



**Sixth Regional Workshop on
Integrated Resource Management in Asian Cities: the Urban Nexus
Santa Rosa, Philippines, 22-23 June 2016**

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

Managing rapidly growing cities and their urban regions is one of the most critical challenges facing Asia and the Pacific, and this is especially so with regards to the relationship of urban development and natural resources. Of all natural resources, energy, water and food are the most essential to sustain development efforts – but they are also the most vulnerable to future demand. The 2012 report of the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability, for example, has forewarned that by 2030 the world will need at least 50 per cent more food, 45 per cent more energy and 30 per cent more water. Much of this demand is being driven by cities, and their urbanizing regions. The Asia-Pacific region faces specific problems resulting from its energy and resource-intensive growth patterns.

In Asia-Pacific, it is evident that managing the resource footprint of cities calls for institutional coordination and other forms of collaboration - which has rarely been evident in policy or practice. The majority of cities/municipal administrations in Asia-Pacific continue to plan and manage along sectorial lines and within municipal boundaries, and rarely in a coordinated and integrative manner. Consequently, they are not able to fully utilize the interaction and synergies between water, energy and food security and the potential co-benefits arising from integrated resource management.

The “nexus” approach aims at integrated planning and management processes of the key sectors of energy, water and food, and this can contribute substantially to the long-term sustainable development of rapidly growing cities in their regions. It is crucial, in this context, to involve municipal, subnational, national and supra-regional actors and utilities towards more integrated planning and management of the nexus sectors.

Against this background, the project on “Integrated Resource Management in Asian Cities: the Urban Nexus” is assisting selected cities and countries in Asia to adopt a nexus approach, developing nexus projects and integrating the nexus approach into urban planning. The project is implemented by GIZ in partnership with ESCAP and ICLEI and with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

In the First Phase of the project (2013-2015), the establishment of nexus task forces has enabled the inter-sectorial cooperation of municipal administrations in the partner cities. Peer-to-peer learning has strengthened the regional exchange between the participating cities regarding inter-sectorial learning, exchange of respective best practices, and South-South cooperation. At the same time, transparent and effective action of the public sector and the participation of the civil society in nexus pilot projects have been promoted and practiced. The dissemination of the nexus approach at regional and international level through the lead executing agency UNESCAP and the implementation partner ICLEI Southeast Asia Secretariat (ICLEI SEAS) has substantially contributed to a better understanding of its concept, application and benefits.

In support of the First Phase, five regional workshops have been organized under the project in June and December 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand; in June 2014 in Da Nang, Viet Nam, in November 2014 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, and June 2015 in Chiangmai, Thailand. The regional workshops have provided a platform for exchange of experiences among participating cities and for multi-stakeholder dialogue between cities, regional/provincial and national governments, meso level organizations, academia and research institutions, the private sector, networks of cities and international financing organizations.

The BMZ has noted the valuable contribution of the Nexus approach to sustainable development and has commissioned the Second Phase of the “Integrated Resource Management in Asian Cities: the Urban Nexus” project for a further three years period (2016-2018). The overall objective of Second Phase is “Nexus concepts are being increasingly taken into account in selected Asian cities and by relevant stakeholders.”

One of key objectives of the Second Phase will be dissemination of the Nexus approach at the global and national level, whereby UNESCAP, ICLEI, and GIZ continue the efforts to embed the nexus approach into the national policies of the partner countries. The integration of the Nexus approach in national policies will also help with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat III).

Objectives

Building on the success in the First Phase, the Sixth Regional Workshop will be organized from 22 to 23 June 2016 in Santa Rosa, Philippines with the following objectives:

- Kickstart the Second Phase of the “Integrated Resource Management in Asian Cities: the Urban Nexus” Project;
- Review and discuss experiences and lessons learnt from the First Phase by the partner cities, and clarify objectives of the Second Phase;
- Recommend measures to integrate the urban nexus initiative in national policies to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat III).
- Discuss the governance dimensions of the urban nexus, both within and across municipal boundaries – focusing on adopting clustering at cities (inter communal cooperation) as a framework to promote collaboration and joint infrastructure development among neighboring municipalities.
- Develop policy recommendations for the removal of barriers to the adoption of nexus approaches at the local level and for the institutionalization of the nexus approach into urban planning and management.



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 UNITED NATIONS
ESCAP
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ICLEI
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

Audience and Participants

An estimated 150 international and local participants will be attending the workshop, including:

1. Local government officials from the partner cities of the Urban Nexus project.
2. National and sub-national government officials from the countries of the partner cities from relevant departments and line ministries.
3. Representatives of city networks, international organizations, international financing institutions, academia and research organizations, private sector enterprises and other relevant stakeholders with an interest in integrated resource management.

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