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LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

NEWSLETTER



United Cities and Local Governments
Asia-Pacific

SELF SUFFICIENT CITY

Foreword



As President of UCLG ASPAC, I am proud of our journey. UCLG ASPAC will continue to lead regional efforts on climate action, equitable growth, and good governance. We will strengthen partnerships – between cities, with national governments, and with global institutions – to unlock resources and innovations for our communities. We will also elevate the voice of local governments on the world stage even further, ensuring that international policies recognise and support the vital work happening at the local level.

GOV. DAX CUA

President, UCLG ASPAC

(President, Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines;
Chairman, League of Provinces of the Philippines;
and Governor, Province of Quirino, Republic of the Philippines)



Our actions to support local governments are reflected in this issue. As we celebrate the role of local governments in our 10th UCLG ASPAC Congress, this Newsletter stands as a living document capturing the commitment of cities and local governments pursuing sustainable development. Through this issue, we encourage cities to become self-sufficient. This is truly another big agenda to pursue, yet not impossible to conclude. Building on unwavering commitment as solid foundation, I invite you all to elevate the game by making the most of the Congress. Bring home the insights and be ready to pave your way towards the vision you foresee.

Dr. Bernadia Irawati Tjandradewi

Secretary General, UCLG ASPAC

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Visiting Goyang, the Sustainability Capital of Korea

Welcome to Goyang City!

We invite you to explore some of the most favourite spots during your visit to Goyang, the Asia's top eco-friendly city (ranked 14th) in the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-I) produced by the International Congress and Convention Association



Ilsan Lake Park

Ilsan Lake Park is one of the largest man-made parks in Asia, offering a tranquil escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. This large, peaceful lake at the center makes it a rare green-blue space in the city. The Ilsan Lake Park was opened on May 4, 1996.



Korean International Exhibition Centre (KINTEX)

It is the largest exhibition centre in South Korea. Even if there's no specific event you're targeting, the centre itself is an architectural marvel. The surrounding area is dotted with cafes, restaurants, and shops, making it a pleasant place to spend an afternoon.



Large, peaceful lake at the centre makes it a rare green-blue space in the city. It opened on May 4, 1996.



Goyang Flower Exhibition Centre

The city also regularly holds Goyang Flower Exhibition, the biggest national event. It was firstly held in 1997 and takes place every three years. It has involved contributions from more than 40 countries, local companies of professional floriculture, farmers, and other relevant organisations.

Seooreung Royal Tombs

It is one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites featuring the burial grounds of Joseon Dynasty royalty. Seooreung contains five main royal tombs: Gyeongneung, Changneung, Ingneung, Myeongneung, and Hongneung. Also included are additional tombs of crown princes and concubines.

Hyundai Motorstudio Goyang

It is the largest mobility theme park in South Korea. Key design elements include Landscape, Vertical Green, Shaped Sky — the architecture tries to blend natural, open/light elements with car culture in a modern, innovative way.

sources:

<https://goyangcvb.com/>
<https://www.goyang.go.kr/>
<https://goyangcvb.com/>

<https://english.khs.go.kr/>
<https://www.hyundai.com/>
<https://motorstudio.hyundai.com/>



Sustainable, Self-Sufficient Cities and Regions for the Future (Asia-Pacific Perspective)

A self-sufficient city is defined as an urban settlement that can meet most or all of its essential needs—such as food, energy, water, housing, and waste management—using its own local resources, systems, and infrastructure, while minimising reliance on external inputs. Instead of being in complete isolation, self-sufficient city can support itself in a resource efficient manner.

The 10th UCLG ASPAC Congress highlights focus area for discussion including:

- **Economic Independence**
- **Environmental Resilience**
- **Social Inclusion**

UCLG ASPAC brings up The Essential Five Pillars that cities must strengthen to achieve self-sufficiency and sustainability as reflected in the Congress programme:

Job Creation and Economic Resilience



Fostering economic resilience through entrepreneurship, small business support, and workforce development is essential for self-sufficient urban economies. Diversifying industries and investing in innovation create employment opportunities, ensuring cities remain robust against economic shocks.

Youth Leadership and Inclusion



Engaging youth in urban governance, innovation, and leadership fosters inclusive and dynamic communities. Through initiatives like youth councils and mentorship programmes, cities and local governments can empower young leaders and drive long-term sustainability.

Key characteristics of a self-sufficient city include food security, energy, water, circular economy, green infrastructure, mobility and accessibility, economic resilience and governance and community participation.

Energy Self-Sufficiency in Cities



Cities and local governments can implement solar power, wind energy, and microgrid systems to ensure a stable, clean, and efficient energy supply. Smart energy strategies and solutions are essential for sustainable urban growth.

Family-Friendly Cities for Social Well-Being



Cities that prioritise affordable childcare, gender equality, quality education, accessible healthcare, and safe public spaces foster strong social foundations and inclusive communities.

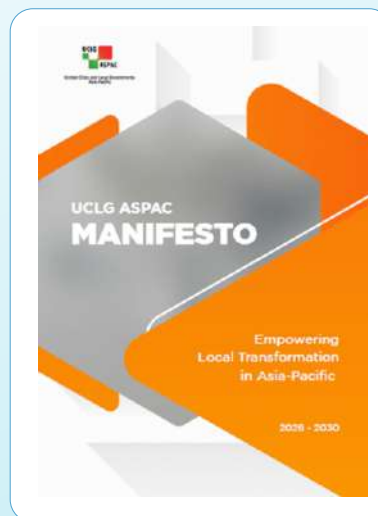
Urban Growth



Well-planned urban areas promote resource efficiency, foster community cohesion, and strengthen long-term resilience in the face of climate, economic, and social challenges.

UCLG ASPAC Manifesto 2026-2030

UCLG ASPAC will officially launch its Manifesto 2026–2030 during its Tenth UCLG ASPAC Congress in Goyang in September this year. Developed through a collaborative and inclusive process, this guiding document reflects the collective aspirations of local and regional governments to advance sustainable, inclusive, resilience urban transformation.



Framed by four guiding principles— Collaboration, Openness, Resilience, and Empowerment (CORE)—the Manifesto defines seven strategic dimensions to drive impactful change:

- ▣ **CORE 1:**
Climate Resilience and Ecological Justice
- ▣ **CORE 2:**
Digital Futures for Inclusive and Smart Governance
- ▣ **CORE 3:**
Equitable Urban Prosperity and Local Economic Development
- ▣ **CORE 4:**
Sustainable Infrastructure and Urban Systems
- ▣ **CORE 5:**
Cultural Vitality, Social Inclusion, and Territorial Identity
- ▣ **CORE 6:**
Localisation of Global Agendas and Sustainable Urban Futures
- ▣ **CORE 7:**
Enabling Ecosystems: Partnerships, Knowledge, and Financing

We invite all members and partners to align efforts with this shared agenda and champion its implementation across the region.



Melbourne: Envisioning The Future of Sustainable Urban Agriculture

The City of Melbourne, Australia's food capital, is weaving its way towards green and food self-sufficient city. Skyfarm and Vertical Farm Project reflect the city's journey.

Skyfarm



sources:
<https://www.governmentnews.com.au/>
<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>
<https://www.switchliving.com.au>

- What it is**
 A project that transforms a car park on top of a city building into a 2000 m² urban farm.
- Location**
 Sits atop a new \$450 million development at Melbourne's Docklands directly overlooking the Yarra River.
- Facilities**
 Completed with a nursery, beehives, eco education centres, a shop, sustainable café and even a live music venue.
- Sustainable elements**
 Passive solar design, renewable energy, zero emissions buildings, carbon neutral transport and rainwater harvesting.
- Funding source**
 \$300,000 from Melbourne's Urban Forest fund
- Results envisioned.**
(projected to be opened to the public in mid-2026)
 - Will produce five tons of produce each year – which will be used to supply the café and donated to charities like Aus Harvest.
 - Estimated that with 800 m² of new green area, the site will evaporate 3200 litres of water per day on average and up to 9600 litres per day in peak summer periods.
 - The farm will also divert waste produced during the coffee roasting process to a composting system which will be used to grow food.
 - High-tech classrooms will be used at the farm to educate students and community groups about sustainability.



Before greening works (December 2019)



After greening works (December 2021)



Before greening works (November 2019)



After greening works (December 2021)

Vertical Farm



sources:
<https://www.businessnewsaustralia.com/>
<https://greenstreetnews.com/>
<https://www.totalconstruction.com.au/>

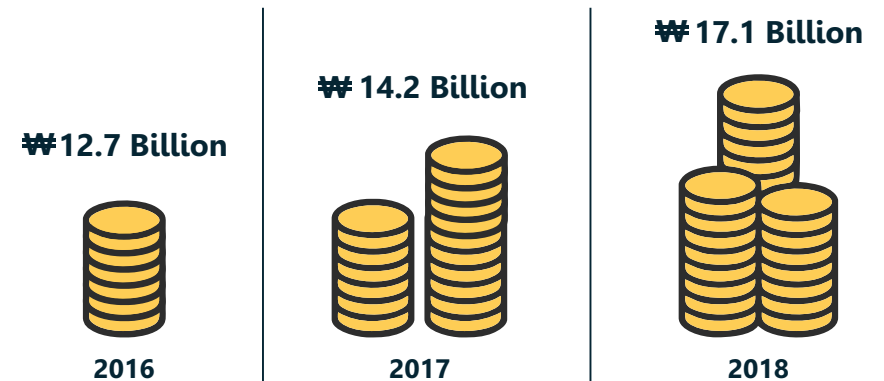
- What it is**
 The largest indoor vertical farm project, 10,000 m², fully automated, climate-controlled facility
- Location**
 Melbourne Airport
- Goal**
 Eliminating the need for costly imports and guaranteeing consistent yields free from weather disruptions
- Funding**
 \$150 million (a mix of debt and equity, with notable investments from Magnetar Capital, a US-based alternative assets manager)
- Results envisioned**
 - Expected to produce 3.4 million kilograms of fresh herbs and leafy greens annually, regardless of weather conditions
 - Specialising in growing cos and mixed leaf lettuces, spinach, rocket, basil, coriander and parsley
 - Quicker than traditional farming methods – crops are ready to harvest in just 16 to 31 days, compared to 45 to 80 days at a traditional farm
- Sustainable elements**
 - Powered entirely by green energy
 - Operate with a zero-waste water system
 - Use cutting-edge robotics to deliver fresh produce 365 days a year
 - 47% more energy-efficient lighting than traditional farms.



Seoul Urban Farming

Seoul has been facing challenges like other big cities. Its rapid urbanisation has caused decline in agricultural land, signalling an alarm for food self-sufficiency, most particularly in the event of disaster and change in international situation. Its rapid urban development has also led to elevated city temperature as well as severe air pollution. On the other side, the city has also been experiencing the aging population and social isolation. Facing these, the City Government of Seoul sees Urban Agriculture as one of solutions that address those challenges. The local government's unwavering commitment has positioned Seoul as one of leading cities in developing initiatives for food self-sufficiency.

Budget Allocation

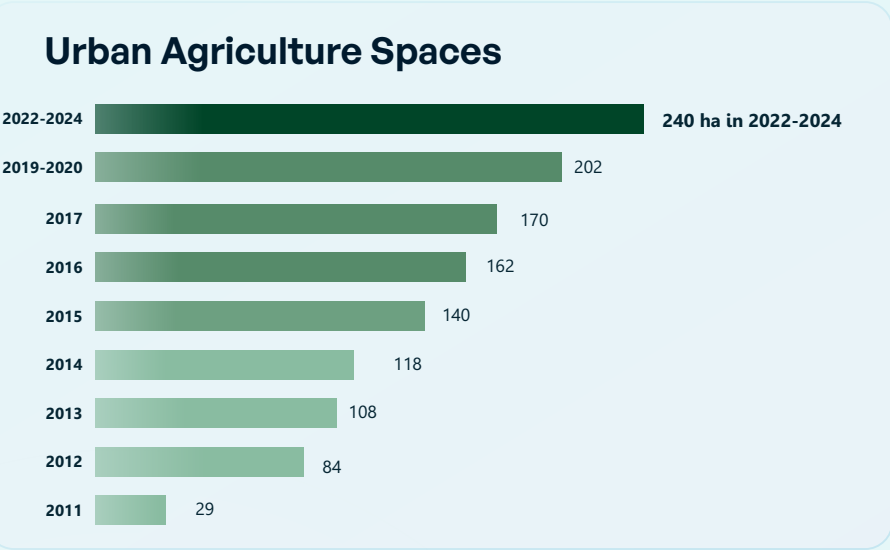
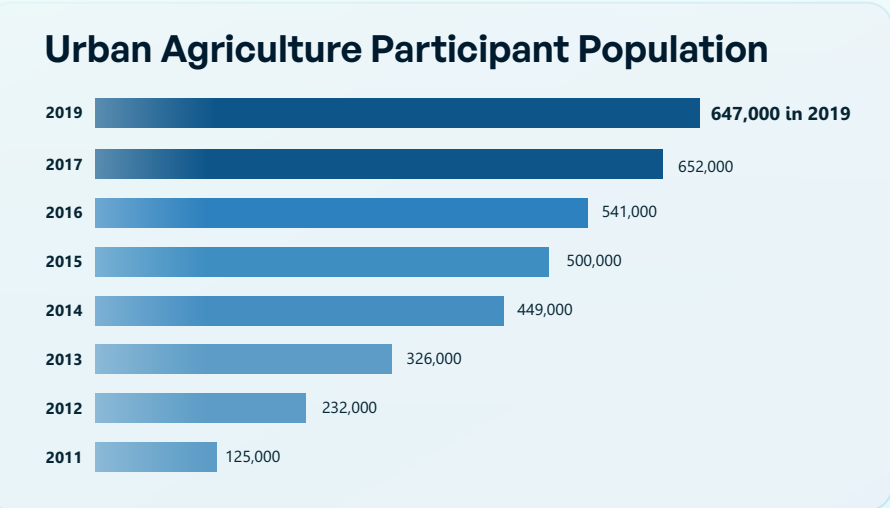


Total: ₩251.4 billion won (US\$216.1 million) until 2024

Keys of Seoul Urban Agriculture Project

- Expand Urban Agriculture Spaces**
 Find sites for urban agriculture and broaden them: gardens established in abandoned places, rooftops, yards
- Restore Community**
 Formation of urban agriculture communities, agricultural activities
- Urban Agriculture Led by Citizens**
 Seoul Metropolitan Government listens to and supports citizens to participate in urban agriculture
- Opportunities to Watch, Sow, and Feel**
 Holding various attractions and experiences: urban agriculture expos and festivals
- Resolve Environmental Issues**
 The urban agriculture can help lowering emissions, greening cities, reducing waste, improving air quality and health, and mitigating heat.

Seoul Metropolitan Government pays attention to urban agriculture as a method to resolve environmental issues.



Metro Farm Sangdo Station



Metro Farm Sangdo Station is an example of subway urban farming project developed by Seoul City and Seoul Metro Corporation. This project promotes urban smart farm that combine IT technology and is implemented in five stations: Sangdo Station, Kamimichi Station, Euljiro 3-ga Station, Cheonwang Station, and Chungjeongno Station.

sources:
<https://cityfarmer.seoul.go.kr/> <https://www.fruitnet.com/> <https://img4.yna.co.kr/>
<https://www.agritecture.com/> <https://roboteer-tokyo.com/> <https://japanese.seoul.go.kr/>

Kampung Admiralty: Nature and Innovation for Biodiverse and Resilient Communities

Location: Singapore | 676 Woodlands Drive

What It Is

Kampung Admiralty (KA) is a government-funded, mixed-use facility built to address two fundamental goals (that also offer solution for the aging community and the needs for growth in limited space):

- Land use intensification through co-location of different public facilities on a single, vertically integrated site
- Creation of a well-designed public space that promotes social interaction between the local community and the project's senior residents, thereby facilitating active and independent lifestyles.

Challenges

- Limited space
- Liveability as it is located next to MRT Station (noise)

Innovations

- Developed as a self-contained vertical village, or "kampung" (i.e. a traditional Malay village) featuring innovative, sustainable design in a stacked collection of typologies:
 - Ground floor: 1,000 m² community plaza to host community events and promote social mixing.
 - Above-ground floors: medical centre, a food court (aka a "hawker centre"), retail, a childcare centre, and an active ageing hub.
- Rooftop: a lush community park and a community farm for use by residents.
- Two eleven-storey blocks: housing for seniors.
- In keeping with the spirit of a co-located facility, the landscaping serves a variety of purposes beyond its obvious decorative intent.
- Although the design of the ground floor plaza is calculated to attract maximum foot traffic, designers have also focused on promoting liveability through minimising noise pollution and crowding.
- KA has been designed using software (i.e. Integrated Urban Environmental Modeling) to develop 3D models that simulate the impact of sun, wind, and humidity on the building structure.
- Development is barrier free, has adopted Universal Design principles.





A thriving ecosystem

Commissioned on a tight 0.9-hectare site with an imposed height limit of 61m Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL), the development helps the exploration of inter-community dynamics and urban density in land scarce Singapore, where the increased stress on the ground level demands creative ways of intensifying land use.

Characterised by its terraced rooftops, Kampung Admiralty comprises a total of 1.2 acres of self-irrigating landscape with a total of 730 trees of 58 different species, over 80,000 shrubs of 66 different species, and an intricate hydrolic network. Utilising the site's terraced orientation, the system collects, cleanses, and stores stormwater to be reused as irrigation, ultimately allowing for more than 1 million gallons of tap water to be conserved each year. Other nature-based water retention features, including an eco-pond and a central raingarden, further support biodiversity.



sources:

<https://cdn-assets-eu.frontify.com>

<https://www.woha.net/>

<https://henninglarsen.com/>

Shreekhandapur in Dhulikhel: Nepal's 1st Wastewater and Faecal Sludge Co-Treatment Plant

Good waste management is part of city's journey toward self-sufficiency. UCLG ASPAC is proud to support Dhulikhel and Waling Municipality in the process. UCLG ASPAC has implemented the Municipalities Network Advocacy on Sanitation in South Asia of MuNASS project in collaboration with Gates Foundation, MuAN and ENPHO.



Challenges

- In 2019, 14.6% of Dhulikhel households used offsite sanitation and rest of the household used onsite sanitation generating 202 m³/year of faecal sludge
- Faecal sludge was improperly dumped due to poor management, lack of policies, and inadequate treatment facilities, exacerbating sanitation challenges.

Interventions

- Dhulikhel Municipality developed innovative sanitation solutions, focusing on resource recovery.
- Dhulikhel Municipality upgraded Shreekhandapur Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) co-treat 50 m³/day wastewater and 3 m³/day faecal sludge, endorsed a Faecal Sludge Management (FSM) policy, and trained sanitation workers, improving public health and environmental conditions.
- The treatment process at the plant involves multiple components, initiating with a Bar Screen to separate inorganic solid particles such as plastics or pads. The components Biogas Digester and Septic Tank are specifically focused on sludge treatment while the liquid treatment is further processed through an anaerobic baffle reactor, horizontal flow constructed wetland and polishing pond. Additionally, the plant is equipped with an automatic sensor and a submersible pump to pump out water to manage the flow of treated wastewater from the final outlet chamber.
- The treatment plant is strategically located on the bank of the Punya Mata River and is connected to the local sewer network, ensuring the efficient transport and treatment of wastewater from the nearby community.

Impacts

- The Shreekhandapur WWTP processes wastewater and faecal sludge, generates biogas, manure, and treats water for irrigation, while promoting sustainable sanitation and healthier environments for Dhulikhel and neighbouring municipalities.

Waling Sanitation Centre: Transforming a Treatment Facility into a Green Park

The plant serves Waling and nearby municipalities, functioning as a treatment facility and a recreational park.



Challenges

- Faecal sludge was emptied and disposed without any treatment causing serious issues.
- Absence of regulations, regulating agencies and lack of treatment plants the problem could lead to an outbreak of an epidemic.
- Sanitation survey findings urged the municipality to improve FSM for better health.

Interventions

- Municipal leadership endorsed Municipal FSM policy, allocated adequate budget with a proper FSM plan and constructed FSTP.
- Municipality envisioned a recreational centre where FSTP could be part of the whole Municipal Sanitation centre.

Impacts

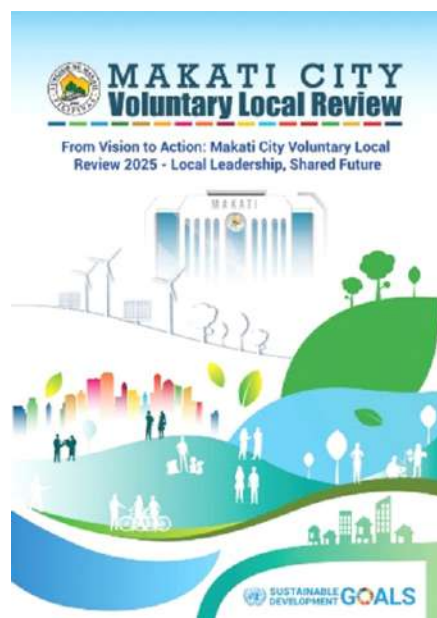
- The centre is now being used as a picnic spot, space for dwelling and a recreational centre by the public.
- Not limited only as a recreational centre, it is now a learning hub for many municipalities of Nepal and the South and Southeast Asia region.
- Ensured safer drinking water and safe sanitation, contributing to SDG 6.



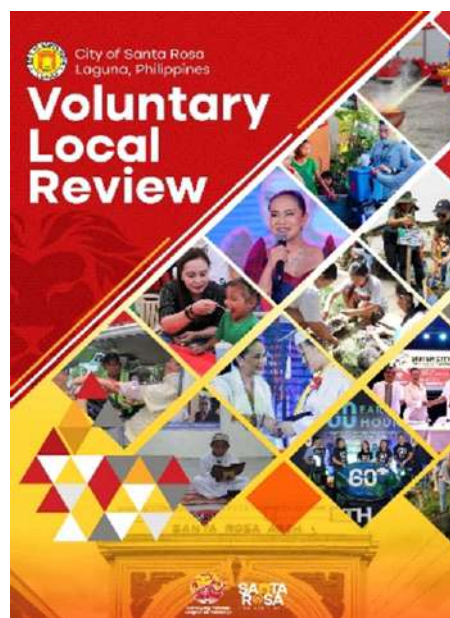
Voluntary Local Review Development Support to Makati, Santa Rosa, and Kutai Kartanegara

UCLG ASPAC is proud to announce the support completion of Voluntary Local Review development of Makati, Santa Rosa, and Kutai Kartanegara. UCLG ASPAC applauds the commitment of city leaders in ensuring their continuous progress through development of Voluntary Local Review.

Makati



Santa Rosa



Kutai Kartanegara



Asia Pacific Mayors Academy Welcomes its Sixth Batch

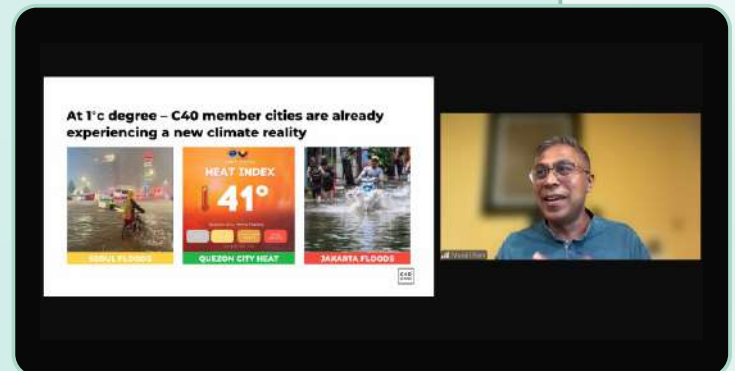
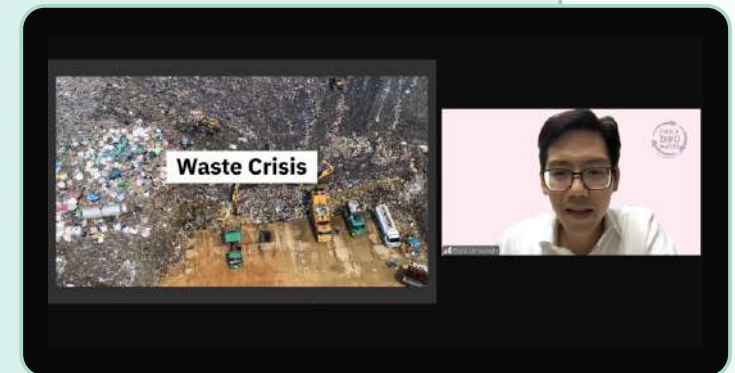
The Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy virtually launched on April 29, 2025. A total of 12 Mayors from six countries in the region were selected as part of the sixth batch: Areiy Ksat and Kampong Chhnang (Cambodia); Banda Aceh (Indonesia); Hulu Selangor (Malaysia); Male (Maldives); Birendranagar, Dhulikhel, Inaruwa, Manarashiswa, Musikot, and Suryodaya (Nepal); and Del Carmen (Philippines).

The Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy provides capacity building for newly elected or appointed mayors in the Asia-Pacific region in support of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Selected mayors undergo intensive online training with experts and complete a concrete initiative that will address a specific challenge in their city.

Within approximately six months, Mayors go through six modules on the following areas: 1) Cities 2030: Leadership in Planning, Managing, and Financing Sustainable Urban Development; 2) Navigating a Multi-Crisis Context: Key approaches for addressing multiple crises; 3) Inclusive Urban and Territorial Planning; 4) Urban Resilience and Climate Action; 5) Inclusive Urban Digital Transformation and Smart Cities; and 6) Urban Finance. The Academy engages local government leaders, experts, and development practitioners, ensuring that the Mayors are provided with unique and context-specific learning opportunities. The Future of Asian and Pacific Cities Report 2023: Crisis Resilient Urban Futures, the flagship report of the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, serves as the main reference material in the Academy.

The Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy was established in 2019 by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and UCLG ASPAC, in cooperation with United Nations University, Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), and Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES). UCLG ASPAC is a permanent member of the Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy Advisory Board.

The graduation of the sixth batch of Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy will be held during the Tenth UCLG ASPAC Congress in Goyang this September 2025.



Online Learning Session: Exploring Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Resilient and Sustainable Cities in Asia-Pacific

UCLG ASPAC organised an **Online Learning Session: Exploring Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) for Resilient and Sustainable Cities and Regions in Asia-Pacific**, on February 19, 2025. It was one of key initiatives of the Organisation to provide a knowledge transfer platform among city and local government leaders and officials, to explore solutions based on nature for resilient and sustainable cities and communities. The on-line event brought together more than 70 participants enthusiastically engaging with experts and policymakers exploring how incorporating natural ecosystems into urban planning might help reduce climate risks, improve water management, and increase biodiversity.



Sustainable Urban Growth Through NbS

Dr. Phanith Chou, Associate Professor at the Royal University of Phnom Penh shared essential principles of NbS, highlighting that sustainable urban expansion should not be based primarily on traditional infrastructure, but rather on hybrid solutions that combine nature, technology, and human development. "The future of our cities depends on how well we integrate green and blue infrastructure into existing urban landscapes. NbS provides a cost-effective way to improve ecosystem services while addressing challenges such as flooding, heatwaves, and pollution," Dr. Chou explained.



Innovative Applications of Nature-Based Solutions

The online learning showcased various innovative applications of Nature-Based Solutions including:

- ▣ **Green roofs:** vegetated roofs that lower temperatures and improve air quality.
- ▣ **Rainwater harvesting:** clever water collection systems that enhance consumption while reducing water scarcity.
- ▣ **Permeable pavements:** coverings which absorb rainfall while preventing surface drainage.
- ▣ **Bioengineered riverbanks:** use natural vegetation to control erosion rather than concrete barriers.

Case Studies: Cambodia, Thailand, and Beyond

The online learning showed a comparison of urban landscapes in Thailand and Cambodia demonstrating the need of implementing NbS. In Poipet, Cambodia, increased development has reduced green space to less than 5%, raising temperatures and aggravating flooding. Collaborative initiatives with the Mekong River Commission (MRC) seek to restore 103 hectares of forest, rehabilitate river systems, and replace concrete flood barriers with bioengineered alternatives. A rural water management project in Ang Trapeang Thmor showed how wetland restoration and enhanced water catchment tactics increased stored water capacity from two million to three million cubic meters, assuring year-round supply during droughts. Meanwhile, a pilot project in Battambang aimed to turn congested urban streets into nature-based corridors by adding rain gardens and stormwater management technologies to reduce excessive heat and flooding.

Economic Justification for NbS

Speakers highlighted the **economic advantages of NbS**:

- Bioengineered riverbanks cost \$6/m² against \$33/m² for concrete constructions.
- Flood mitigation activities in Cambodia could result in \$4.4 million in damage prevention savings.
- A nature-based school redesign with solar energy and green roofs had a benefit-cost ratio (BCR) of 1.6, indicating long-term financial feasibility.

Challenges and Future Directions

Despite its benefits, NbS adoption has challenges, such as a lack of finance, legislative opposition, and public uncertainty. Governments occasionally support conventional infrastructure due to maintenance concerns. However, the Nangang River Restoration in Guangzhou (China) and the Cheonggyecheon Stream Revitalisation in Seoul are instances of how public support and government funding may enable large-scale NbS initiatives to succeed.

- Experts advise using other funding sources like green investments for climate adaption to get around obstacles.
- Pilot initiatives should be shown to be effective before being scaled up.
- Greater policy integration, including a requirement for NbS in urban planning laws.
- Public awareness initiatives that emphasise the long-term financial and ecological advantages.



Looking Ahead

Cities must move quickly to adopt resilient and sustainable urban planning techniques as climate change increases. Throughout Asia-Pacific, governments, urban planners, and local communities are encouraged to adopt NbS as a fundamental element of development in the future.



CRIF 2025: Empowering Cities for a Climate-Resilient Future



UCLG ASPAC hosted the Climate Resilience and Innovation Forum (CRIF) 2025 in partnership with the Jakarta Special Capital Region and with support from the European Union. Bringing together over 300 participants from across Asia and Europe to accelerate local climate action, the event marked the conclusion of the Climate Resilient and Inclusive Cities (CRIC) Project. Held in Jakarta, continued with visit to Banyumas from May 21-23, 2025, the event highlighted the importance of city leadership, cooperation, and innovation in building resilience.

The event marked several milestones. The Climate Action Plan (CAP) Guideline and 10 CAP reports were launched and symbolically handed over to 10 CRIC pilot city mayors of Bandar Lampung, Banjarmasin, Cirebon, Gorontalo, Kupang, Mataram, Pangkalpinang, Pekanbaru, Samarinda, and Ternate.

Mayors of CRIC pilot cities also presented sustainability strategies to carry forward their climate action after the project. Pilot cities showcased how climate action plans were integrated into urban services and Regional Medium-Term Development Plan, from Kupang's digital waste tracking system to Bandar Lampung's early warning system, and Samarinda's baseline-driven waste and sanitation initiatives. Pangkalpinang and Cirebon emphasised cross-sector partnerships, while Pekanbaru and Mataram shared biogas, electric mobility and innovations when it comes to integrated waste management. Finally, Ternate underscored the role of thematic temporary waste sorting sites, and community awareness as part of its climate approach. Banjarmasin shared efforts on solid waste management and flood control. Gorontalo highlighted priority actions on water, sanitation and solid waste management.

The opening of the CRIF 2025 established a powerful narrative of achievement and sustainability. Secretary General of UCLG ASPAC, celebrated the tangible results of the concluded CRIC project. She highlighted its enduring legacy, and praised the ten pilot cities for their unwavering commitment. She detailed key achievements: "the creation of task force on climate change shows multi-stakeholder partnerships, and climate actions' integration in the local action plan proves strong institutional commitment that ensures its impact will continue."

H.E. Mr. Denis Chaibi, EU Ambassador, powerfully affirmed this sustainability approach. He framed the project within the global imperative of urban leadership, stating, "In Europe, cities are at the forefront of our climate response... They are the ones who change the mindset of the citizen." He directly endorsed the CRIC model, confirming, "This is why the CRIC project is crucial: it empowers cities to lead this change and make climate action a normal part of planning."

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Mayor of Kuala Lumpur, provided a high-level validation of the entire approach.

From a city leader's perspective, she issued a stark warning that justified the project's methodology: "We must integrate climate data into every aspect of our urban planning because planning without climate foresight is simply planning for failure." She positioned the work of CRIC and similar initiatives as the essential answer, providing the tools to move "from reactive responses to a proactive, resilient future where local leadership is trusted and empowered to lead the way."





Session Highlights

- Stronger peer-to-peer learning and systems of support to position local governments as not only first responders but also policy innovators to climate risks.
- Shift mindsets, treating cities not as problems, but as vital assets to protect with better data, capacity, and shared accountability.
- Emphasis on nature-based solutions and participatory governance.
- Importance of quantifying adaptation co-benefits to access financing.
- The importance of aligning planning with funding systems.
- Empowering communities as co-creators of solutions.
- Fostering trust-based partnerships to scale urban innovation.

The Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) badges were also awarded to leading Southeast Asian Cities as recognition for their local climate leadership, including Kuala Lumpur, Hang Tuah Jaya, Jakarta Special Capital Region, Pontianak and Segamat district.

UCLG ASPAC serves as the Secretariat of GCoM for Southeast Asia.

Jakarta Greening, and Study Visit to Banyumas

Participants joined a tree planting activity at Lapangan Banteng Park, symbolising a collective environmental stewardship, followed by a visit to Tebet Eco Park to view nature-based solutions in action. CRIC pilot city delegates and partner representatives visited Banyumas regency to learn about its integrated, decentralised waste management system.



Closing and Way Forward

CRIF 2025 served as a powerful reminder that climate resilience starts locally, through collaboration, innovation, and the sustained leadership of cities and local governments, shaping a better future.

The forum resulted in the adoption of the Jakarta Call for Action, reaffirming collective commitment to inclusive, locally driven climate solutions. It highlights the need for stronger climate finance access, city-to-city cooperation, and integrated planning to ensure long-term resilience and sustainability.

ASEAN Governors and Mayors Forum 2025: Advancing Inclusivity and Sustainability in ASEAN Cities

UCLG ASPAC as the Secretariat of the ASEAN Governors and Mayors Forum (AGMF), successfully convened city/local government leaders in the largest gathering of AGMF 2025, from August 10 to 15, 2025 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, taking the theme “ASEAN Future Cities and Regions: Inclusivity and Sustainability.” Organised alongside the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Forum (ASUF) and the Meeting of Governors and Mayors of ASEAN Capitals (MGMAC), the Forum reaffirmed the importance of local governments as critical partners in advancing ASEAN’s sustainable development agenda and realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The AGMF, ASUF, and MGMAC were jointly hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur City Government and Urbanice. More than 9,000 people have registered and participated, with a significant number of youth among them.



The 2025 AGMF was officially opened by YB Nga Kor Ming, Minister of Housing and Local Government of Malaysia. He called for policies that balance growth with sustainability, emphasising investments in affordable housing, low-carbon public transport, and smart waste management.



Governor Pramono Anung of Jakarta emphasised the importance of translating shared regional goals into tangible, sustainable actions through technology and data-driven governance. Mayor Dato’ Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif of Kuala Lumpur, Chairperson of AGMF 2025, also expressed her appreciation for the enthusiasm and active involvement of cities’ representatives in this event. She also announced the establishment of the MGMAC Secretariat Office in Jakarta City Hall and highlighted priorities for climate action, affordable housing, and collective efforts toward zero waste.

Dr. Bima Arya, Vice Minister of Home Affairs of Indonesia, elaborated on how AGMF contributed to the long-term vision of ASEAN 2045 as a prosperous, digitally driven, and environmentally sustainable region.



In the Opening Ceremony of AGMF, ASUF and MGMAC, the Hon. Dato’ Sri Haji Fadillah Haji Yusof, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, reminded that cities are the engines of ASEAN’s growth, generating 70% of regional GDP, yet also sites of stark inequality and climate vulnerability.

Dr. Bernadia in her delivery remarks highlighted local governments’ empowerment as essential to localising ASEAN Vision 2045, ensuring inclusive, resilient, sustainable, people-centered cities.

Insights from Cities



AGMF 2025 demonstrated that cities and local governments are both laboratories of innovation and front-liners in addressing pressing challenges, from climate impacts to rapid digital transformation. Singapore presented its net-zero emissions strategy and regional cooperation on renewable energy. Pakse, Lao PDR, shared experiences on flood management and the need for financial and technical support. Nong Khai, Thailand, outlined its vision of becoming a sustainable border province through smart city projects and green economy initiatives.

Kuching North presented its integrated circular economy model and renewable energy cooperation, while Banda Aceh detailed its digital transformation framework. Other cities, including Padang, Ha Noi, Baguio, Medan, and Palu, shared local strategies on waste management, smart governance, and climate resilience.

Kuala Lumpur Sustainable Declaration on Localising ASEAN Community Vision 2045



The AGMF 2025 strengthened the commitment of local governments in Southeast Asia to actively localise the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 through the Kuala Lumpur Sustainable Declaration. The Declaration positions local governments not only as implementers but also as co-creators of ASEAN's collective future by putting pillars of ASEAN Community Vision 2045—political-security, economic, socio-cultural and connectivity—as a foundation for creating concrete actions at the subnational level. The Positioning Paper on Localising the ACV 2045 was also presented.

Closing and Way Forward

The 2025 AGMF addressed several decisions. It was agreed that the 2026 AGMF will be held in Manila, when the Philippines holds the 2026 ASEAN Chairmanship. There was also the unanimous appointment of Dato' Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Mayor of Kuala Lumpur, as the Special Envoy on ASEAN Cities and Local Governments.



The Forum concluded with the symbolic handover of the AGMF Chairmanship from Kuala Lumpur to Manila. The Vice Mayor of Manila, Ms. Angela Lei Atienza Valdepenas, warmly welcomed delegates to gather again the following year, reaffirming Manila's commitment to build on the momentum achieved in Kuala Lumpur.

The AGMF 2025 concluded with a strong sense of shared purpose: that the future of a stronger ASEAN Community Building depends on its cities and local governments, and that inclusivity and sustainability must guide local action as the region works collectively toward ASEAN Vision 2045.

Advancing Urban-Act Pilot Cities Knowledge on Waste Management: Regional Peer Learning and City Pairing

UCLG ASPAC, under the initiative of Urban-Act Project held the first Regional Learning and City Pairing event in collaboration GIZ, and UN ESCAP during the 2025 AGFM in Kuala Lumpur. The event was attended by 80 participants from 20 cities representative; it brought together learning and knowledge cities from different countries to strengthen regional collaboration and explore concrete strategies for improving waste management at the local level.

The learning session was started with the site visit to Bukit Tagar Enviro Park on 12 August and the visit was facilitated by Kuala Lumpur City Government (DBKL) as the host city of AGMF 2025.

Key Highlights from Best Practices on Waste Management

Indore, India	
Key Practices	Key Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% source segregation (6-bin system) • Digital monitoring of collection • Waste-to-energy, Bio-CNG, composting, 3R initiatives • Phasing out single-use plastics • Achieved "Zero Landfill City" • India's #1 cleanest city • Improved air quality (AQI < 50) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved "Zero Landfill City" • India's #1 cleanest city • Improved air quality (AQI < 50)



Phitsanulok, Thailand	
Key Practices	Key Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based waste separation (organic, recyclables, hazardous). • Eco-composting bins for households. • Waste banks for community income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily waste reduced by 31% (140 > 96 tons/day). • CO₂e emissions avoided: 1,228 t/year. • Generates community income.

Malang, Indonesia	
Key Practices	Key Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mantung IRRC (est. 2014) as game changer. • 3R practices via MRF & Waste Bank. • Controlled landfill & landfill mining. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthens recycling and resource recovery. • Transition toward elimination of landfill dependency. • Focus districts for integrated IRRC system with RDF and biogas.

Key Highlights of Capstone Project Ideas

Medan | Community-Based Waste Infrastructure

Key Issues	Expected Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,000 tons/day waste; only 7% processed; 69% unmanaged dumps; methane emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPS3R sites (community-based sorting). • Maggot Centers (Black Soldier Fly for organic waste > compost/animal feed). • Recycling Centers (plastics, metals).

Padang | Accelerating City Waste Management toward Circular Economy

Key Issues	Expected Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak regulations supporting circular practices. • Lack of reuse/recycling facility • No sustainable Programs – long-term systems for waste reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to citywide circular economy for environmental and economic resilience.

Shimla | Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste Challenge

Key Issues	Expected Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No source segregation or quantitative data. • No collection vehicles—waste generators transport debris themselves. • No processing facilities: waste dumped at Bhariyal site (used for levelling). • Illegal dumping common; soil & water contamination risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish dedicated C&D waste processing and recycling (aggregates, sand substitutes).

*Details of best practices can be found in the Learning Note publication



Tagbilaran | Plastic-to-Purpose Eco-Bag Project

Key Issues	Expected Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic pollution + unemployment among women and youth • Low household segregation, limited marketing expertise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upcycling sachets and low-value plastics into reusable eco-bags. • Scale up to other Bohol cities; model for circular livelihood. • 5–10 tons of plastic diverted yearly. • 50+ women and youth trained, 10+ micro-entrepreneurs earning income. • 660,794 yearly income generated from bags. • Cost: PHP1.5M (multi-sector funded).

Bacolod | Integrated Recovery & Recycling Technology Hub (BIRTH) and Eco-Park Project

Key Issues	Expected Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor segregation, reliance on landfill, weak recycling systems. • Generates 450 tons of waste daily, 400 tons go to landfill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIRTH & Eco-Park: 25.7-hectare integrated facility in Barangay Felisa. • Reduce GHG emissions by cutting landfill dependence. • Promote circular economy via recycling & resource recovery.



A Cup of Tea with Nguyen Dao Dang on Youth–Local Government Partnership

UCLG ASPAC met Nguyen Dao Dang, co-founder of the Young Urbanists of Southeast Asia (YUSEA) and talked about his view on youth and partnership with Local Governments. We also discussed how his contributions through YUSEA serve to the mission.

What's your view about youth when founding Young Urbanists of Southeast Asia (YUSEA)?

"Youth is not "a monolithic, passive group to be managed, controlled, or spoken for, but as "heterogeneous societal actors with lived experience, unique capacity, and creativity to shape urban futures."

What is the mission of YUSEA?

The Young Urbanists of Southeast Asia (YUSEA) is a platform that envisions to connect young people across borders, equip them with tools to shape their cities, and make sure their voices are heard in places where decisions about urban futures are made. The organisation works to create "safe, accessible, and context-sensitive spaces that enable 100 members of YUSEA from diverse backgrounds to speak, be heard, and contribute to collective knowledge-building and organisational growth." This flat-hierarchy environment allows members to contribute ideas and challenge systemic barriers as equal knowledge partners in urban transformation.

Tell us about YUSEA's works and achievements.

One of YUSEA's flagship achievements is the URBANovation project, helping us win the Silver Prize of UNESCO Net Zero Hackathon and top 10 of EU-ASEAN Youth Sustainability Projects. URBANovation is a podcast and advocacy initiative focusing on "innovative ideas for emerging cities in Asia" with the aim "to inspire youth to make their cities better by creating innovative solutions and fostering interdisciplinary, multicultural, and intergenerational dialogues and policy advocacy." The project has featured leading experts from Singapore, China, Indonesia, and beyond, bridging academic, policy, and grassroots perspectives.

Beyond this, YUSEA's work spans a range of transnational programmes. The ASUF Youth Assembly provided training on Meaningful Youth Engagement in Sustainable Development, introducing YUSEA's Urban Co-creation Framework. The City Transformation Initiatives, held in Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Singapore, are capacity-building and cultural exchange events aimed at enhancing youth's ability to analyse, appreciate, and contribute to the sustainable, inclusive, and human-centred evolution of cities. Through these events, YUSEA members engage with city officials, urban planners, and local community leaders—connecting ideas with decision-making spaces.

At the Indonesian Ministry of Youth and Sport, the organisation conducted a workshop on meaningful youth engagement in innovative urban development. At the ASEAN level, YUSEA is an associate member of the ASEAN University Network on Ecological Education and Culture. Internationally, it has worked with the National University of Singapore, Tsinghua University, and Ateneo de Manila University to host online and onsite training sessions for youth.

What are the priorities of YUSEA for the next five to ten years?

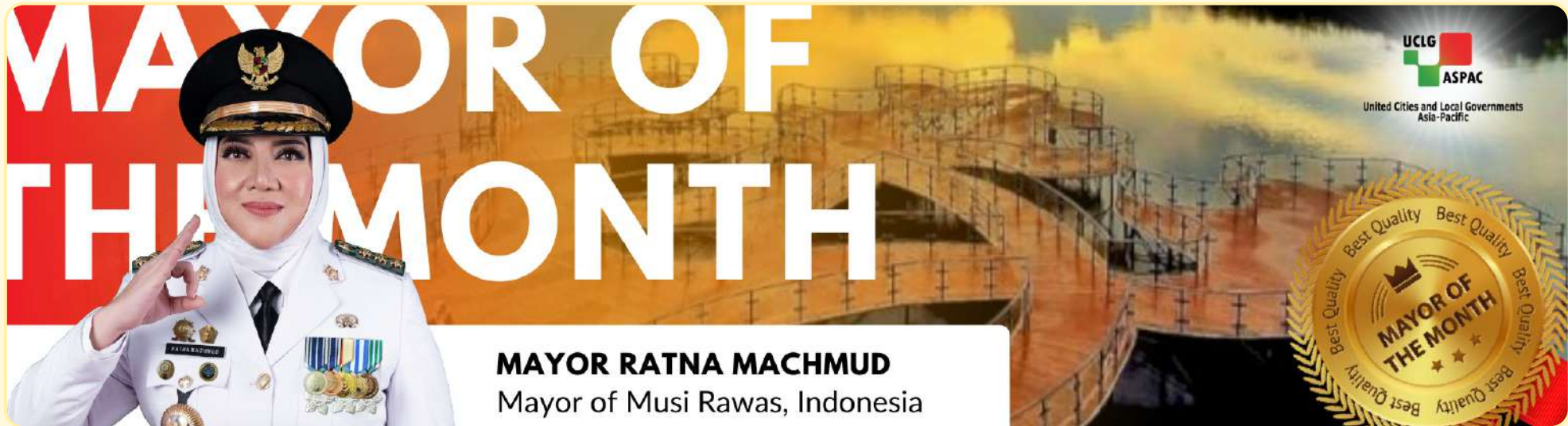
First, achieving “regional policy relevance with local impacts” by ensuring that YUSEA’s presence at international forums like COP, ASUF, and the World Cities Summit translates into tangible benefits for local communities. Second, raising awareness among youth “on how they can meaningfully engage in policy-making and urban development process” and encouraging them to take initiatives in innovative ways. Third, building intergenerational dialogue as “a foundation for meaningful and sustainable transformation in urban society,” fostering mentor-mentee relationships and reciprocal learning between generations.

Words for youth across Asia-Pacific?

Urban issues can be overwhelming at first as they are multifaceted, complicated and moving very fast. The foundation of any youth-led urban intervention starts with a concise understanding of why action is urgent and relevant to address now... Young people themselves need to frame the problem in accordance with their lens or lived experiences to ensure that the solution or intervention is grounded in the reality they face and the need that they lack, instead of just reacting to predefined agendas.



“Youth is not “a monolithic, passive group to be managed, controlled, or spoken for, but as “heterogeneous societal actors with lived experience, unique capacity, and creativity to shape urban futures.”



MAYOR RATNA MACHMUD
Mayor of Musi Rawas, Indonesia

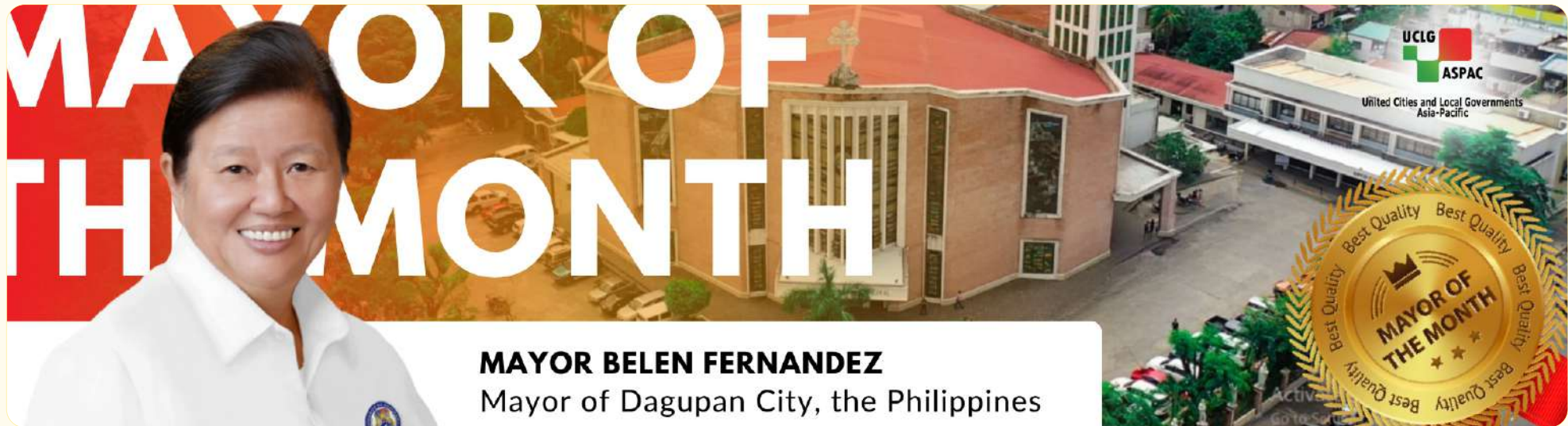
Regent Mayor Ratna Machmud: Continue Leading Musi Rawas Becoming the Place She Foresees

Regent Mayor Ratna Machmud won the election to lead Regency of Musi Rawas, South Sumatra, Indonesia. For the second time, she will lead Musi Rawas Regency for the next five years. Trust comes not only from local people, but also various stakeholders reflected on the long list of awards and appreciations she received in her first term of leadership.

Developed, Independent, Dignified, and Sustainable are what Regent Mayor Ratna Machmud envisions for Musi Rawas throughout her leadership. To achieve this, Mayor Ratna Machmud drafted a series of priority programmes covering free tuition fee, scholarship for colleges, free medication, equal basic infrastructure development, farming revitalisation, development of micro and small enterprises, social security, and support to religious activities. The track she left created a great foundation to continue what she started.

Under her leadership in 2022, Musi Rawas Regency received Paritrana Award, appreciation for her effort in improving social protection and employment security. Regent Ratna also received a mark of honour “Manggala Karya Kencana” from National Family Planning Coordinating Board for the commitment to support national family planning programme and in improving quality of lives. In 2023, Indonesia Entrepreneurs Challenge also selected Mayor Ratna as key figure driving the micro, small, and medium enterprises for improvement.

Regent Ratna Machmud has five years to implement her priority programmes and make Musi Rawas closer to the place she foresees. Equal opportunity, trust, and support are modalities enabling Musi Rawas moving forward to a better place.



Mayor Belen Fernandez of Dagupan: Creating Positive Impact for Local People

Mayor Belen Fernandez of Dagupan City, Philippines, has led Dagupenos for almost 10 years. Mayor Belen once stated that her leadership is centred around creating positive impacts on the lives of local people. Mayor Belen has turned her words into actions that have brought her a long list of awards and accomplishments recognised by many.

Mayor Belen has put education as her top priority. Media recorded that she has invested more than P1.5 billion (around USD17,800) in education, covering scholarships, construction, and school renovations. Under the “Iskolar Bawat Pamilya” (Scholar for every Family) programme, she has allocated P200 million (or USD3.5 million) annual funding to ensure opportunities for youths to attend college. The city government also provided cash incentives for outstanding students.

Mayor Belen highlights the importance of raising awareness of women’s rights. Various Initiatives were developed, including training on gender sensitivity, a mental health awareness campaign, as well as the enactment of the Anti-Street Harassment Ordinance and the Gender Development Code of Dagupan City. Besides, there is the establishment of a lying-in clinic, a healthcare centre for Dagupan women to give birth with the support of state-of-the-art X-ray, electrocardiogram (ECG), and ultrasound machines.

In the health sector, Mayor Belen spearheaded the establishment of a 24-hour emergency health centre equipped with ECG monitoring, ultrasound, and X-ray machines. She has made these services free of charge for local people, ensuring equal accessibility for local people.

Mayor Belen has shown that she holds her vision unwavering. She has set the bar showing what a city leader should be like. Mayor Belen has participated and shared her experiences in several events organised by UCLG ASPAC, including the Executive Bureau Meeting in Boracay, the Philippines, and the 2025 AGMF in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Sub-Region Updates

East Asia

Fantasia Daegu Festa 2025

Daegu City Government held Fantasia Daegu Festa 2025, a collection of local festivals that is in its sixth run this year. The event consists of Spring and Autumn Festivals. Its Spring Festival was held from May 8 – 15, 2025. The event integrated 11 local festivals under the “Cosmic Parade” theme, featuring over 124 teams and 97 street performances in a citywide celebration. The event boosted cultural engagement with diverse programmes and offered visitors discounts on city tours and museum admissions. While the Spring Festival was completed, The Fantasia Daegu Festa Autumn Festival is in the list of activities. The Autumn Festival will be conducted from September 26 to October 5, 2025, taking theme “Symphony of Star”, representing the unique beauty of autumn. Further information is available through its official website: <https://fantasiafesta.or.kr>.



Pacific

SuperLocal Conference and Awards 2025

Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) celebrated the achievements of outstanding local government people and projects in LGNZ’s annual SuperLocal Awards held on July 17, 2025. The event concluded the LGNZ SuperLocal25 Conference in Christchurch held from 16 to 17, 2025. The SuperLocal Conference 2025 itself challenged conventional wisdom and inspired fresh ideas, from enabling economic growth to responding to the big challenges of the day, as stated in LGNZ website. Regarding the awarding event, LGNZ Chief Executive Susan Freeman-Greene congratulated the winners and other finalists, as well as everyone who entered this year’s awards. “The quality and number of awards this year has blown us away; I know how hard the judges found it to decide the winners. Some entries that didn’t make the list of finalists were outstanding,” says Susan Freeman-Greene.



South Asia

Capacity Building for Women and Youth

The Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities (FSLGA) organised capacity building activities targeting at women and youths building their paths in their political career. FSLGA organised an interactive forum to discuss challenges faced by youth and women in shaping up their future political career on March 10, 2025. The event brought together former mayors, women councillors, youth activists, and officers, making the discussions alive. FSLGA, in collaboration with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) Sri Lanka, also conducted She Leads Advanced Training for 28 young women, representing plantation sector, a continuation of She Leads Beginners' Training event. The Advanced training focused on Understanding Local Councils & Emerging Trends, The Role of Women in Local Development, Transforming into a Public Leader (SWOT Analysis), Community Representation and Advocacy, Stakeholder Analysis and Lobbying, Project Proposal Development, Negotiation skills, and Engaging with Local Committees. As a next step, each participant received a stipend to implement an advocacy project in their community, under the supervision of FSLGA. This initiative was funded by the Australian Government under the 'Strengthening Governance' project.



Southeast Asia

Indonesia Youth Summit 2025

Association of the Indonesia Municipalities (Asosiasi Pemerintah Kota Seluruh Indonesia/APEKSI), in collaboration with Makassar City Government, held Indonesia Youth Summit 2025 on June 13-14, 2025. The event convened 150 official delegates and 500 general participants. The summit also involved high profiles including Japan Consular, Mr. Ohashi Koichi and Australia Consulate General Mr. Todd Dias. The two-day forum showed the enthusiasm of youth in discussing challenges from their place of origin. Most importantly, they also formulated the roles that they could play to contribute to the creation of solution. Through this forum, participants not only voiced their ideas, but also established dialogues with fellow youths coming from different cities and regencies, and even countries. They also learned new things, fostered empathy, as well as built network.



New Members

UCLG ASPAC Secretariat warmly welcomes new members to be approved in the UCLG ASPAC Congress 2025.



Budhanilkantha Municipality

Mayor : Mr. Mitharam Adhikari
Website : budhanilkanthamun.gov.np

Budhanilkantha was formed on December 2, 2014, through the merger of several former village development committees. This municipality lies at the foothills of Shivapuri Hill, becoming the second largest municipality in Kathmandu District. It derives its name from Budhanilkantha Temple, showing a strong cultural and religious significance, becoming one of Nepal's historically significant local governments. The Budhanilkantha Municipality places importance in good governance, transparency, and public service.



Isma Rural Municipality

Mayor : Mr. Bhagat Singh Khadka
Website : ismamun.gov.np

A rural Municipality located within the Lumbini Province of Nepal, The Isma Rural Municipality was established by merging former village development committees, now consisting of 6 wards with Isma Rajasthal as its headquarters. The Municipality is rich with economic activities ranging from agriculture, livestock, and growing tourism with an active promotion for eco-cultural experiences. The Isma Rural Municipality also provides notable local government services including agricultural support, social security and e-services.



Kurunegala Municipal Council

Governor : Mr. Ananda Sahabandu
Website : kurunegalamc.dolgnwp.lk

Located in Sri Lanka's Northwestern Province, the Kurunegala Municipal Council stands as a vibrant cultural hub shaped by its rich history and traditions. Home to a diverse population representing various ethnic and religious communities, Kurunegala has evolved into a dynamic centre of culture and the arts. Blending modern influences with deep-rooted heritage, the city attracts both local and international visitors eager to experience its unique mix of tradition and contemporary life.



Malang Regency

Regent : Drs. H. M. Sanusi M.M.
Website : malangkab.go.id

Malang Regency, one of the largest in the province, is known for its rich heritage. The regency has great potential for tourism with countless sites ranging from historical temples, agrotourism, and national parks showcasing the natural wonders of the East Java Province. Represented by the Burung Cucak Ijo as its symbol, Malang Regency thrives for cultural preservation, environmental conservation, and sustainable tourism.



North Sulawesi Province

Governor : Mayjen TNI (Purn) Yulius Selvanus, SE
Website : sulutprov.go.id

North Sulawesi is a vibrant province in Indonesia that forms part of Sulawesi's celebrated world's eleventh largest island. Centred on the scenic Minahasa Peninsula, the province is surrounded with majestic volcanoes and fertile soil contributing to agricultural activities to thrive. Beyond just the land, North Sulawesi is a global hotspot for marine biodiversity, home to coral reefs, mangroves forests, and seagrass beds that help maintain ocean current and climate balance. Its people reflect the rich culture inherited from the Minahasa ethnic groups, which thrives as the centre of agriculture, fishing, and tourism.



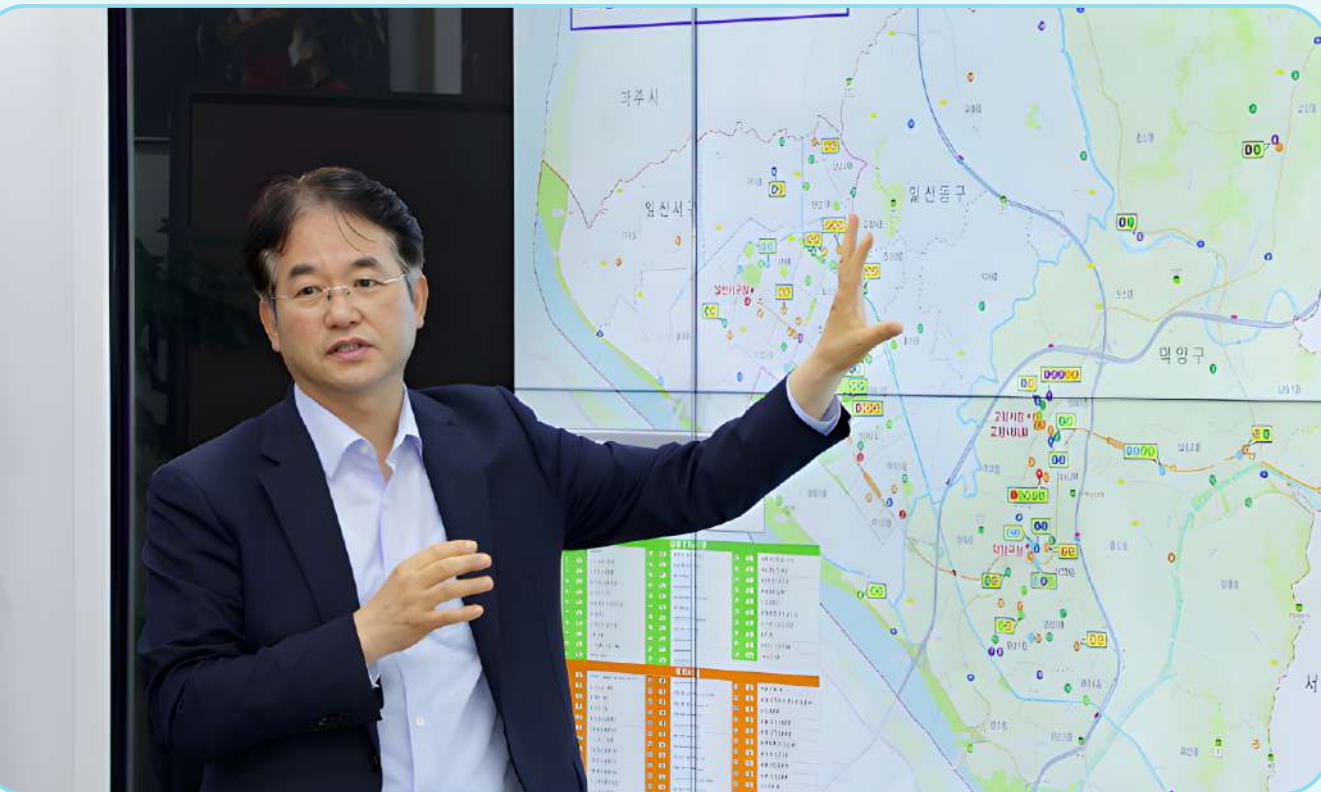
Palu City

Mayor : Hadiano Rasyid, SE
Website : palukota.go.id

Palu City is the capital and the largest city of Central Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. The city is also known as "the five-dimension city" for its unique landscape consisting of five geographical elements: the mountain, the valley, the river, the bay, and the sea. Palu City is the centre of economic growth and has been operating economic exclusive zones since 2017, becoming home to various processing industries. The city has also served as a stop along a trade route connecting Kalimantan to regional and international partners.

From Innovation to Implementation: Goyang's Smart City Transformation

Goyang is accelerating efforts to build a people-centred smart city by integrating cutting-edge technology with active citizen participation. Since being selected in 2023 for the Korean Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport's "Smart City Hub Project," the city has embarked on a 40-billion-won (approx. 28 million USD) initiative to implement eight core smart services in transportation, safety, environment, and public administration—areas that directly impact citizens' daily lives.



Innovation Hub Connecting Technology and Citizens: The Smart City Innovation Centre

In September 2024, Goyang officially opened the Smart City Innovation Centre in Seongsu Innovation District. Expanding upon the existing Smart City Support Centre, the facility will serve as the core hub of the city's smart policy, offering open labs and co-working lounges, citizen experience zones and smart service showcases, digital talent development programmes to strengthen local capacity in data analytics and AI applications and a public data analytics centre.

More than just a workspace, the centre will operate as a governance platform where academia, research institutions, industry, and government collaborate to expand the smart city ecosystem.



Citizen-Driven Innovation: Living Labs in Action

The city is also actively engaging residents through Living Labs, enabling them to take part in testing, verifying, and improving smart services. Citizen solution groups visit key project sites, experience the services first-hand, and provide direct feedback. This participatory approach ensures that Goyang's smart city development remains human-centred rather than technology-driven.

AI, Drones, and Digital Twin: Transforming Urban Operations

Goyang is deploying AI, drone networks, and digital twin technology to innovate across transportation, safety, and urban management.

Smarter Transportation

- Introduction of autonomous buses connecting key hubs including GTX-A Kintex Station and Goyang Sports Complex;
- Night service routes between Hwajeong and Daehwa Stations to improve late-night mobility;
- AI-powered traffic analysis to optimise traffic flows, stimulate commercial districts, and enhance urban safety.

Stronger Safety Network

- Establishment of a Drone Integrated Control Centre and seven drone stations across the city;
- Deployment of patrol drones capable of rapid emergency response, fire detection, and real-time surveillance, significantly enhancing disaster readiness.

Digitalised Urban Management

- Implementation of a digital twin platform to simulate disaster scenarios, monitor aging infrastructure, and plan for future urban air mobility (UAM) vertiports;
- Installation of smart poles and media walls equipped with CCTV, emergency call systems, public Wi-Fi, and EV charging, improving both urban safety and convenience.

AI-Powered Administration: 24/7 Citizen Services

Through the development of a smart data platform, Goyang integrates citywide data in real time to support advanced urban management and citizen services. Leveraging AI, the city is preparing to launch round-the-clock AI-based administrative services, offering residents continuous access to government support while enabling data-driven, precision policymaking.



Qingdao Strengthens Role in Global Cooperation with Global Mayors Dialogue

With renewed ambition, Qingdao, the coastal jewel of East China's Shandong province, is stepping up its role as a vital bridge that fosters international collaboration and cross-cultural understanding.

At the Global Mayors Dialogue in Qingdao on July 19, Ren Gang, Mayor of Qingdao, described the event as an excellent platform to enhance mutual understanding, deepen friendships, and promote cooperation and development.

"Through this event, more foreign friends are gaining a deeper understanding of China, a nation rooted in ancient traditions, full of vitality and undergoing profound changes," he said.

The event was attended by mayors from countries including Japan, South Korea, Greece, and Cambodia. The dialogue highlights included marine tourism, revitalising historic districts through cultural tourism, and developing international tourism to promote people-to-people exchanges.

Qingdao is defined by the sea. Recognised by China as a pivotal coastal hub and a modern marine city, it shoulders national strategic significance and local responsibility.

The city highlighted its strengths in the blue marine economy at the event. It is home to one-third of China's marine academicians, about half of its marine research and development platforms, and 50 percent of its marine-related scientific achievements. The Qingdao Port of Shandong Port Group handled 710 million metric tons of cargo in 2024, ranking fourth globally. It ranked fifth in terms of container volume, with 30.78 million TEUs.

Qingdao is also home to several unique institutions, including the country's only comprehensive marine university, national museum of marine archaeology, and naval museum, as well as its first aquarium, the Qingdao Aquarium, which was built in 1932.

Qingdao's 800-kilometre coastline is dotted with 49 bays and the famous Taoist Laoshan Mountain. The city also connects vibrant urban districts, including the West Coast New Area, which contributes one-third of the city's GDP.

Beyond the Games: New Taipei's Sporting Diplomacy

New Taipei City recently leveraged the 2025 World Masters Games to significantly advance its city diplomacy, fostering international cooperation and cultural exchange. Co-hosted with Taipei City, the Games provided a robust platform for New Taipei to enhance its global standing and fortify ties with partner cities.

The New Taipei City Government Secretariat welcomed over 100 dignitaries from 16 delegations representing six countries. This extensive participation underscored New Taipei's commitment to collaborative international engagement through shared sporting endeavours. Notably, GAROK Ambassador Mr. Ha Tae-youk and Gunsan City Vice Mayor Mr. Kim Young-min—two fellow UCLG ASPAC members with frequent exchanges—led delegations from South Korea. Moreover, Mayor Takao Tanano of Shiranuka Town in Hokkaido, Japan, a sister city to New Taipei's Wulai District, led a substantial 40-member delegation, further solidifying existing city-to-city bonds and showcasing the strength of such partnerships.

The Games also highlighted the power of city cooperation to transcend borders, with several international delegates actively competing and excelling. Mr. Naoki Inoue, a city councilor from Wakayama, Japan, with longstanding ties to New Taipei's Banqiao District, competed in multiple events and claimed a gold medal in the Men's 50+ Hammer Throw.

Beyond sports, New Taipei City curated special cultural tours to showcase its rich heritage. Visiting delegations explored Yingge—renowned for ceramics—and Jiufen, famous for its early gold-mining history, and visited historic landmarks such as the Lin Family Mansion and Garden and the well-known Cihui Temple. Additionally, the Shiranuka Town delegation captured attention by staging a flash mob of their traditional "Shiranuka Horse Dance" in the main concourse of New Taipei's largest railway station.

By integrating these cultural experiences with the sporting event, New Taipei successfully promoted tourism and elevated its international profile, setting a best practice for city cooperation and diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region.



Mayor Hou, Yu-Ih with representatives of New Taipei's sister cities and friendship cities
(Photo: New Taipei City Government)



The delegation from Gunsan City, South Korea
at New Taipei City Hall
(Photo: New Taipei City Government)



"Shiranuka Horse Dance" flash mob performance
(Photo: New Taipei City Government)



The Sejong Cultural Centre of Korean Tradition

The Sejong Cultural Centre of Korean Tradition is a space rooted in the philosophy of On-go-ji-shin (溫故知新), which means “learning new insights by reflecting on the old.” It serves as a place where people of all ages can discover and experience Korea’s traditional culture through a variety of engaging, hands-on activities.

The centre offers both professional training in the traditional arts and a wide range of cultural experiences open to all citizens of Sejong City. Housed in a facility with one basement floor and three floors above ground, it covers a total floor area of 5,495.96 m².

Programme Overview

- **Temple Cuisine Experience:** A programme where participants learn about and prepare traditional Korean temple food using seasonal, plant-based ingredients.
- **Tea Ceremony Experience:** Learn the principles and etiquette of Korea’s traditional tea culture, along with everyday tea wisdom.
- **Zen and Meditation:** Designed for modern individuals, this programme helps participants discover inner calm through meditation and learn how to live as the master of their own mind.
- **Barley Craft (Maekgan):** A hands-on craft programme using barley stalks to create accessories, picture frames, and other decorative items.
- **Additional Programmes:** The centre also offers traditional snack making, balwoo gongyang (monastic meal practice), traditional lantern making, Korean calligraphy, and more.

A City Where Heritage Meets Innovation

Sejong City is a place where the future-oriented vision of a smart city is harmoniously blended with the enduring value of traditional culture. At the heart of this harmony is the Sejong Cultural Centre of Korean Tradition—a space where past and present, technology and tradition come together. It is open not only to the citizens of Sejong but also to visitors from across Korea and around the world, serving as a cultural bridge between generations and communities.

Calendar of Activities 2025

uclg-aspac.org



12-14 September

Urban 20 Mayoral Summit
Johannesburg, South Africa
UCLG, C40



24-26 September

10th UCLG ASPAC Congress
Goyang, the Republic of Korea
UCLG ASPAC, Goyang



29 September - 1 October

The 40th Anniversary
Metropolis Seoul World Congress
Seoul, Republic of Korea
Metropolis, Seoul



13-16 October

International Mayors Forum 2025
Toyota, Japan
UN DESA, Toyota City, UCLG ASPAC



16-18 October

Second Session of the UCLG
Executive Bureau 2025 & UCLG
Council 2025
Xi'an, China
Xi'an City Government, UCLG



21 October

Intercity Collaboration
Forum 2025 Hamamatsu
Hamamatsu, Japan



6-8 November

World Humanistic Cities
Network (WHCN) General Assembly
Andong, Republic of Korea
Andong



10-21 November

30th Session of the Conference
of the Parties on Climate Change
(COP 30)
Belem, Brazil
UN

1-5 December

19th World Water Congress
Marrakesh, Morocco
International Water Resources
Association (IWRA)

8-12 December

7th United Nations Environment
Assembly
Nairobi, Kenya
UN

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