



iGST
Independent Global Stocktake

OPEN LETTER

Leaders in Southeast Asia Call for Bold Climate Action at COP28

The Global Stocktake emphasizes that the role of non-Party stakeholders is crucial to the success of systems transformations that accelerate climate resilience and low-emissions development. The political outcomes at COP28 must promote a whole-of-society approach and incorporate voices and knowledge from Southeast Asia's non-Party stakeholders.

Dear Global Leaders,

The appetite for bold climate action has never been greater. We know that the drive and desire exist, and we are calling on you to use the findings of the Global Stocktake to drive action that has a real, transformative impact. In order to execute this pivotal moment, inclusive regionally-considered solutions must be the centerpiece of the political outcomes of the Global Stocktake, at COP28 and beyond.

In September, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) published the Technical Synthesis Report for the world's first Global Stocktake. The landmark review identifies the prevailing climate action implementation gap and will form the basis of conversations at COP28 in Dubai where leaders will reflect on progress and establish updated climate commitments. However, the report and independent assessments from non-Party stakeholders (NPS) also state that the world is not on track to reach the Paris Agreement goal and so substantial work lies ahead. Where the Global Stocktake provides a roadmap for a decisive shift in the current incomplete approach to addressing climate change, COP28 is the primary platform to execute this pivot.

We are calling on world leaders to continuously incorporate the unique risks and opportunities in Southeast Asia in this decision-making process and to elevate the voices of those most vulnerable to devastating climate impacts. An adequate response to climate change must not be a one-size-fits-all solution, particularly for regions like Southeast Asia with diverse cultures, governments, and political structures. A whole-of-society approach that incorporates the voices of non-Party Stakeholders, including women, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, will ensure local needs and opportunities are integrated into the development of climate strategies.

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Top regional considerations include:

- **Adaptation:** **Over three-quarters** of the region's total population lives in coastal areas. Disaster risk reduction for tropical storms and other disasters in the region is a key priority for the region and must lead the adaptation tactics including National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).
- **Finance:** There is an urgent need for cooperation towards a fit-for-climate global financial architecture to ensure scaling up enhanced direct access to and volume of financing for vulnerable countries and communities. Transparent deployment and monitoring strategies must be delivered in tandem with financial allocations for a funding strategy that encourages local impact.
- **Mitigation:** Southeast Asia is home to some of the world's most important carbon sinks, including **nearly one-third** of all mangroves, which safeguard biodiversity and protect communities from the threat of rising sea levels, and **140 million people** in the region depend on forests for their livelihoods. Local experts understand how to best protect and promote these coastal ecosystems and this knowledge must guide relevant climate change mitigation strategies.
- **Equity:** Energy demand in Southeast Asia is set to rapidly increase over the coming decades, projected to grow **by 70% by 2040**. A just transition must ensure this growing demand is met equitably by reskilling workers and offering alternative livelihood, including but not limited to insurance to individuals working in carbon-intensive industries.
- **Implementation:** Government goals and actions must be presented in a manner that is accessible and culturally-appropriate and responsive to local communities. Non-party stakeholders can play a principal role in enabling the delivery of tailored, concrete policies and actions that sit within national contexts.¹

Climate change poses a unique threat to our region because of compounding ecological, social, and development-related factors. Our societies, geographies, cultures, and skills offer hope that a proper understanding of the Global Stocktake in the context of Southeast Asia can result in climate solutions that put people and the earth first, and benefit our economy as well.

Therefore, we call on leaders to produce a Global Stocktake decision text that considers the unique opportunities and vulnerabilities related to the region's coastal communities, incorporates monitoring and communication channels for the appropriate allocation of finance, uplifts local expertise of ecosystems, equitably meets energy demands through the just transition, and engages non-Party stakeholders to deliver tailored climate solutions as part of the NDC update process.

We implore the world's leaders to interpret the implications of the Global Stocktake that are specific to our region and to utilize these advantages, including:

- **Adaptation:** Due to the region's biodiversity, Southeast Asia is uniquely positioned to harness ecosystem-based adaptation to build resilience against climate change. Climate actions that prioritize adaptation and build resilience are likely to do more to reduce the extent of climate change and cope with its impacts at the global level.
- **Finance:** Climate finance is the first step in delivering the suite of climate solutions the region is

¹ Policy Recommendations for Engaging Regional Non-State Actors in the Follow-up Period Of the First Global Stocktake: Insights from the Independent Global Stocktake Southeast Asia Hub.' <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/Documents/202309151406---IGST-PolicyRecommendations-V2.pdf>





working to deploy and can jumpstart novel solutions that address intersecting climate, social, and economic needs.

- **Mitigation:** Community-based experiences from Indigenous Peoples and local communities can inform the just deployment of mitigation strategies, including scaling nature-based solutions and moving away from carbon-intensive industrial production.
- **Equity:** Political outcomes must sit within the context that looks at both regional equity and local context- whereby there is equal access to resources, decision-making processes, benefits, and opportunities across populations - and establish lasting systems that improve intersecting climate, social, economic, and political needs in the region.
- **Implementation:** Non-party stakeholders can act as intermediaries in communicating local needs and in designing and implementing the recommendations of the Global Stocktake to deliver actionable, equitable, and proportionate solutions.

Our call to action

An optimal political outcome of the Global Stocktake at COP28 would provide an opportunity for Southeast Asia to protect and promote its unique biodiversity, deliver intersectional climate solutions, amplify marginalized voices and local knowledge to deliver adequate and equitable climate solutions, operationalize systems that promote regional equity, and understand and address the range of local needs.

The Global Stocktake Technical Synthesis report identified the knowledge and action gaps that need to be addressed to adequately and equitably act on climate. To avoid the irreversible consequences of climate change, and with Southeast Asian countries experiencing its impacts firsthand, it's never been more urgent to incorporate regional and local considerations into climate plans and deliver political outcomes at COP28 that protect the people of Southeast Asia, and beyond.

Signatories

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Quotes from regional stakeholders

“There is a need to understand that even within countries, there are different realities of different non-Party stakeholders—Indigenous Peoples, women, local communities, farmers, the youth—and this should be recognized in the global stocktake. No one-size-fits-all will ever address the diverse needs and priorities of countries and people.”

Helen Magata, Coordinator, Climate and Biodiversity Program, Tebtebba Foundation

“The Global Stocktake technical synthesis report and independent assessments underscore that the world is not on track to reach the Paris Agreement goal and so substantial work lies ahead. It clearly underscored the role of the non-Party stakeholders in implementing regional climate action. A whole-of-society approach must be taken that incorporates local strategic considerations and guidance to deliver proportionate and lasting climate solutions for the region.”

Danica Marie Supnet, Director for Climate Policy, Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities

“Advocating for the role of NSAs in the GST process serves two primary objectives. Firstly, it seeks to raise awareness among government actors about the vital role of NSAs in the GST. Secondly, it is to enhance understanding among NSAs of the GST and encourage their participation in the process. We found that the critical objective of the Hub’s initiatives is to convey the significance of NSA involvement in the GST and to encourage the further participation of NSAs in this process.”

Chisa Umemiya, (Research Manager), **Kei Kurushima** (Policy Researcher), **Nagisa Shiiba** (Policy Researcher), and **Akibi Tsukui** (Fellow), Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

“On mitigation, the GST technical synthesis report shows that global emissions are not in line with the model and more mitigation is needed. A systemic approach through just transition should also be required. These findings show that NSAs should be more involved and have more participation through different approaches. NSAs can work at the national level to advocate mitigation to all stakeholders, provide independent evidence-based climate accountability, and work at the regional level to strengthen mitigation actions through regional projects and international networks.”

Wira A. Swadana, Green Economy Program Manager, Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR).