

Asia-Pacific Synergies Report

Advancing Synergistic Solutions to the Triple Planetary Crisis and the SDGs



Framing Presentation

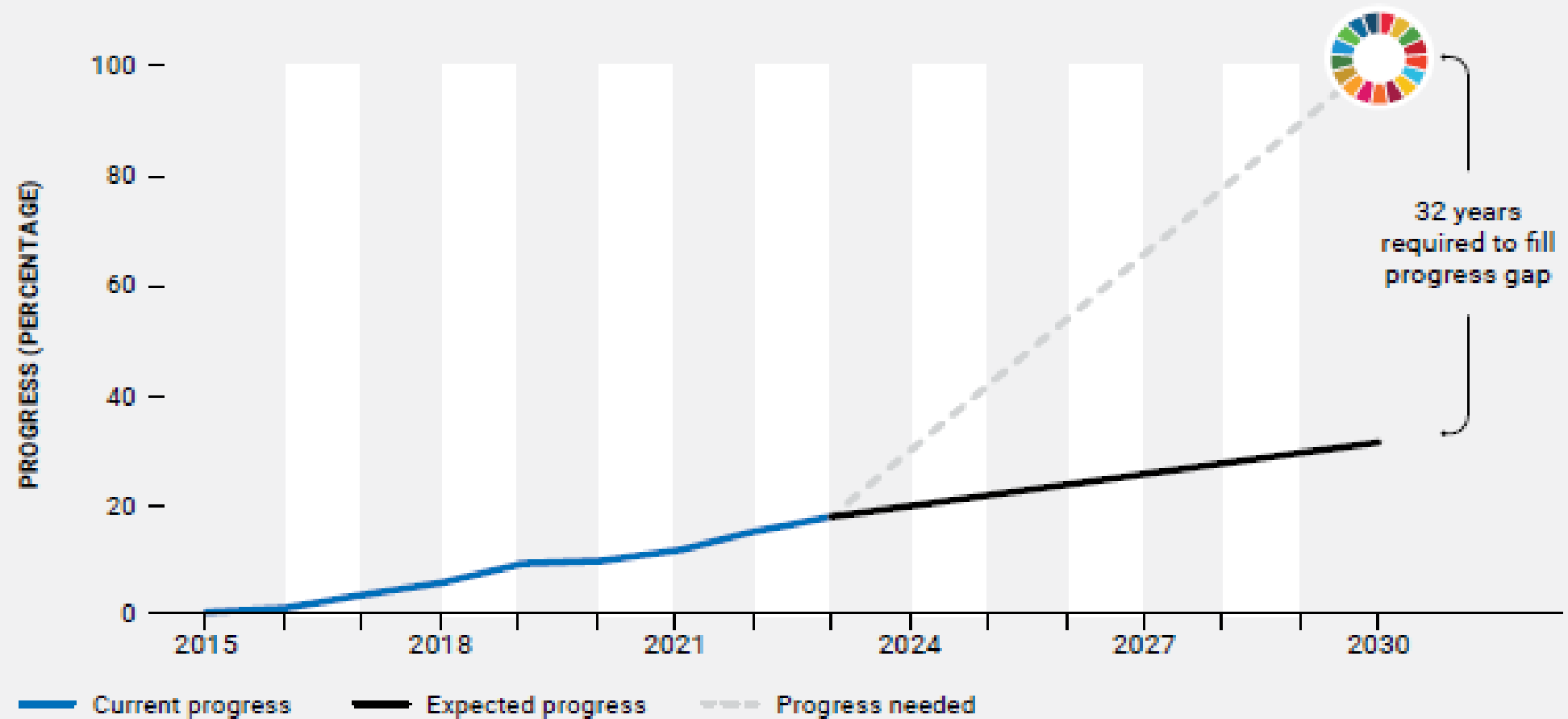
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The Asia-Pacific Synergies Report and Regional Action Programme: Translating Regional Insights into Global and Local Implementation

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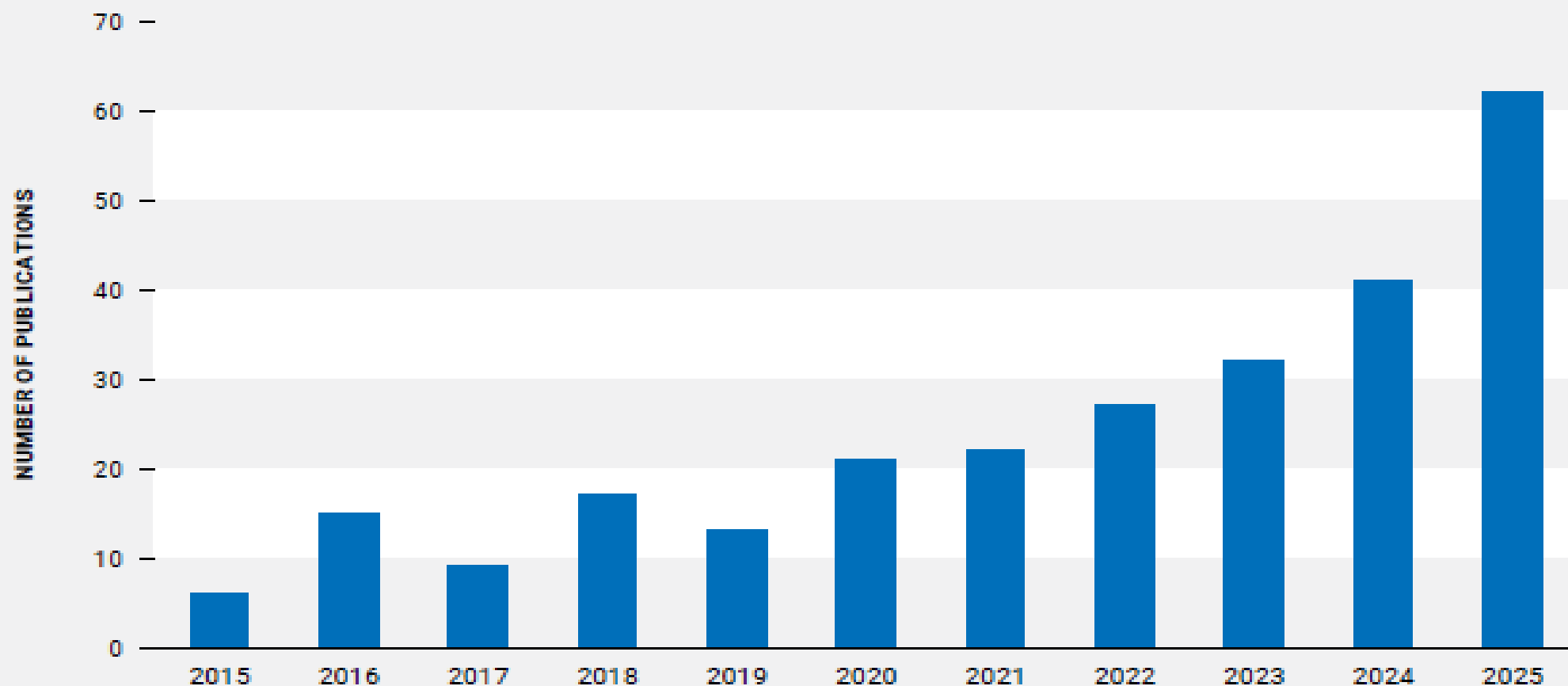
Figure 1.1 Progress toward achieving the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific



Source: *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2024: Showcasing Transformative Actions* (United Nations publication, 2024).

Note: For each year, the percentage represents the average progress recorded towards all 17 SDGs.

Figure 1.2 Growing attention to synergies in academic publications



Source: Adapted by IGES, based on data from Scopus. Available at <https://www.scopus.com/sources>

Note: This figure is based on Scopus keyword search on "climate and synergy/ies". It demonstrates that articles on the theme have risen sharply over the past 10 years.

Supplementary Appendix: Compendium of Case Studies on Synergies in Asia and the Pacific

147 unique case studies

29 countries

90% of Asia-Pacific population



PROJECT

Hyogo Environmental Future Conference



SDGs: 4.7, 7.2, 8.4, 8.9, 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 11.2, 11.3, 12.2, 12.3, 12.5, 12.7, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 14.1, 14.2, 15.1, 15.2, 15.5, 15.9
Relevant frameworks and documents:
6th Hyogo Prefecture Basic Environmental Plan

Background and issues

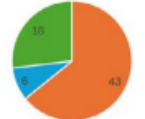
In 2022, Hyogo Prefecture formulated "Hyogo Vision 2050" which outlines the society around 2050. In line with this vision, the 5th Hyogo Prefecture Basic Environmental Plan in 2019 was revised in 2024 and the "Hyogo Environmental Future Conference" was convened to reflect the opinions of future generations who will play a central role by 2050 to the revised Basic Environmental Plan.

Chosen approach

1-day conferences were held in 3 cities, Toyooka, **Kobe** and Himeji, with 20-30 participants including high school and university students for each conference. The "Future Design" method was employed, which introduced "imaginary future generation" i.e. participants act as members of future generation and argue on behalf of their interests. Each conference consisted of introductory session and the following 3 group work sessions:

- Work 1: Open discussion on the vision for 2050
- Work 2: Envisioning society in 2050 as "imaginary future generation"
- Work 3: Proposing policies/actions as "imaginary future generation"

Participants composition



■ High school students ■ University students ■ Working adults

Achieved synergies & mitigated trade-offs

From a long-term perspective, proposed solutions emphasized the importance of human resource development, changing mindsets, and technological innovation, which promote synergies among "decarbonization," "coexistence with nature," and "resource circulation."

Enabling factors / remaining issues

- The commitment of Hyogo Prefecture to reflect the outcomes of the conference to the revised Basic Environmental Plan highly motivated participants.
- Employment of Future Design method was beneficial to bring long-term perspective which facilitates synergistic solution development.

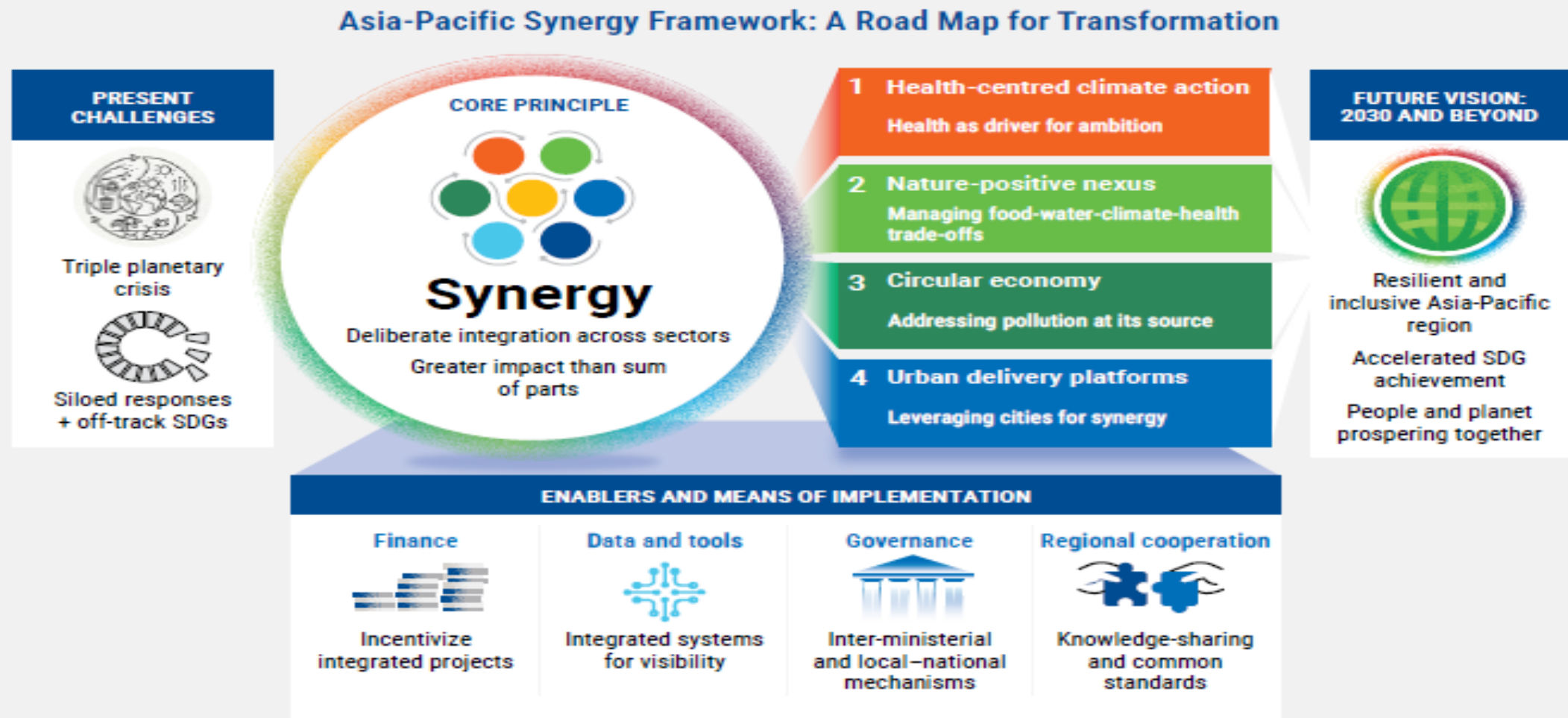


Lesson learned: Facilitators familiar with Future Design are essential to stimulate constructive discussion. Balancing innovative ideas and convincing solutions is not easily achieved.

Resource and acknowledgement: IGES Kansai Research Centre (2024), [Project Report on Hyogo Environmental Future Conference](#).

Study provided by Satoshi Kojima, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES).

Figure 1.3 An overview of the structure of the report



Source: IGES and ESCAP.

CHAPTER 4

Advancing circular economy solutions to address pollution



Table 4.1 Circular economy actions, pollution reduction and synergistic SDG outcomes by provisioning system

Provisioning systems	Circular economy action	Pollution reduction	SDG outcomes
Agrifood	• Food waste reduction • Nutrient cycling • organic waste valorization	• Nutrient runoff; methane • plastic waste	SDGs: 2 6 13 14 15
Housing / built environment	• Material efficiency • Retrofitting • construction waste reuse	• CO₂ • Particulate matter • landfill waste	SDGs: 3 11 12 13
Mobility	• Modal shifts • Electrification • shared mobility	• Air pollutants • GHGs • noise	SDGs: 3 10 11 13
Energy	• Renewables • Efficiency • recycling of energy technologies	• Air pollutants • CO₂ • mining impacts	SDGs: 7 8 12 13
Cross-cutting circular economy innovations	• Eco-design • Industrial symbiosis • product-service systems	• Material flows • Waste streams • pollution loads	SDGs: 8 9 12

CHAPTER 5

Mobilizing cities as delivery platforms for resilient and synergistic solutions



Table 5.1 Summary of the case studies

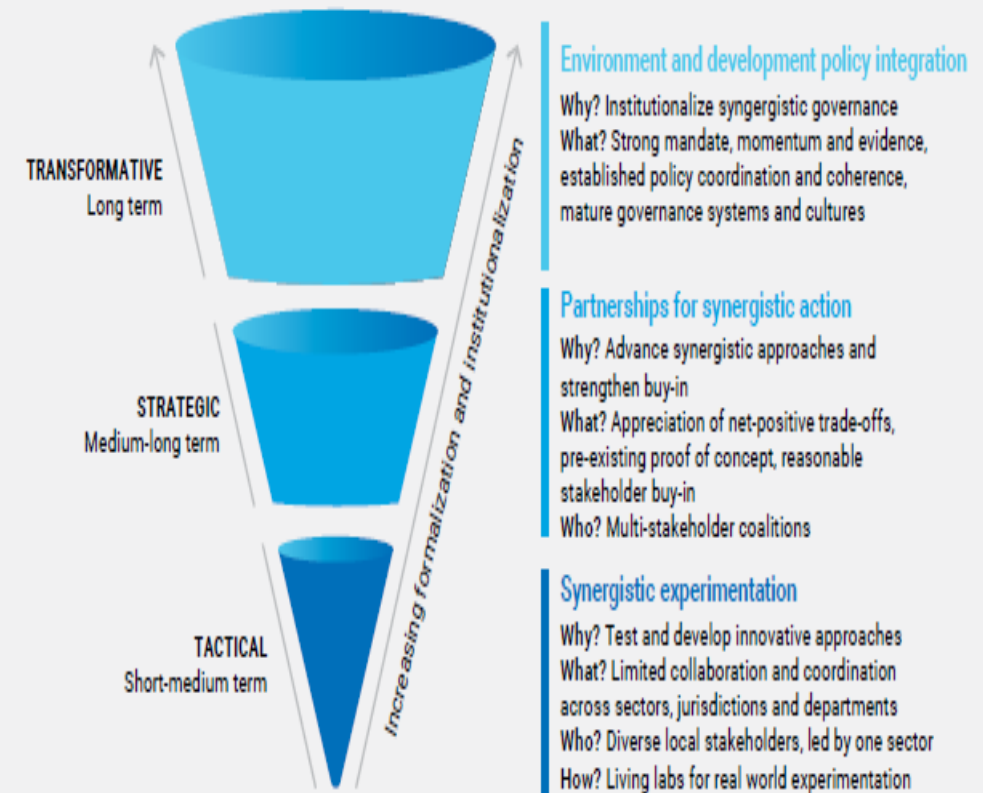
Areas of synergies	Synergistic solutions/approaches	Key actors	Enablers
Case study: Addressing urban air pollution, public health and climate change in Jakarta SDGs: 3 7 11 13 17			
- Air quality management - Public health protection - Sustainable urban mobility - Energy transition - Metropolitan environmental governance - Climate mitigation	- Expansion of traffic demand management policies - Strengthening vehicle emissions testing and enforcement - Investment in mass public transport systems - Tightening national air quality standards - Regulatory measures targeting emissions from coal-fired power plants and industrial sources - Data-driven pollution source apportionment	- Provincial Government of Jakarta - National Government of Indonesia (Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources) - Metropolitan and neighboring provincial authorities in Greater Jakarta - Civil society organizations and citizen advocacy groups - International partners	- Judicial intervention through the 2021 clean air court ruling strengthening government accountability - Growing public awareness and civic engagement - Expansion of public transport infrastructure - International technical support - Policy coordination across sectors
Case study: Integrating climate-resilient and low-carbon land use in the Santa Rosa-Silang sub-watershed, the Philippines SDGs: 6 11 13 15 17			
- Integrated climate change adaptation and mitigation - Flood resilience - Biodiversity - Watershed land-use planning and governance	- Basin-scale participatory land use management approach - Participatory GIS mapping and scenario analysis - GIS-based hydrological modelling - Collaborative planning workshops - Aligning ecological strategies with institutional mechanisms	- Local government units in the Santa Rosa-Silang sub-watershed - Academic and research institutions - Laguna Lake Development Authority - Local communities	- Strong academic-government partnerships - Policy mandate for 5-year plans - Combined use of scientific tools and participatory methods
Case study: Circulating and ecological sphere approach for resilient cities and regions SDGs: 2 3 6 7 8 11 13			
- Strengthening urban-rural linkages through optimal resource circulation - Decarbonization - Ecosystem conservation - Economic revitalization - Community well-being	- Mapping the resource flows across urban-rural continuum - Geospatial mapping and scenario analysis - Multi-stakeholder consultations and workshops - Co-design and co-development of action plans	- Local government - Private and business sector - Civil society - Academic and research institutions - Development agencies	- Integrated policy planning - Local stakeholder engagement and partnership-building - Mutual learning - Capacity development - Regional cooperation
Case study: Bridging the digital divide in Sri Lanka via the e-Sabha digital complaint application SDGs: 5 11 16 17			
- Social inclusion - Urban planning and governance - Digital transformation	Mobile app-based governance platform links multiple urban priorities	- Asia Foundation - Local government authorities of Sri Lanka - Department of Local Government (Southern Province); HELP-O (civil society)	- Social inclusion; transparency and accountability of public service; community watchdog groups; - Local government authorities

CHAPTER 8

Strengthening governance to advance synergies



Figure 8.1 Synergistic Governance Framework



Source: Adapted by authors based on S. Malekpour, S. Tawfik, and C. Chesterfield, "Designing collaborative governance for nature-based solutions", *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, vol. 62, No. 127177 (July 2021).

Six Strategic Directions



Strategic direction 1: Make synergies the organizing principle for national development strategies, climate action, biodiversity conservation, pollution control and urban policy.



Strategic direction 2: Empower cities and subnational governments to serve as delivery platforms for synergistic solutions, supported by predictable finance and technical capacity.



Strategic direction 3: Promote cross-sectoral investment by aligning finance with multi-benefit outcomes across climate, biodiversity, pollution and other development priorities to drive systemic changes.



Strategic direction 4: Transform data and tools into accessible and actionable resources for routine decision-making on synergies.



Strategic direction 5: Institutionalize whole-of-government and whole-of-society governance approaches, with clear mandates, shared indicators and aligned incentives.



Strategic direction 6: Leverage regional cooperation to synthesize evidence, harmonize approaches, promote learning and scale synergistic solutions across diverse contexts.