

# 2021 EAST ASIA SUMMIT LEADERS' STATEMENT ON SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY

*Adopted on 27 October 2021*

**WE**, the participating countries of the East Asia Summit met via videoconferencing on 27 October 2021, under Brunei Darussalam's 2021 ASEAN Chairmanship on the occasion of the 16th East Asia Summit (EAS);

**EMPHASISING** the importance of a sustainable recovery that is comprehensive, inclusive, and resilient, through a unified response from EAS participating countries to address the continued spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);

**RECOGNISING** with appreciation initiatives which support ASEAN centrality and ASEAN-centred architecture which could contribute to mitigating the impact of the pandemic and expedite recovery;

**RECALLING** the relevant EAS Leaders' Statements and the Manila Plan of Action to Advance the Phnom Penh Declaration on the East Asia Summit Development Initiative (2018-2022) to further enhance regional and multilateral cooperation on post-COVID-19 recovery efforts;

**REITERATING** the importance of promoting economic policies and growth including trade and investment, which contribute to sustainable development and tackling climate change, as well as addressing other economic, social, and environmental challenges;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the need for East Asia Summit participating countries to take active, effective, cooperative, and inclusive approaches when developing comprehensive recovery strategies;

**FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING** the importance of responding to the urgent challenge of climate change, and that actions taken to address climate change are most effective if they are based on best available science and continually re-evaluated in the light of new findings;

**RECOGNISING** the efforts by East Asia Summit participating countries to implement the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement;

**LOOKING FORWARD** to the work to formulate the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and set new goals for global biodiversity conservation at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming, China;

**WELCOMING** initiatives that support achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to complement our efforts to enable a sustainable recovery;

## **DO HEREBY DECIDE TO:**

1. **Combat** the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through open, inclusive, non-discriminatory and transparent efforts; upholding multilateralism; and enhancing international and multi-stakeholder cooperation;
2. **Encourage** EAS participating countries to use the opportunity of a recovery to cooperate with each other and with other countries in response to climate change;

3. **Exchange views** on strategies, economic models and frameworks relating to sustainable growth, including bio, circular and green economies, and natural capital accounting systems;
4. **Support** ASEAN's effort to implement the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and its Implementation Plan, particularly the Broad Strategy 5, which aims to advance the resilience and sustainability of ASEAN, by promoting socially responsible policy-making at national and regional levels, and developing a recovery framework that is durable, long-lasting, inclusive, capable of safeguarding the region's natural resources, social fabric, and the prosperity of its people;
5. **Further** support ASEAN in advancing economic cooperation with its Dialogue Partners through ASEAN-centred regional architecture, reaffirming the importance of agreed-upon rules in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and exploring innovative ways to support the global transition to lower-emission and more circular economies in the pursuit of achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, recognising the essential role of trade and investment in tackling the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in enabling a strong economic recovery for all our people;
6. **Enhance** connectivity of affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy infrastructure and increase cooperation on innovative and emerging low emissions, clean, effective, and renewable energy technologies, to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 7 Affordable and Clean Energy consistent with the-long-term temperature goals of the Paris Agreement;
7. **Further** enhance cooperation on energy security and sustainable development such as sharing best practices on the formulation and implementation of low greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions development strategies, energy efficiency, clean, low-emission and renewable energy, energy storage solutions, mobility decarbonisation, hydrogen, and carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) that can be achieved through initiatives such as the EAS Energy Cooperation Task Force (ECTF), the EAS Clean Energy Forum, the EAS New Energy Forum, and the Asia Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) Network throughout ASEAN countries;
8. **Support** ASEAN in its efforts to conserve, protect, and advocate for the sustainable use of biodiversity, including the rehabilitation and restoration of ecosystems, formulation of recommendations/policy briefs to minimise risks of zoonotic diseases transmission from wildlife trade and high risk consumptive behaviour of and interaction with wildlife, promote the importance of nature-based solutions to prevent future pandemics, facilitate sharing of data and information, and support capacity building on technical and scientific cooperation for the management of biodiversity, including through the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity;
9. **Further** support ASEAN's efforts to enhance regional disaster resiliency through its implementation of the Strategic and Holistic Initiative to Link ASEAN Responses to Emergencies and Disasters (ASEAN SHIELD) and strengthen the capacities of existing mechanisms on disaster risk reduction and disaster management, and humanitarian assistance for natural disasters, including the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) and the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) Work Programme 2021-2025, as well as explore opportunities for new resilience-building initiatives;
10. **Seize** the opportunities presented by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) to accelerate digital transformation, underscoring the importance of an enabling, inclusive and non-discriminatory digital economy that fosters the application of new technologies, and to advance the transition of the region's economies towards low emissions, climate-resilient futures;

11. **Foster** regional cooperation for the promotion of science and technology, stimulating innovation to drive development and competitiveness;
12. **Encourage** EAS participating countries to mobilise the public and private sectors, international organisations, and other stakeholders to support smart cities development towards accelerating equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth through initiatives such as the ASEAN Smart Cities Network (ASCN);
13. **Balance** economic activity with the long-term capacity of the seas and oceans to support economic resilience through the conservation, sustainable use and management of coastal and marine resources; and enhance cooperation to strengthen regional maritime connectivity, and protect the livelihoods of coastal communities and conserve marine ecosystems while addressing their increasing vulnerability to climate change and marine plastic pollution;
14. **Address** the issue of marine plastic debris by promoting sustainable use of plastic, integrated land, coastal and marine management, source-directed approaches to reduce plastic waste and implementing the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Member States (2021-2025);
15. **Promote** cooperation to strengthen the sustainability and capacity of the private sector, including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, small scale and artisanal fishers, smallholder farmers and others affected by COVID-19, in pursuing a recovery that leaves no one behind;
16. **Further** promote youth participation in climate action and support their participation in and leadership of activities and projects both at national and grassroots levels, taking into account the positive role that youth can play in national efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

**ADOPTED** on the Twenty Seventh of October in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-One.