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## Chapter 3

# Regional Policy Trends for Strengthening the Inclusion of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in Public Governance

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### 3.1 SWITCHing towards Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) — An Overview of Changing Policy Agendas in the Asia Pacific Region

SCP is a transversal issue in national and regional governance, and an objective that needs to be embedded in regulatory policy on resource extraction, manufacturing, health, consumer information, fiscal policies, and much more. SCP is about influencing both the supply and demand essentials of an economy from macro to micro levels, as well as understanding and in some cases influencing human behaviour. Policymaking in this context of complexity requires a crosscutting approach. It is in this vein that SCP is

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\* Supported by contributions from Julie Godin, UNEP.

included as a transversal and central element of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This transversality of SCP will ultimately need to be reflected in the associated national policies of countries. Recognising the importance of this transversal approach to policymaking for SCP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), under the framework of the EU-funded SWITCH-Asia Programme, provides SCP policy support across regional, sub-regional and national policy agenda for the Asian region. In this context, the objective of SCP policymaking is to create resource efficient production systems for sustainable goods and services (*supply*), coupled with shifts in consumption patterns and consumer behaviour (*demand*) for SD, economic growth, and societal well-being.

Global policy agendas are changing to increasingly give central consideration to the environment and natural resources constraints, embedding these within national growth and development planning. In parallel, a number of developing countries have begun to pursue SD strategies which leapfrog the “grow now, clean up later” approach associated with the traditional industrialisation model. Asian countries have mainstreamed environmental considerations into national development planning, with strong national ownership. South Korea exemplifies this with the early launch of its Presidential Council on Green Growth to guide Green Growth<sup>1</sup> as a strategic vision that would cut across national to local governance, influencing even foreign relations and development cooperation policies. This national strategy was announced in 2008 with ‘Low Carbon, Green Growth,’ the formal vision for mid- to long-term development from 2009 to 2050, including a voluntary target of 30% reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2020 [OECD, 2014]. The case of South Korea’s rapid mainstreaming of its own approach to SD into national planning and governance showcases the importance of leadership and political will from the highest levels to guide this switch. One can also suggest that the country’s overarching promotion of its green growth strategy, which

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<sup>1</sup>“The concept of “**green growth**” has its origins in the Asia and Pacific Region. At the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development (MCED) held in March 2005 in Seoul, 52 Governments and other stakeholders from Asia and the Pacific agreed to move beyond the SD rhetoric and pursue a path of “green growth.”

also included development cooperation, set a trend for other countries to embark on similar policy reforms.

Since 2010, the specific inclusion of SCP in governance and policy agenda in Asia has greatly advanced. However, this progress in the policy arena has not yet reversed regional trends on rapidly escalating natural resource use. While many Asian countries can be touted as models of rapid economic growth, this has come at a tremendous cost to the environment. With recently acquired data (see Box 3.1), the resource efficiency of the region can be more clearly assessed in terms of its implications for the environment, economic growth, and human well-being.

Today, the region consumes more than half of the world's materials (e.g., fossil fuels, metals, and minerals) with an annual growth rate in materials consumption of 5% [UNEP, 2015a]. The high growth rate of material consumption equally matches the region's high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates. This correlation highlights the close link between

### **Box 3.1 Asian trends in resource efficiency [UNEP, 2015a]**

- On average, Asia and the Pacific need 3 kg of materials to produce one dollar of GDP and this lags far behind of the rest of the world where on average only 1 kg is needed per dollar.
- Developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region use five times as many natural resources per dollar of GDP (5 kg/USD) as the rest of the world and 10 times more than industrialised countries (0.4 kg/USD) in the Asia-Pacific region, signalling the need for increased resource efficient technologies and production processes.
- The regional averages mask wide ranges from a high of 17 kg/USD in Mongolia and 12 kg/USD in Lao PDR, down to 0.3 kg/USD in Japan, with lower income countries most dependent on natural resources often having very low resource efficiency.
- Regionally, demand for electricity, gas, and transport fuel has increased more than fourfold between 1970 and 2010, influenced by the growing needs of a rapidly urbanising China, which accounts for 52% of Asian energy consumption.
- On average, material efficiency has been improving in developing countries in Asia and the Pacific at a steady rate of 1.5% per year.

materials consumption and GDP growth in Asia, as well as the need for “decoupling” this link through more resource efficient production systems and policies.

The clear drivers for these trends, signalling that regional development is not yet decoupled from environmental degradation, are urbanisation, increasing regional consumer demand, and the fact that the region has become the manufacturing hub for the world. Much of the global market relies on Asia’s manufacturing, thus centralising resource use intensity in the region for the production of goods exported into global markets and increasingly also for intra-regional consumption [UNIDO, 2014]. Ensuring that national and intra-regional trade policies and supply chains are aligned with SCP could greatly assist in achieving increased competitiveness of green goods and services in the region, including for export of these into global markets [Bucher *et al.*, 2014].<sup>2</sup>

Demographic trends are also increasing resource use in Asia. It is increasingly apparent that with 4.2 billion or over 60% of the world population already in Asia and this proportion set to grow, resource consumption challenges in the region are likely to continue (see Figure 3.1).

By 2030, Asia’s consumers are expected to represent the world’s largest consumer group, with consumer spending predicted to reach USD 32 trillion [ADB, 2010]. As the region’s middle-class swells in size, increased consumption of natural resources will likely occur to fuel growing consumer demand. Forecasting future resource pressures in the region and modelling the carrying capacity of regional ecosystems will be necessary. These forecasts and models can assist policy-makers in mapping critical thresholds of natural ecosystems as a result of “unsustainable” consumption, to better inform policy decisions and national planning. In addition, integrating SCP considerations into national planning will be essential to ensure that the availability of quality natural resources for generations to come is prioritised in policymaking today.

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<sup>2</sup>The global market for environmental goods and services was estimated to have reached US\$ 866 billion in 2011 and is expected to rise to US\$ 1.9 trillion by 2020. (Quoted from the publication by ITC, page 1.)

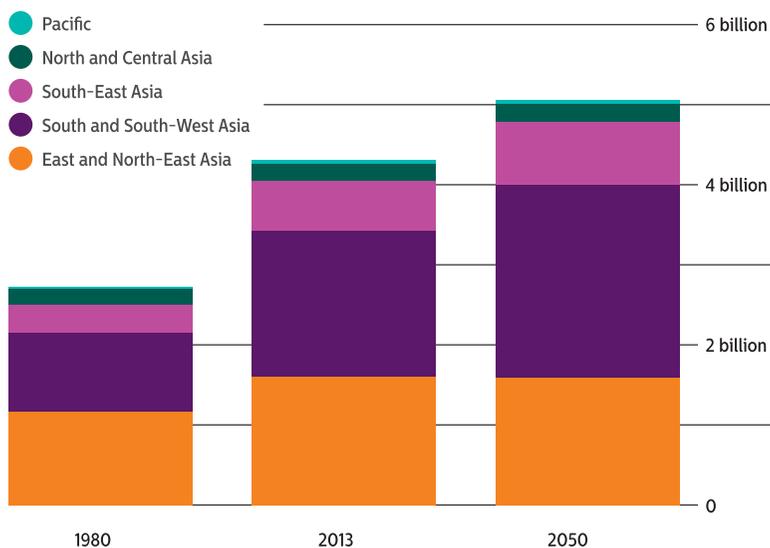


Figure 3.1: Projected population size by Asia-Pacific sub-regions [UNESCAP, 2013]

## 3.2 A Framework for National Environmental Governance on SCP

Based on the SWITCH-Asia Programme experience on SCP policymaking, this chapter introduces how a transition toward SCP can be promoted through a mixed strategy at three levels addressing both supply and demand (see Figure 3.2). This following section examines regional trends on SCP in public governance systems across Asia focusing on the institutional framework for SCP.

The “Institutional Lever” includes policies such as preferential trade agreements on certified sustainable products or green technologies, and for government to act as the main overarching actor driving SCP. The “Technological Lever” ensures a supply-side focus for the flow of goods and services into the market with a lower environmental and resource footprint. This lever also includes informing key actors in the market, especially the private sector, to increase resource efficiency in production, using approaches such as eco-innovations or cleaner production into business practice. Lastly, the “Cultural Lever” focuses on the consumer

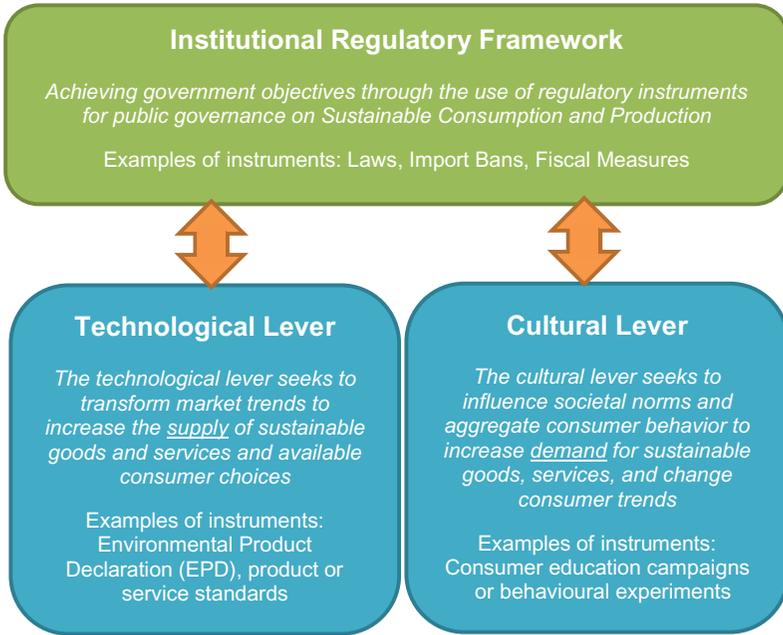


Figure 3.2: Institutional roles in national governance for SCP [UNEP, 2015b]

demand side of the market, shaping aggregate consumer behaviour, social norms, and sustainable lifestyles. This lever targets key institutions and actors involved in shaping social norms and consumer behaviour, such as media, education, and more.

In national public governance, an SCP policy framework encompasses strategies, policies, and instruments to consider and minimise the negative environmental impacts from all life cycle stages of consumption and production processes while promoting quality of life for all. SCP offers a holistic perspective to align society and the economy with the goals of sustainability, as well as concrete operational approaches targeting different sectors, stages of life cycle and various market players that make consumption and production choices. SCP also encompasses policies to support technological and social innovation, and there are a variety of policy instruments and tools that can be analysed in the context of national policymaking for industrialisation and especially in the context of national SD strategies [Bentley, 2008].

Table 3.1: Selected SCP policy instruments [United Nations, 2015, p. 98]

Policy Instrument	Description
Regulatory instruments	These include elements such as product and substance bans, emissions limits, production process standards, minimum product standards, and building codes aimed at determining which products, services, substances, and production methods are allowed.
Economic instruments	These include instruments such as fees and charges, taxes and subsidies, cap and trade schemes, tradable permits, feed-in tariffs, deposit-refund systems, etc. Examples include energy taxes, water user fees, subsidies for clean technology adoption, and feed-in tariffs for renewable energy installations.
Information-based instruments	These include instruments such as eco-labelling, consumer guidelines, corporate sustainability reporting, consumer campaigns, education on SCP, and training seminars for authorities and/or the private sector, all aimed at raising awareness. Most of these instruments influence the demand side and thus play an important role in stimulating the market for more sustainable solutions to which the supply side can respond.
Behavioural instruments	A behaviourally informed instrument represents a non-regulatory means to influence human behaviour towards more sustainable choices. Essentially a demand-side instrument and a recent policy innovation in and of itself, contain elements from cognitive psychology, behavioural economics, and cultural studies. Behavioural instruments aim to understand fundamental drivers for behaviour and use those to encourage consumers to change consumption behaviours in their choices and use of resources — such as through increasing water efficiency or energy efficiency behaviours at the household level.

*On the production side*, to increase competitiveness of sustainable goods and services, there are policy instruments that can strengthen the supply of goods, services, technologies, and the overall infrastructure required. *On the consumption side*, there are equally a variety of policies to change consumption purchasing trends among government, businesses, and consumer households. These sets of policy instruments are broadly classified as follows in the table below [UNEP, 2013a, 2013b].

These policy instruments should be embedded within a comprehensive national strategy for shifting towards SCP patterns in a national economy.

Certain countries are including SCP priorities in national development plans or five-year plans, as the crosscutting nature of SCP in public governance is more widely recognised [UNEP, 2013a, 2013b].

### **3.3 Global and Regional Progress on SCP Policy Agenda**

SCP has been present on global development agenda since the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. In 2012, recognising the importance of shifting to more sustainable patterns of and policies for consumption and production, at Rio+20, Heads of State strengthened their commitment to accelerate the shift towards SCP with the adoption of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP), in paragraph 226 of the Rio+20 Outcome Document “The Future we Want”.

UNEP, which hosts the 10YFP Secretariat, also offers regional policy support on resource efficiency and SCP through the European Union’s SWITCH-Asia Programme. In this vein, UNEP is tasked with the development of the Asia-Pacific Regional Roadmap for the 10YFP. From November 7–8, 2013, representatives from more than 50 countries met in Bangkok to craft a regional roadmap for a priority action agenda on consumption and production. This “First Asia Pacific Meeting of the 10YFP on SCP” brought together government officials, regional and international organisations, civil society, and business representatives. Asian countries highlighted that the region is leading the way on advancing greener growth and SCP policies. The regional message was clear — countries recognise their challenges and priorities, and are strengthening focus towards the implementation of practical solutions for SCP. The following were the identified priorities for policy support and capacity building on SCP [UNEP, 2014]:

1. National and regional indicators on SCP.
2. Assessment of gaps in knowledge and practice.
3. Sustainability reporting benchmarking schemes for industry.
4. Eco-labels, sustainable public procurement, and sustainable consumption in general.
5. Coordinated awareness-raising campaigns.
6. Financing SCP, including financing for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

7. Eco-innovation and adaptation of new technologies for cleaner production, and
8. On a sector level, energy, buildings, food, mobility, and tourism are sectors of interest as expressed by most of the countries in the region with sustainable cities, water management and waste being also cross-sectoral issues.

As a direct result of the UN commitment and the SWITCH-Asia Programme's efforts to advance concepts of SCP and greener growth for SD, policymakers in the region now have a clear mechanism to guide the 10YFP's implementation in the region. The current roadmap's activities have been implemented almost fully, especially with the financial support of the EU SWITCH-Asia Programme. This Roadmap will continue to be developed and implemented through the 10YFP as a multi-stakeholder process guiding regional action on SCP. The 2016–2017 Regional Roadmap is, at the time of writing, under development with more impetus, as SCP has become a key part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD).

### **3.4 SCP's Central Role in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD) and the SDGs**

In September 2015, the UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD). This agenda comprises of 17 SDGs and 169 targets. SCP is not only featured as a standalone SDG (12) to “Ensure SCP Patterns”, but has also been recognised as a “nexus” for the network of SDGs and their respective targets, along with the topic of inequality [LeBlanc, 2015]. SCP is linked to multiple targets across 13 of the 17 goals, showcasing the interlinkages and interdependence of the SDGs themselves.<sup>3</sup> For example, target 12.1 focuses on implementation of the 10YFP; while SDG 8 on economic growth and employment also explicitly mentions the

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<sup>3</sup>“SCP is reflected as a crosscutting enabler (in the form of both targets and means of implementation) for the achievement of many of the SDGs as well as in a stand-alone goal 12 on ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns” [UNEP/10YFP Secretariat, 2015]. SCP Indicators for the Future SDGs Discussion paper — March 2015. Online at: <http://www.scpclearinghouse.org/d/the-clearinghouse/94-scp-indicators-for-the-future-sdgs-discussion-paper.html>.

10YFP and SCP. Specifically, SDG 8's Target 8.4 states: "*Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10YFP on SCP, with developed countries taking the lead*" [United Nations, 2015]. With the transversal inclusion of SCP in the SDGs, it is expected that support for SCP's inclusion across national governance in areas of economic, industrialisation, trade, and consumer health policies will increase.

The Asia-Pacific region has actively contributed to achieving global support for SCP in the SDGs. The regional voice has been integrated into the 2030 Agenda as per the process and outcomes of the UNESCAP Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (SD), along with the First Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of the Asia-Pacific in 2015 [UNESCAP, 2015]. These regional discussions have highlighted the importance of achieving SD and growth "in line with Planetary Boundaries." In addition, the discussions highlighted the policy progress countries have made in the region on national models for SD. Some of the national models and strategies highlighted in this process included the sufficiency economy of Thailand (see Chapter 12); the "3R" (reduce, reuse, recycle) model of Japan; China's circular economy; the Gross National Happiness model of Bhutan (see Chapter 6), the Vietnam Green Growth Strategy (see Chapter 13), and Cambodia's Green Growth Roadmap (see Chapter 7), among others. The region's input into the global process to develop the 2030 Agenda echoed priorities of other regions in terms of national ownership, addressing inequality and social justice measures, including the private sector and civil society in policy development. In addition, Asia's position called for ensuring that the SDGs are integrated into centralised and comprehensive national development strategies to reduce any duplication and to strengthen governance. This latter point is especially significant, as currently countries often face policy recommendations that seem to suggest separate national policy documents responding to climate change, green growth, SCP, circular economy, SD, and similar concepts. In Asia, countries have especially taken national ownership and exerted their policy space to integrate global development concepts, such as SCP, into existing national plans and strategies, in a nationally determined manner.

### 3.5 Framing Asia's Progress on SCP — A Focus on ASEAN and South Asia

As regional trends have highlighted in the previous section, Asia is rapidly developing to become a region not just characterised by rapid economic growth rates, but also by the observed negative effects of unchecked consumption. By 2030, Asia is projected to account for two-thirds of the 4.9 billion global middle-class consumers, which will equal larger disposable incomes to drive a trend of consumption-led growth patterns in the region [ADB, 2010]. However, these trends towards rapid development come with dramatic challenges to well-being. As a result of unsustainable production and consumption trends and increasing industrialisation, consumer health challenges are on the rise with decreasing water quality, air quality, and more. Obesity, a “lifestyle disease” of over-consumption is also rapidly rising among Asian citizens, increasingly affecting children and youth in urban centres. Studies indicate that these lifestyles diseases, technically termed “non-communicable diseases”, are a growing health threat as Asia develops [WHO, 2013]. Addressing consumption through this comprehensive lens on consumer well-being, including health, is central to ensuring sustainable consumption. This comprehensive or systematic outlook on consumer well-being is now part of the newly updated UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection. These updated UN Guidelines include a comprehensive section on Sustainable Consumption, including specific policy recommendations for Member States on areas of health and more [UNCTAD, 2015]. Consumer protection policies in Asia have been hard pressed to keep up with fast-evolving consumption trends and risks. In the region, consumer protection policies have most notably made reforms to include e-commerce protection measures, but rarely consumer health and well-being concerns. With the region's rapid development, debt-fuelled consumption is also on the rise in Asia, financing a rising demand for products and the natural resources required to make them. Rising household consumption in the region depends on increased disposable incomes, consumer spending and potentially higher debt. In Thailand, consumer household debt has risen to nearly 80% of GDP, among the highest in Asia, whereas a decade ago it was only 45% [Sriring, 2013]. This signals a dramatic increase of Asian consumer household reliance on

credit to fuel spending on goods and services. National consumption rates are a fundamental part of economic growth and productivity in countries. GDP is often positively correlated to consumption expenditure. One can see that many countries in the region are today shifting from investment-led growth models towards consumption-led growth for a continuously increasing GDP rate [Mayer, 2013]. In some Asian economies, rising consumer debt is fuelling GDP growth in economies such as the Philippines, China and others shift to further reliance on consumption-led growth. The Philippines Development Plan (2011–2016) recognises the impact of the country’s “*consumption-driven nature of the growth*” calling for “*a re-balancing of the economy towards greater investments*” or savings [NEDA, 2014, p. 3]. This is a central challenge to be addressed in reconciling SCP with national growth policies in the region. On the one hand, consumption is a central part of GDP and national accounts, with many national policies promoting more household consumption. On the other hand, greater consumption trends are often coupled with negative environmental impacts. It is suggested that with increased resource efficiency and SCP policies, this trend can potentially be controlled, but the Jevons Paradox suggests otherwise [see Polimeni *et al.*, 2008]. With rising populations, rising incomes, and rising consumer demand, the region’s investments in resource efficiency may be cancelled out — continuing current trends of unsustainable environmental degradation. Exploring the effects of the Jevons Paradox will require greater country analysis at the national level as resource efficiency and SCP patterns evolve in the coming years. Equally, the dynamics and correlations between sustainable consumption and economic growth will require greater applied research in the Asia-Pacific region.

### 3.6 ASEAN Progress on SCP Policies

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has prioritised SD. The ASEAN Vision 2020 (adopted in 1997) aims for “a clean and green ASEAN with fully established mechanisms for SD to ensure the protection of the region’s environment, the sustainability of natural resources and the high quality of life of its peoples” [ASEAN, 1997]. Tackling SCP policymaking through the ASEAN group of countries is of particular importance given the region’s growing integration in 2015 into the

ASEAN Economic Community. In 2015, the EU SWITCH-Asia Programme completed four years of policy research and advocacy in Asia to strengthen regional policy frameworks and policymaker awareness of the benefits of sustainability in consumption and production. Southeast Asia or ASEAN has been a priority region for SCP policy support over these five years. In September 2013, as a result of the UNEP's policy advocacy efforts through SWITCH-Asia's Regional Policy Support Component and the strengthening of regional commitment to SCP, ASEAN Ministers issued a "Joint Statement on the Implementation of SCP in ASEAN by the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Environment" [ASEAN Secretariat, 2013]. This statement noted the commitment to strengthen "cooperation within ASEAN and with ASEAN Dialogue Partners, relevant UN Agencies and other international partners on the implementation of SCP" setting the basis for advancing SCP in the region, and establishing an annual ASEAN SCP Forum. The ASEAN Forum on SCP was hosted in April 2014 and served to strengthen ASEAN's growing commitment to SCP in priority areas, such as green public procurement and eco-labelling, and will continue to serve as a voluntary policy mechanism. This provides an umbrella forum for policy dialogue on the range of SCP policy priorities in ASEAN, however there are still topic-specific activities. For example, in 2013, the ASEAN+3 countries also came together to create the ASEAN+3 Green Public Procurement and Eco-labelling network formally entitled "Strengthening the capacities and improving the knowledge on green public procurement and eco-labelling in the ASEAN+3 region." The objectives of the network are to (i) Strengthen sustainable public procurement and eco-labelling in ASEAN, (ii) Enhance South-South collaboration on these topics, and (iii) Ensure a broad and effective participation of ASEAN+3 countries in activities of the 10YFP. Since the establishment of the ASEAN Forum on SCP, there has been progress on implementing the priority activities and topics outlined by this forum on capacity development for SCP and green public procurement for example. There has also been progress on policy change in the area of energy efficiency or sustainable consumption of energy resources, through harmonising Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) in ASEAN (see Box 3.2).

Ensuring energy efficiency is of particular importance to increase the competitiveness of the SME sector in ASEAN countries as well as saving

### **Box 3.2 Harmonisation of ASEAN standards to drive SCP of energy efficient products**

In 2015, the integration of the ASEAN Economic Community into a single market presents a remarkable opportunity to foster intraregional trade and uptake of high-quality lighting products to speed up the transition to energy efficient products, such as in lighting technology. At the 19<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Sub-Sector Network (EE&C-SSN), ASEAN countries agreed that high efficiency lighting solutions, such as light emitting diode (LED) technology and controls offer immense potential to significantly reduce energy consumption in the region. The harmonisation of lighting standards in ASEAN could result in an annual savings of over USD 3.5 billion in electricity bills for consumers and a reduction of 35 TWh in electricity consumption, as well as an associated decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of more than 20 million tonnes. At the July 2015 SWITCH-Asia regional networking event on Advancing Energy Efficiency in Asia through SCP and Green Finance [SWITCH-Asia Network Facility, 2015], UNEP launched a policy guide on Developing Minimum Energy Performance Standards for Lighting Products [Scholand, 2015] with the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE). The harmonisation of standards approach through MEPS has been applied to air conditioners as well in the case of the SWITCH-Asia ASEAN “SHINE/Efficient Air Conditioners” project. The project successfully delivered MEPS for air conditioners for the ASEAN market. In 2016, the approach will also be upscaled into other product sectors to achieve greater resource efficiency of energy consumption in ASEAN.

households financial resources in countries where the cost of energy is high. By harmonising energy standards in ASEAN, governments can ensure that inefficient appliances and technologies, such as low performance lighting products, are phased out of the market. Improving energy standards means that consumers have access to more energy efficient products, while relying on harmonised standards to make informed purchasing decisions. In 2015 and beyond as the ASEAN Economic Community’s integration strengthens, the creation and harmonisation of standards, labels and other policies to drive SCP, resource efficiency will become more feasible across ASEAN.

### 3.6.1 *SCP and Resource efficiency policy advancements in South Asia*

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) is an environmental policy body established in 1982 to guide the sub-regional policy agenda on the environment in the eight South Asian Countries.<sup>4</sup> Following the November 2013 UNEP meeting on the Asia-Pacific Roadmap of the 10YFP on SCP, SACEP's Governing Council issued a special decision on SCP which was formally adopted by South Asian states with the objective of promoting SCP within policymaking mechanisms of the South Asian countries. As a follow-up to implement the decision, in February 2015, UNEP and SACEP organised a "Preparatory Meeting for the Establishment of the South Asia Forum on SCP." UNEP contributed to the meeting in its role as host of the 10YFP Secretariat and implementing organisation of the SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Support Component. The aim was to establish an annual policy platform, replicating the ASEAN policy platform for SCP. In addition, the platform aims to build knowledge and networks for South Asian policy makers and stakeholders on how SCP policies can support SD in South Asia and its expanding consumer and producer base.

South Asian cooperation bodies like SACEP are taking steps to increase resource efficiency and SCP in member countries. In line with its December 2013 governing council decision, SACEP and the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), proposed the establishment of a South Asia Forum on SCP to serve as a regional policy platform convening annually. The South Asia Forum on SCP was formally approved by South Asian countries in February 2015 with the following objectives [SWITCH-Asia Programme, 2015]:

1. In the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, to provide a venue for policy dialogue and collaboration on SCP national, sub-regional, and regional strategies, planning, and implementation, increasing the profile of SCP in national development planning, and policymaking.

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<sup>4</sup>SACEP's member countries include: Afghanistan, the Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka.

2. To meet annually to assess progress towards SCP and resource efficiency in South Asia, and to propose policy priorities to address under the specific working groups of the forum in line with an annual prioritisation exercise.
3. To provide a venue for discussion on research and innovation for SCP that can support tailored, effective policy design and actions to effectively embed SCP in national and sub-regional governance.
4. To develop a South Asian resource pool and explore technical support services for governments and other stakeholders at national and regional levels in a transition to SCP patterns, and
5. To encourage discussion on emerging issues on SCP, including the development of links with SAARC and other regional bodies, to develop a South Asian community of practice on SCP in policymaking.
6. The Forum was launched by South Asian countries at the next SACEP Governing Council meeting in early 2016. Policy support has already started through sub-regional technical cooperation activities. In addition, national policy support activities on resource efficiency and SCP are underway in countries which have expressed key interest, such as in Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, and most recently India.

### **3.7 Integrating SCP Transversally into Public Governance in Asia**

Today, in an increasing number of Asian countries, one can see the inclusion of SCP concepts in national planning documents. However, one key challenge for the success of SCP policies in countries is local level enforcement to implement national SCP policy commitments. Starting the process of integrating SCP in a transversal way into national planning documents is the first step forward. Countries in the region are making concerted strides to achieve this and to prioritise SCP. This will only increase with the priority the SDGs have placed on SCP as a standalone goal together with its transversal links. The following sections present snapshots of the concerted progress specific countries are making in the region on mainstreaming SCP in national governance.

### ***3.7.1 Indonesia — a national 10YFP for SCP in national public policies***

The Republic of Indonesia is one of the most active countries in the Asian region regarding SCP policy development. Following the adoption of the 10YFP at Rio+20, the Indonesian government decided to develop a national 10YFP on SCP, the development of which was supported by the SWITCH-Asia Programme's National Policy Support Component (NPSC) for Indonesia which was implemented from 02/2012 to 01/2015. The SWITCH-Asia Programme's NPSC for Indonesia equally focused on demand and supply-side interventions for SCP, on public procurement and labelling. The SWITCH-Asia NPSC in Indonesia also delved deeper into tackling the aforementioned challenge of sub-national implementation of these policies in cities like Surabaya [SWITCH-Asia NPSC Indonesia, 2014].

The national SCP framework was adopted by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and the Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS) on 5 June 2013. Since then, the uptake of SCP in the national development policy has advanced further; the national 10YFP is now reflected in the Presidential Decree Number 43 of 2014 as one of the seven cross-cutting priorities in national planning. As of 2015, SCP was formally adopted into the National Development Plan Document 2015–2019 [Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Indonesia, 2015]. Joint planning and implementation are being undertaken by the government, the business and industry sector, and civil society to implement specific national commitments for climate change and SD through targeted policy action. The national framework puts forward a vision where quality of life is improved towards SD and builds upon three main goals: (1) the inclusion of SCP into national development planning; (2) asset management and service to stakeholders for SCP implementation: “SCP Resource Pool Indonesia”; and (3) “Quick Win” policies with thematic public programmes on: “Ecolabel & Green Public Procurement”, “Green Industry”, “Green Building”, “Green Tourism”, and “Waste Management.” One of the sectors where the government is particularly active is sustainable buildings and construction, due to increasing urbanisation trends in the country. The government is applying sustainable public procurement

practices in the buildings and construction sector. It relies on a life-cycle approach that takes into account not only the construction but also the usage phase of the building. The country is also actively engaged in consumer information, as one of the co-leads of the 10YFP Consumer Information Programme through its Ministry of Environment and Forestry. In addition, SCP indicators for eco-tourism, as well as a Green Hotel Award programme, have been put in place as part of a national Green Tourism programme. These policies and initiatives cover almost all of the six programme areas of the 10YFP and show early progress in Indonesia's implementation of SDG 12.1 on implementation of the 10YFP. To encourage financing for green SMEs and green business models, the government also launched a model policy in 2014 to "certify" green SMEs, and signal their creditworthiness to the finance sector. This also included the adoption of national standards and certification to define the green SMEs in the country's policy context. In addition, the certification of green SMEs by the government was seen as a way to provide a creditworthiness signal to stimulate demand for these SMEs in specific bids, supporting matching demand for green products from green public procurement policy changes. In 2009, the country also enacted a new Type I ISO 14024 environmental ecolabel called "Ekolabel Ramah Lingkungan," supported by Act No. 32/2009. This label is equally designed for specific green products, certifying these to simultaneously strengthen consumer information in the country. Overall, the Indonesian economy already shows signs of improvement in natural resource management, with the material intensity of the economy decreasing sharply in the last decades from around 11 kg of material per USD of GDP in 1970 to 5 kg/USD in 2008 [UNEP, 2015c].

### ***3.7.2 The Case of Malaysia — Embedding SCP centrally into planning and policy***

In the case of Malaysia, the government has centrally embedded SCP into the new 11<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan — the country's Five-Year Plan for 2016–2020 (see Figure 3.3). The Plan has 'six strategic thrusts' — and the fourth strategic thrust focuses on "Pursuing Green Growth for



Figure 3.3: Extract of the 11<sup>th</sup> Malaysia plan’s SCP policies and targets [Subramaniam, 2015]

Sustainability and Resilience” with an explicit focus on SCP and key SCP concepts such as “green government procurement.”

The SWITCH-Asia Programme’s NPSC for Malaysia supported exactly these types of policy mainstreaming activities for SCP. It started in 2012 and continued until January 2016, largely achieving all its original goals for policy mainstreaming, thanks especially to the country’s

political will and support for SCP policy. The SWITCH-Asia NPSC Malaysia was embedded within the Prime Minister's Economic Planning Unit (EPU). This strategic location for the NPSC into the central planning body of the national government demonstrates not only the importance of high-level political will, but also the potential policy successes available if SCP is prioritised in central planning bodies in a country. In line with this SCP policy support at central levels, the EPU has also led policy change in areas such as Green Government Procurement (Malaysia's term for Sustainable Public Procurement). The current 11<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan includes a target for at least 20% of government procurement to be "green" by 2020. This is complemented by a specific strategy focusing on green procurement according to feasible and impactful products as designated by the government, and policies to support businesses to satisfy this new demand. To guide further mainstreaming of SCP in national policies in line with the new SDGs, with the support of SWITCH-Asia, the EPU is also leading the development of a "National SCP Blueprint." This action plan will guide national activities on SCP until 2030, also the target year for the SDGs. It focuses on all priority government sectors for SCP, such as goods and services, housing, low-carbon transport, tourism, and other specific sectors.

Malaysia has also made of advances with applying or integrating SCP within the education sector, which is of crucial importance in SCP to achieve necessary changes in behaviour, lifestyle, and eventually the necessary social norms. Formal education can be a large and effective determinant to shape individual, household, community, and even national behaviour. In Malaysia, the government has embedded the topic of SCP and Sustainable Lifestyles into the national curricula to foment behavioural change in young generations through applied learning [National SCP Portal of Malaysia, 2015]. The SCP portal for Malaysia notes that:

*"The Government has formulated an education system that integrates the concept of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) across the school's curricula. Currently, all of the 27 teacher training institutes are contributing towards SCP and ESD by offering environmental education to*

*teacher trainees. Once the teachers-to-be understand the concept of SCP, they'll be able to convey their knowledge to their students that are the gem of our nation."*

In addition, Malaysia has implemented special learning initiatives through a partnership between the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Malaysian Ministry of Education to bring students outside the classroom for SCP learning and to "build an effective environmental education model to bring about positive behavioural change among students" [National SCP Portal of Malaysia, 2015]. This programme is implemented in selected schools at primary and secondary levels. Among many activities, the programme develops in-school herb gardens, vegetable patches, and aquaculture ponds, where these serve as "learning stations." Through these learning stations, students develop practical "hands-on" knowledge and skills to complement what they learn in textbooks through the integration of the environment and SCP in the formal curriculum.

### ***3.7.3 Overview of SCP in Asian national development plans***

In summary, there are many countries in Asia advancing SCP policy commitments, especially in national development plans. As Table 3.2 shows, what has especially been embedded into national planning documents is a focus on changing consumption behaviour — with national plans reflecting goals of changing "behavioural patterns," developing an environmentally-friendly "consumption culture" and similar goals. For countries to achieve these national goals, effective national to local implementation and enforcement of policies that can effectively change behaviour and social norms will be key in order to advance. Equally important is how to measure progress of national changes in behaviour and purchasing patterns in line with the SDG indicators proposed for Goal 12 on SCP. Countries will need to focus on increasing investments to change the consumption or demand-side of the equation, through education programmes, as in the example of Malaysia above, and more behaviourally-informed policies.

Table 3.2: Selected countries in the region mainstreaming SCP in national development plans

Country	Key National Plan's Inclusion of SCP
Mongolia	<p><b>Mongolia's Comprehensive National Development Strategy up to 2021</b> includes environmental commitments. The UNEP is also engaged with Mongolia to provide Green Economy and SCP technical policy support on SCP topics such as Sustainable Public Procurement and eco-labelling. Currently, the public procurement legislation is being reviewed with SPP to be enacted in 2016.</p>
India	<p><b>The 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (2012–2017)</b> denotes that “the issue of environmental sustainability cannot be ignored. We need a growth process that is consistent with protecting our environment” and it lays out specific financial instruments recommendations to ensure SCP — “<i>economic instruments can help achieve SD through their influence on behavioural patterns leading to SCP in the economy.</i>” It also mentions other central concepts in SCP and resource efficiency, such as energy efficiency, cleaner production, greening procurement, and more.</p>
Sri Lanka	<p><b>National Action Plan for the Haritha (Green) Lanka Programme (2009–2016)</b> was developed through a high-level participatory process and was intended to ensure that sustainability would not just remain a concept but would translate into practical reality. The Mission 10 area of the plan entitled “Knowledge for Right Choices” focuses explicitly on SCP by key strategies and actions for behavioural change among youth, women, etc. The plan also details specific Key Performance Indicators, baselines and details responsible government institutions for each strategy, and action area. For example, key strategies focus on: “6. Promote behavioural changes amongst youth towards sustainable production and consumption,” “7. Promote women to become change agents towards sustainable production and consumption practice,” and “8. Promote sustainable production and consumption practice amongst the general public.”</p>

(Continued)

Table 3.2: (Continued)

Country	Key National Plan's Inclusion of SCP
Vietnam	<p><b>Vietnam's Sustainable Development (SD) Strategy from 2011 to 2020</b> specifically focuses on SCP. It aims “to develop a civilised, harmonious, and environmentally-friendly consumption culture. Gradually implement eco-label and green shopping. Develop an eco-product market and community-based initiatives for sustainable production and consumption. Apply policies to correct unreasonable consumption behaviour.” It also focuses on efficient energy and water consumption. The <b>National Strategy on Green Growth</b> (promulgated in 2012), also has strategic tasks focused on “greening production,” “greening lifestyle” and “promoting sustainable consumption.” In addition, the <b>National Action Plan for Green Growth (2014–2020)</b> specifically mentions sustainable consumption and cleaner production, complementing other plans for SCP (e.g., the 2009 National Strategy on Cleaner Production in the Industry Sector).</p>
Thailand	<p><b>The 11<sup>th</sup> National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012–2016)</b>: the plan consists of eight development strategies and their respective implementation plans. SCP is clearly mentioned throughout the Plan. Chapter 8 details focus areas such as “3.2 A lifestyle that follows the Philosophy of Economic Sufficiency, the Thai way of life, and awareness of the benefits and values of natural resources and the environment” with clear objectives and targets for SCP and resource efficiency to be achieved such as in sub-chapter 4.1.2 <i>to promote production and consumption that is environmentally sound in order to redirect the country toward a low carbon emission society</i>.</p>
Cambodia	<p><b>National Policy and Strategic Plan for Green Growth (2013–2030)</b>: the policy and plan were developed with the aim to establish the economy with consideration for environment and natural resources sustainability. The national policy targets a balance between economic development and environmental protection, culture preservation, social stability, and sustainable consumption of natural resources to improve people’s living conditions and welfare. Meanwhile, the plan aims at developing a green economy by the effective use of natural resources, environmental sustainability, green jobs, green technologies, green finance, green credit, and green investment.</p>

### 3.8 Conclusions and Lessons Learned in Strengthening SCP's Inclusion in Public Governance

In national governance, an SCP policy framework encompasses strategies, policies, and instruments to increase consumer well-being and minimise the negative environmental impacts from all life-cycle stages of consumption and production processes. From experience gained since 2012 in implementing policy support on SCP in the region, there are a series of lessons learned by the SWITCH-Asia Programme that can aid in strengthening national planning and governance for SCP.

**Enhancing policy coherence:** in public governance, there are coordination challenges between ministerial mandates and policies. One ministry may implement policies that directly contrast the efforts of another. SCP is a transversal topic that requires policy coherence and coordination across national ministries to eliminate these challenges. Mainstreaming SCP across government policies can best be achieved through either a central planning agency taking the lead on this process or through embedding SCP as a priority in national development plans. In the case of Malaysia, both of these methods have been applied to ensure more coherent SCP policies in national governance. It should be noted in this regard that enhancing policy coherence is also Target 17.14 of the SDGs.

**Contextualisation of policy support in accordance with national planning processes and levels of decentralisation:** in many Asian countries, national planning is done through five-year cycles. Aligning policy support for SCP with these Five-Year Plan cycles is key to its success. In addition, countries have differing levels of decentralisation, which may centralise planning and policymaking or devolve this to state and local levels. Indonesia, for example, engages in a decentralised planning process from local to national levels — the Musrenbang (Musyawarah Rencana Pembangunan) — highlighting its higher level of decentralisation. Neighbouring countries, such as Malaysia or Singapore, engage in more centralised planning and policymaking. Ensuring that SCP policy support accounts for a country's decentralisation would allow for more

effective interventions tailored to national governance. In a country with greater decentralisation, more emphasis should be placed on minimising national to local SCP capacity gaps and including state and local governments in policy support.

**Nationally-determined and owned strategies for SCP implementation:** in line with SDG target 17.15, technical cooperation for SCP should “respect each country’s policy space and leadership to establish and implement policies for poverty reduction and SD.” In Asia, national ownership of SCP and the overlapping concept of green growth have developed side by side. It is likely the same will follow for the implementation of the SDGs and relevant SCP targets. While some countries may not explicitly develop National Action Plans on SCP, they may integrate SCP systematically into national planning documents or key sector-based policies. Ensuring that the focus areas under SCP policy support for each country are based on nationally-determined priorities through inter-ministerial consultations, as well as existing strategies or plans, will assist in this regard.

**Specialised focus on Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Land-locked Developing States (LLDCs), and Small-Island Developing States (SIDS):** while Asia has large diversity in the stages of development of its countries, the region also has the largest group of LDCs after Africa, also SIDS and LLDCs. These country groups require specialised attention and should be especially prioritised in SCP policy support, with this being delivered as part of a tailor-made and cohesive package of technical cooperation for attaining the SDGs. LDCs in Asia for example with the lowest resource intensity, such as Bangladesh, Myanmar, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and others, are poised to integrate SCP equally as governance is strengthened in their current development paths.

**Partnerships for collective impact:** SCP is now a central part of a global agenda for SD. SCP policy support to countries to implement this new agenda can be strengthened by delivering through a “one UN approach” and coordinated multi-partner activities in each country. The SDGs Fund has already launched with this objective of “delivering as one” UN in each country, under the inclusive leadership of each country’s UN resident coordinator. This allows for coordination with not only UN organisations operating in each country, but equally includes all development actors in

a country, such as non-government organisations to achieve the SDGs collectively.

**Increasing national policy champions and SCP experts:** to assist countries in achieving measurable progress on all SCP relevant goals and targets, countries will need national pools of SCP expertise. In Asia, policymakers in SWITCH-Asia countries have developed strong knowledge and skills on SCP, resulting in a network of experts that can act as SCP policy champions in their respective countries. However, other countries in the region and globally could benefit from increased national capacity and policy expertise, to ensure greater national ownership of SCP activities and guide these towards scalable achievements.

**Communicating the value-added of SCP for a resource efficient private sector:** SCP must always be presented in terms of the value added it can create. SCP can drive innovation, eco-innovation in business, and resource efficient production can increase business profitability for large national companies and SMEs. It can assist developing countries to avoid the “lock-ins” observed in developed nations, ensuring that they avoid inefficient modes of production, urbanisation, and lifestyles. SCP’s potential value-added must be communicated in an understandable way to all key stakeholders in the production and consumption process. This requires greater engagement and customisation of the academic or scientific language that can at times underpin resource efficiency and promotion of relevant “proof of concept” examples to all. Many SWITCH-Asia grant projects, which work directly with SMEs, have achieved successful results proving the business case for SCP in practical contexts.

**Ensuring SCP policy effectiveness through behavioural insights:** to truly change current resource intensive consumption patterns, policies must affect behavioural change and bridge the all too commonly observed gap between consumer intentions and actions [Umpfenbach *et al.*, 2014]. This includes both (i) the supply-side (through policies for ensuring more resource efficient global value chains, which promote life-cycle thinking and eco-innovation), as well as (ii) the demand-side (policies for changing consumers’ demand). Using insights from psychology and economics, behavioural economics addresses the complexity involved in consumer

decision-making by exploring how people (consumers) make choices. Policies attempting to influence consumer decision-making could benefit from these types of behavioural insights. Multiple countries emphasise the need for behavioural change in ensuring SCP (see Table 3.1), but in Asia few to no countries have begun to include behavioural analysis and insights in policy interventions and government programmes. The approach is typically applied by identifying a behavioural “problem” or challenge, researching the potential causes or contributing behaviours, proposing corrective actions, and a randomised control trial in the field. Aiming for scalable results and scientific rigour in changing the behaviour, the approach is being mainstreamed to address many different challenges. By including this component into policy design, countries can ensure greater policy effectiveness at lower costs to address consumption challenges of water efficiency, energy efficiency or food waste among households.

**Specialised policy focus on achieving SCP in MSMEs:** improved policy attention should be paid to increasing resource efficiency in the production and consumption happening within micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). As engines of growth for rural as well as urban areas, SMEs generate income and economic empowerment for producers and consumers everywhere — from developed to developing countries. As diverse as this business group is for many countries, it provides direct access to the Bottom of the Pyramid (BoP) to ensure SCP contributes to poverty alleviation, job creation, and income-growth for the majority of households. SMEs are the backbone of Asian economies and their development is essential for SD and economic growth. Given their central role to ensure SD in the region, SMEs are a key catalyst for the switch to really make sustainable patterns of production and consumption happen in communities everywhere. As the switch to more green production and consumption practices takes place, supported by enabling policy structures, finance and opportunities for scaling-up, SMEs can lead the way for green growth in Asia’s economies.

**Linking SCP with health and trade policy arenas:** lastly, SCP policies must be more connected to two essential areas, which have not been

extensively linked as of yet, despite being pivotal for sustainable consumption's global success. This first area is human health policies. SCP is greatly connected to areas of air quality, water quality, cleaner production, and reduced toxicity hazards, the rise of "lifestyle diseases", and more. SCP policy support at national level should be more integrated with national health policies, through greater inter-ministerial coordination and policy coherence for the systematic well-being of consumers. The second essential area yet to be systematically linked to SCP policymaking is trade. Given the growing global amount of "sustainable" goods being traded, SCP objectives could be greatly complemented by greater links with national or global trade policy. SCP and trade are centrally linked in policy areas of eco-labelling, sustainable public procurement, standards harmonisation, and more.

### **3.9 Conclusions**

This chapter has shown that in recent years, in particular since the implementation of the SWITCH-Asia Regional and NPSC, SCP has become increasingly integrated into Asia's public governance frameworks, such as overarching national development plans and strategies. In addition, countries in the region are prioritising a shift in the social norms and behaviours that lead to unsustainable consumption, promoting traditional concepts of sufficiency, and adopting newer concepts of green growth. On the production side, the region will continue to make advancements in resource efficient technologies and practices. Overall, it is clear that the region will require greater nationally-focused research, capacity development, and overall policy support to ensure SCP's implementation, especially at the local level. While national policy commitments on SCP increase, ensuring that policy support is customised to national contexts and to the challenges of local policy enforcement will guarantee that measurable progress can be made in achieving the SDGs on the ground. In addition, developing the regional knowledge base to advance SCP in line with national growth strategies will require greater attention, including the forecasting of future resource pressures as a result of national trends in consumption and

production. Developing this knowledge base, especially at the national level, can equip policymakers with greater tools to guide resource use in line with policy priorities and development planning. The region will continue to be a primary driver for global economic growth, including in the production — and now more so in the consumption — of goods and services. Prioritising SCP policy implementation, from the highest national level to local level policies, will contribute to Asia's SD, improving the overall well-being for the Earth's inhabitants — for those today and for those yet to come.

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