



2023 Asia Pacific Sustainable Development Forum (APSDF10)

Economic and Social Council of the Asia Pacific (ESCAP)

National Statement

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**Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)
and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
Development at all levels in Asia and the Pacific**

Madame/Mr President

Australia is steadfastly committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They represent the universally agreed roadmap for sustainable development and growth, underpinned by full respect for international law and human rights.

However, at the mid-point to 2030 our region is not on track to meet these ambitious Goals. Our progress has been uneven against individual targets and further set back by multiple and intersecting crises - in climate, health, food security and energy.

Australia is working in partnership with our neighbours to address these severe disruptions to people's lives, environments, and economies.



We want to realise a peaceful, stable and prosperous world, and a global system that can help meet present and future development needs.

To guide our work, we are designing a new **international development policy** to ensure our development program is fit-for-purpose to support our region and address shared challenges. We want to thank all the partner governments, international organisations and civil society organisations that have shared their perspectives during our policy consultations. The policy will reflect strong support for **gender equality**, which is not only good for women and girls, but also for broader economic and social development.

We will continue to listen to the priorities of our region, and I'd like to share some of Australia's work to progress the goals under review at this year's Forum.

We were proud to host the recent **Water and WASH** Futures Conference in February 2023 in Brisbane, which shared lessons on achieving SDG 6 in the context of a changing climate.

Australia has also extended and committed an extra \$36 million to the Water for Women Fund, (bringing our total to almost \$155 million to 2024), that supports climate-resilient, inclusive and sustainable WASH systems, and safeguards water security in our region.



The Australian **Infrastructure** Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP) is partnering with Timor-Leste with a \$97.7 million concessional financing package for the redevelopment of facilities at the International Airport in Dili.

Our investment will complement runway and terminal work, which is supported by the Asian Development Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

We are supporting partners to build more **sustainable cities**, including co-financing with Indonesia the Palembang City Sewerage Project (\$45 million, 2017-2024) to upgrade the city's sanitation system and benefit 100,000 people.

Development support must be practical, adapted to the challenges of the 21st century and ensure vulnerable countries such as **Small Island Developing States** do not get left behind. Australia strongly supports the work of the High-Level Panel to finalise a **multidimensional vulnerability index**. Developing an evidence-based way to measure and understand vulnerability is a critical step toward sustainable and effective allocation of development resources.

Beyond measuring and adapting to vulnerability, we need to mitigate the causes through urgent **climate** action. Australia has joined many others who have increased their 2030 targets – enshrined in legislation - but the science is clear that more ambition and rapid implementation is needed. Australia is taking



strong action to decarbonise our economy and we are working with countries to scale up global cooperation. We were proud to have taken an active role at COP27 in Egypt, particularly with our Pacific family on loss and damage, which we know is a Pacific priority – and we would be very proud to **host COP31** in 2026 with Pacific partners.

The current intersecting crises are testing us from all directions, but Australia is committed to working with our neighbours and UN partners to navigate these challenges and achieve a sustainable and resilient future for the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

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