

Manila Statement

~ Towards the realization of environmentally sustainable transport in Asia ~

The participants, having met in Manila, the Philippines from 16-17 January 2004, for the Manila Policy Dialogue on Environment and Transport in the Asian Region, to gain insight into the regional situation on transport and environment, to discuss specific priority topics with regard to environmentally sustainable transport, and to adopt a statement on environmentally sustainable transport in the Asian region,

Recalling the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002, and in particular, the commitments reflected in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI),

Building upon the Nagoya Statement agreed at the International Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Transport in the Asian Region, held in Nagoya, Japan, in March 2003,

Noting that there have been efforts by the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), as well as other international organizations such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN/ESCAP), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in carrying out initiatives toward the promotion of environmental sustainability in the transport sector,

Considering that rapid economic growth and urbanization in Asia has brought about significant transport related socio-economic and environmental issues such as air pollution and health related problems,

Respecting the natural, social, cultural diversity, and economic differences among Asian countries, and the need to establish environmental goals and timetables that are appropriate to local circumstances, and to identify ways of meeting these goals while ensuring social and economic development,

Acknowledging that the Asian countries should work together towards a roadmap for concrete actions to realize environmentally sustainable transport in Asia,

Recognizing the need for strategic planning on environmentally sustainable transport with both long-term vision and short to long-term actions at the regional, national, and local levels,

1. unanimously agree to the need for establishing a regional forum and subsidiary expert groups, where appropriate, to facilitate further exchange of opinions, ideas, and information among participating countries on environment and transport related issues in the Asian region;
2. also agree that such a regional forum should facilitate annual high-level policy dialogues, including sharing of experiences and views on regional, national, and local strategies, and detailed discussions on specific issues of common concerns through expert group meetings;
3. appreciate the on-going activities in relation to some elements of environmentally sustainable transport, such as Clean Air Initiative for Asian Cities (CAI Asia), Policy Initiative in Transport (POINT), Air Pollution in the Megacities of Asia (APMA), Kitakyushu Initiative, the Sustainable Mobility Project of World Business Council of Sustainable Development (WBCSD), ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities, and various projects carried out by bilateral and multilateral agencies;
4. particularly welcome the initiatives of UNCRD in extending assistance to the countries of the region, especially the developing countries, in preparing national strategies and action plans to promote environmentally sustainable transport, and to facilitate annual high-level meetings and expert group meetings;
5. request UNCRD to cooperate with other relevant organizations and initiatives, in identifying and exploring sources of possible assistance to realize national strategies and action plans, and in establishing the regional forum and its subsidiary expert groups to promote environmentally sustainable transport;
6. also request UNCRD, in cooperation with other relevant organizations and initiatives, to follow-up overall progress on transport and environment related issues in Asia, including formulation as well as implementation of the national strategies and action plans on environmentally sustainable transport, and to report on achievements and progress at the first regional forum. The First Regional Forum is expected to be held in the year 2005 in Nagoya, Japan.