



I. Thank You for Attending the 13th Asia Smart City Conference!

The City of Yokohama hosted the 13th ASCC on October 23-24, 2024, at PACIFICO Yokohama. The event brought together more than 2,200 participants in total from 46 overseas countries, focusing on the topic of “Decarbonization”. ASCC is an international conference held annually with the cooperation of international organizations such as the World Bank (WB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and CITYNET, that brings together representatives from Asian cities, national governments, international organizations, academic institutions, and private companies aiming to discuss the realization of sustainable cities where economic growth and a favorable urban environment are compatible. This year’s ASCC included 18 sessions and upwards of 50 booths showcasing decarbonization solutions for businesses involved in green tech, cutting-edge techniques, urban issues, and innovation. Among others, an SDGs Cluster seminar was held under the theme of “Synergies between SDGs and Climate Action,” with a particular focus on the use of CITYNET’s network. A summary and video footage of the two-day event, including the CITYNET session, will be available to view on the City of Yokohama website at a later date. If you were unable to attend or missed the session, please take a look!

II. CITYNET SDGs Cluster Seminar 2024

On the last day of the ASCC, the CITYNET SDGs Cluster Seminar was conducted with the goal of strengthening city-to-city networks through presentations and knowledge sharing from CITYNET members and international organizations. The seminar focused on the synergies between SDGs localization and climate action, aiming to promote further efforts in these areas across the Asia-Pacific region by leveraging the CITYNET network. We were pleased to welcome approximately 120 participants from more than 25 cities and organizations to the seminar, including representatives from CITYNET members and international organizations such as ESCAP and IGES (Institute for Global Environmental Strategies). The recording of the seminar will be available at a later date.



Seminar Highlights

Initially, **Mr. Hirotaka Sato, Deputy Mayor of the City of Yokohama** delivered the opening remarks for the seminar, followed by a video message from **Dr. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Mayor of Kuala Lumpur City Hall**. Consequently, **Mr. Omar Siddique**, the lead of City Climate Action and SDGs Localization, Sustainable Urban Development Section of **ESCAP**, made a keynote speech regarding synergies and co-benefits for SDG localization and subnational climate action. In his informative speech, he insisted on the importance of strengthening the synergies between SDG localization and climate action at the local level to improve the effectiveness of addressing climate change while simultaneously advancing sustainable development goals. These synergies create opportunities for local climate action to contribute to multiple SDG targets.



*Opening remarks by
Hirotaka Sato, Deputy Mayor of
Yokohama*



*Video message by
Maimunah Sharif, Mayor of Kuala
Lumpur*



*Keynote Speech by
Omar Siddique, ESCAP*

Following the keynote speech, the SDGs Cluster Leads —**Mr. Tadahiro Saegusa from the City of Yokohama**, **Ms. Arang Ma from Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG)**, and **Mr. Mohd Azlan Shah bin Abdullah from Kuala Lumpur City Hall**—shared presentations on initiatives of the SDGs and climate action in their respective cities. **Mr. Saegusa from the City of Yokohama** highlighted their initiative of Yokohama SDGs Design Center, which has jointly been established and operated by the City of Yokohama and the private sector and is an intermediary support organization for solving environmental, economic, and social issues in Yokohama by connecting the needs and seeds of diverse entities in and outside the city toward the achievement of the SDGs. **Arang from SMG** pointed out the top three challenges of their city, which are 1) low birthrate and an aging society, 2) digital and green transition, and 3) climate crisis action, and introduced their initiatives to overcome each challenge such as “Mom and Dad Happiness Project,” “Smart Safety City Seoul,” and “Waterside Attractive City.” **Azlan from Kuala Lumpur** brought attention to their initiatives and roadmaps on SDGs in their city. He introduced the city master plan called the Kuala Lumpur Climate Action Plan 2050, which includes 15 actions categorized in five strategies: mobility and infrastructure, green adaptation, energy efficiency, smart waste management, and disaster management.

Additionally, the SDG Cluster Co-Leads, **AIILSG** (All India Institute of Local Self Government) and **HELP-O** (Human & Environment Links Progressive Organization), provided video presentations showcasing their SDG and climate change efforts. In the video of AIILSG, the speaker, **Ms. Neha** explained their recent SDG initiatives in collaboration with CITYNET such as disaster prevention program with CITYNET-Plus Arts Center for Creative Partnerships. She also showcased the examples of AIILSG's contribution to Urban SDG Knowledge Platform. **Ms. Nadeeka Amarasinghe from HELP-O** spotlighted their three recent key focus areas: 1) Empowering citizens' participation in local governance in Sri Lanka, 2) Making Galle City Plastic Free City, and 3) Implementing Clean Cities Blue Oceans & Green City Program.



*Presentation by Tadahiro Saegusa,
Director General of International
Affairs Bureau, Yokohama*



*Presentation by Arang Ma,
Manager of Evaluation, Planning
and Coordination Department, SMG*



*Speaking by Mohd Azlan Shah bin
Abdullah, Deputy Director of Urban
Transport Department, Kuala Lumpur*

After the presentation session, a discussion session was led by the moderator, **Mr. Junichi Fujino** from **IGES**, and six panelists representing CITYNET Secretariat, ESCAP, SMG, Kuala Lumpur, Yokohama, and Baguio City. Mr. Fujino initiated the discussion by asking the panelists questions regarding the synergies between SDGs localization and climate action, as well as further promotion of these efforts in the Asia-Pacific region. Panelists engaged in fruitful discussions on the insights drawn from their local contexts. The discussion emphasized the crucial role of strong local government leadership in advancing the synergies between the SDGs and climate action. Equally important is the engagement of relevant stakeholders including private sectors, youth groups, and other local governments. Mutual learning and knowledge sharing, which is one of CITYNET's Urban SDGs Knowledge Platform initiatives, was also highlighted as essential for effective collaboration. This collaborative discussion resulted in positive outcomes for advancing SDGs and climate change synergies through the CITYNET network.

The SDG Cluster Seminar concluded successfully with closing remarks from **Ms. Rumi Kurita, Head of the CITYNET Yokohama Office (CYO)**, followed by a group photo session to commemorate the event.



Panel Discussion among the Moderator and Panelists



*Closing Remarks by Ms. Rumi Kurita,
Head of CYO*

The presentation materials at the seminar are available to download from the following link until the end of December 2024.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/108qXcPKNIif_hal7yLFTVbMjArnwzJmP

III. Networking among CITYNET Members

On October 22, the day before the ASCC, a face-to-face networking event took place at the communal meeting room of the Yokohama International Organization Center. Facilitated by **Mr. Chris DiGennaro from CITYNET Secretariat**, this exclusive gathering for CITYNET members provided a relaxed atmosphere with light refreshments. The event started with the opening remarks and a warm welcome to the members by **Mr. Norio Tomioka from the City of Yokohama**. Then, **Chris** facilitated a fun icebreaking session featuring an SDGs quiz. The quiz was conducted in quick-fire style with participants divided into four teams, encouraging cooperation among teammates and competition between the teams, which made for a lively and exciting event. After the icebreaking, **Ms. Akiko Yamakoshi from CITYNET Yokohama Office (CYO)** presented the results of SDGs questionnaire survey 2024, highlighting comparisons with the previous year's findings. Following this, **Mr. Ermin Lucino from Santa Rosa City**, and **Ms. Donna R. Tabangin from Baguio City** introduced their cities' Voluntary Local Review (VLR) activities, SDGs and climate change initiatives. The event brought together a total of 25 CITYNET members, fostering engaging conversations and facilitating the exchange of contact information among participants. Attendees showed active participation and a keen interest in the initiatives of VLR from Baguio and Santa Rosa. This networking event concluded with closing remarks of **Ms. Mary Jane Ortega, Special Advisor of CITYNET**, who highlighted the potential of the CITYNET network and encouraged members to fully leverage it for future initiatives.



Facilitation by *Chris DiGennaro, CITYNET Secretariat*



Presentation by *Akiko Yamakoshi, CYO*



Icebreaking SDGs Quiz Competition



Presentation of Baguio's VLR initiatives by Donna R. Tabangin



Presentation of Santa Rosa's VLR initiatives by Ermin Lucino

The presentation materials at the seminar are available to download from the following link until the end of December 2024.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1027a49EUwd5fMd73sVQysDrOEEor9yrm?usp=drive_link

In addition to the CITYNET networking event, the ASCC networking lunches on October 23 and 24 were also valuable opportunities for CITYNET members. In particular, at the networking lunch on the 24th, **Ms. Mary Jane Ortega** gave an encouraging speech to all participants, sharing CITYNET's history of playing an important role in connecting key persons who are active in international cooperation.



Group Photo



Speech by Mary Jane Ortega, Special Advisor of CityNet

IV. SDGs Youth Action Project in Metaverse World!

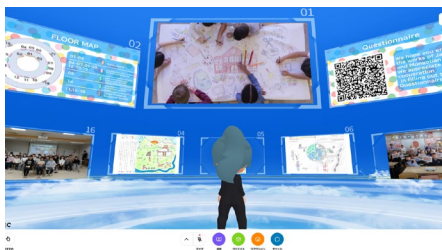
At the ASCC event, the activities of CITYNET youth were also showcased in a Virtual Reality (VR) exhibition room, featuring SDG-related projects by students from Japan and Mongolia. This year, the ASCC participants entered the VR room via devices such as VR headset or smartphone via a designated URL. In this VR room, the participants were able to look around 9 picture diaries related to SDGs and a video message from Ulaanbaatar 23rd school, and a video of a school song, “Colorful Future,” from Minatomirai Honcho Elementary school, highlighting their achievements on SDGs. These works impressed guests by showing how the students considered and tackled SDGs-related challenges.

The VR room is accessible from the link below until the end of December 2024. Please take a look from your PC or smartphone if you are interested!

<https://door.ntt/zMmBBk8/asc%E4%BC%9A%E8%AD%B0%E6%B5%B7%E5%A4%96%E7%89%88>



Since 2022, CITYNET Yokohama project office has been supporting exchange activity between Minatomirai Honcho elementary school in Japan and Ulaanbaatar 23rd School in Mongolia to foster the next generation of children. The program aims to encourage students to view the SDGs as part of their daily lives and to take the initiative in practicing sustainable behaviors. In 2023, online exchange meetings were held three times, and students deepened their insight into the environmental issues in each other's area. In particular, at last year's 12th ASCC, students from Yokohama City presented “Colorful Future,” which they created themselves with the desire to achieve the SDGs. Besides, students from Ulaanbaatar 23rd School participated in the Yokohama SDGs Future City and Environmental Picture Diary Exhibition and the students in Ulaanbaatar delivered video messages expressing their thoughts about the works and environmental issues. The VR room this year displayed their works including the song and video messages.



VR exhibition room



*Art Works of students in
Ulaanbaatar City*



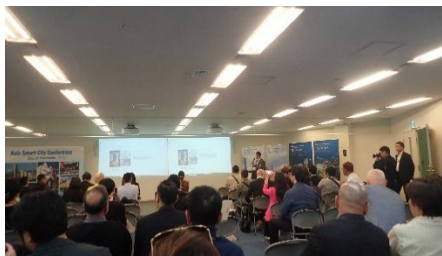
*Art Works of students in Yokohama
City*

Students from both schools are planning to continue SDGs exchange activities, just as they did last year. What makes this year particularly remarkable is the introduction of Virtual Reality technology to promote more efficient and advanced communication. We are looking forward to seeing how they will discuss and what output will appear.

The CITYNET Yokohama Project Office E-News will continuously follow their activities and share the latest updates. We also aim to further expand the school's international network and coordinate with new schools from CityNet member cities for the exchange programs early next year. Please look forward to it.

V. Site Visit Program

As a pre-conference event on October 22, site visit tours were held, featuring five selective groups with 73 participants from the invited cities and organizations. Each tour provides a glimpse into the City of Yokohama and its decarbonization efforts. Tour-A visited the **Yokohama City Hall** to explore green energy initiatives, while Tour-B focused on advanced technology of water circulation at **Sludge Treatment Plant**. As well as that, Tour-C examined a CCU pilot project through regional collaboration at **Tsurumi-Ward Waste Incineration Plant**, Tour-D highlighted a decarbonization model through PPP (public-private-partnership) scheme at leading decarbonization area **MM21 District**, and Tour-E studied the private sector contribution to carbon neutral society at **MM21 District** respectively.



Orientation before tours



*Tour-C exploring Tsurumi-Ward
Waste Incineration Plant*



*Tour-D exploring Minato Mirai 21
District*

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CITYNET Yokohama Project Office
supports the SDGs.