable development. After nearly two decades of concerted global efforts to achieve sustainable development from the historic 1992 Rio Conference, some progress has been made on the economic front and in eradicating poverty in some regions. However, the dividends from the

progress have been unequally shared between and within countries and many developing countries are not on track to achieving the key Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and most of the environmental indicators have continued to deteriorate.

As a result, one of the two main themes decided on for the forthcoming UNCSO 2012 (Rio+20) is a 'green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication'. So far there is no globally agreed definition of a green economy. However, it is generally accepted that it needs to be understood in the context of sustainable development and consistent with the Rio principles. Most importantly, it should not be a straitjacket, but be broad and flexible enough to be relevant and adaptable to the needs of countries at different levels of development, with differing national capacities and priorities.

Given the critical role and impact of transport in pursuing sustainable development, there is a growing consensus on the need for sustainable mobility in the transport sector towards achieving a green economy. According to the latest report on green economy (UNEP, 2011), green transport is a transport system which supports environmental (e.g., protection of natural resources, ecosystems, and global climate) as well as economic (e.g., affordable, fair, and efficient) and social (e.g., access to job, education, and basic social services) sustainability.

Actions towards achieving a green economy are required in all the regions of the world. However, opportunities are greatest in the Asian region considering its current patterns of rapid industrialization and urbanization, especially in emerging economies where the future sustainability of the transport system will be greatly influenced by the policy, planning, and investment made today. Promoting green transport will enable these countries to leapfrog towards a sustainable path, rather than repeating the same mistakes made by early industrialized countries. It will be necessary to significantly reduce mobility needs through better land-use planning and transport demand management, together with various avoid-shift-improve strategies as outlined in the *Bangkok 2020 Declaration*. Some countries in the world already have shown that the decoupling of economic growth from private car-oriented motorization is possible, which is greatly due to the promotion of public transport, non-motorized transport, and transport demand management. In this context, the Sixth EST Forum will provide a strategic platform to address EST vis-à-vis the Bangkok 2020 Declaration in the context of moving towards a green economy.

The United Nations also launched the Decade of Action for Road Safety in May 2011 in order to prevent rapidly increasing road deaths and injuries in the world. As underlined in the *Bangkok 2020 Declaration*, about half of all global traffic deaths and injuries occur in the Asian-Pacific region and the majority of victims are vulnerable road users and transport-sensitive groups, including pedestrians, cyclists, riders of two and three wheelers, children, and the elderly. In close collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Sixth EST Forum aims to build a consensus among Asian countries in developing and implementing the necessary programmes and actions to support the global initiative.

5. Objectives

- Address sound policy options, better institutional measures, and financing mechanisms for the promotion of EST in Asia, with specific emphasis on road safety, public health, social equity, rail, green freight, sustainable management of two and three wheelers, intelligent transport systems, and non-motorized transport in realizing sustainable mobility;
- Review countries initiatives, achievements, and best practices in addressing the Bangkok 2020 Declaration;
- Address and identify the challenges and opportunities for transport NAMAs for climate mitigation and co-benefits;
- Contribute towards enhanced regional input to Rio+20 by addressing EST vis-à-vis the Bangkok 2020 Declaration in the context of moving towards a green economy; and
- Provide a platform for interagency coordination, both at the national and international levels, towards facilitating partnerships and collaboration among governments, international organizations, NGOs, and donor agencies in effectively implementing the Bangkok 2020 Declaration.

6. Co-Organizers and Supporting Organizations

The Sixth Regional EST Forum in Asia will be co-organized by the Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD) of the Government of India, World Health Organization South-East Asia Regional Office (WHO/SEARO), Ministry of the Environment (MOE) of the Government of Japan, and United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD).

The Forum is also supported by various international partner organizations and donor agencies, including Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), German International Cooperation (GIZ), Clean Air Initiative for Asian Cities (CAI-Asia) Center, Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Resource Institute's Center for Sustainable Transport (EMBARQ), Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Office (WHO/WPRO), International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT), The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), South Asia Environment Cooperative Programme (SACEP), Health Effects Institute (HEI), Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Alliance for Healthy Cities (AFHC), International Union of Railways (UIC), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Dutch Cycling Embassy.

7. Geographic Coverage

The geographic coverage of the meeting encompasses twenty-three countries in Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

8. Participants

Participation in the Sixth Regional EST Forum in Asia is by invitation only. It is expected that, together with the participants of UMI-2011, approximately more than a thousand people as listed below will be attending.

- High-level government representatives and policymakers;
- Selected municipal government representatives;
- Distinguished transport, environment, and climate change experts and international resource persons;
- Representatives of relevant UN and international organizations, including international financial institutions and donor agencies;
- Selected representatives of the private sector; and
- Urban Mobility India 2011 participants.