



ASEAN at COP 28: Affirming the Net-Zero Commitment

ASEAN Climate &
Energy Insight
Q4/2023 : COP 28
Special Edition
by ACCEPT II

Muhammad Ilham Rizaldi
Aldilla Noor Rakhiemah
Indira Pradnyaswari
Muhammad Shidiq
Beni Suryadi



January 2024

Designed by
Rumaysha Aliffi Shanika

The recent conclusion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 28) marks a pivotal moment for ASEAN to pursue its goals for sustainable energy development. This year's closing edition of the ASEAN Climate and Energy Insight series highlights ASEAN's recent strides in clean energy. In response to COP 28, [The ASEAN Joint Statement on COP 28](#) stresses ambitious climate actions, advocating enhanced support for developing countries in mitigation, adaptation and finance, aligning with the goals enshrined in the Paris Agreement. It brings attention to the dire need for robust climate measures, increased financial support and the strengthening of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets to support regions battling climate change impacts.

In our [Climate Insight of Q3/2023](#), we discussed ASEAN's commitment to clean energy and climate action through collaborative initiatives and transformative projects. With an estimated USD 29.4 trillion investment required for a low-carbon energy transition, countries such as Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines are advancing their efforts in solar, wind and hydropower projects while fostering regional connectivity for sustainable energy trade. Their explorations into carbon pricing, green investments, and technological advancements, particularly in hydrogen production, underscore the collective dedication to achieving global climate goals and transitioning towards a more sustainable future.

This special edition spotlights the advancements made by the ASEAN Member States (AMS) towards net zero, particularly in the wake of COP 28. The unity demonstrated behind their resolute statements mirrors a collective ambition to sculpt a sustainable future, a theme that is central to the "High-Level Ambitions for Regional Climate Collaboration" section of this edition. At COP 28, ASEAN's unwavering commitment was evident through its active

participation in pledges and providing invaluable perspectives on climate action. These efforts will be further explored in "ASEAN's Commitments and Positions at COP28: Pledges and Perspectives" section. We will also delve into the next steps for ASEAN, focusing on how these efforts are

driving the shift to cleaner energy sources, catalysing investments, and nurturing a more sustainable future for AMS. Integrating climate action into energy policies is vital for AMS to reduce carbon footprints and drive innovation toward a resilient, sustainable, and net zero future.

High-Level Ambitions for Regional Climate Collaboration

At COP 28, the AMS presented high-level national statements that outlined their commitments and strategies for energy transition and climate resilience. These statements, coming from top government officials, reflected the region's dedication to sustainable development and climate action.

For instance, [Malaysia](#), led by H.E. Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change, Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, is aiming for a 45% reduction in GHG emissions intensity by 2030, with aspirations for net-zero GHG emissions as detailed in its forthcoming Long-term Low Greenhouse Gas Emission Development Strategies (LT-LEDS). These goals pivot on a key target listed in the country's Energy Transition Roadmap: a 70% share of renewable energy installed capacity in the power mix by 2050. Legislative measures such as the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act and the proposed Climate Change Bill support this roadmap. In addition, Malaysia is actively implementing environmental conservation by maintaining over half its land as forest and calling for transparent operation of the loss and damage fund at COP28.

[Singapore](#), represented by H.E. Senior Minister Teo Chee Hean, is targeting net-zero emissions by 2050, with strategies that include a significant increase in carbon tax and the promotion of cleaner energy vehicles. Despite geographical constraints, Singapore

is ambitiously pursuing solar power, aiming for 2 GW by 2030, and actively participating in the ASEAN Power Grid initiative for regional energy connectivity.

In [Cambodia](#), H.E. Senior Minister Dr Eang Sophalleth proclaimed the country's recent achievement of 62% renewable energy capacity and the plans to increase this to 70% by 2030. The nation has cancelled a major coal power project and is enhancing the efficiency of power generation, alongside a commitment towards sustainable hydropower. H.E. Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, emphasised balanced approach taken by [Brunei Darussalam](#) between national development and environmental protection, while aiming for a 20% reduction in emissions by 2030, as part of its 2050 net-zero goal. Brunei is also playing a critical role in regional climate action by hosting the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change.

Laos PDR, Thailand, and Vietnam also presented their comprehensive climate action plans. In [Laos PDR](#), under Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, H.E. Bounkham Vorachit, explained how the country is integrating climate change policies into its development strategies. As the ASEAN Chair in 2024, Laos PDR will emphasise environmental cooperation in its approach towards a sustainable future. [Vietnam](#)'s Prime Minister, H.E. Pham Minh Chinh, described his

country's development of programmes like the Green Growth Strategy, revision of renewable energy legal frameworks and promotion of innovative agricultural practices to reduce emissions. [Thailand's](#) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and

Environment, H.E. Pol. Gen. Phatcharavat Wongsuwan, reported that his government is revising its NDC Action Plan and enacting its first Climate Change Act, with a focus on transitioning towards a net-zero society.

ASEAN's Commitments and Positions at COP28: Pledges and Perspectives

Following COP 28, ASEAN's role in the global climate dialogue has risen in prominence. Amidst ambitious pledges and collaborative efforts, the region's commitment to sustainability is striking.

Among the notable pledges announced was: [118 countries, including Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Singapore](#), pledging to triple renewable energy capacity to 11TW by 2030. Solar energy is at the forefront of these efforts, in line with the Paris Agreement's climate goals. The focus is on collaborative efforts for resilient energy systems, financial support and streamlined processes. In addition, 63 nations, including [Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam](#) joined the Global Cooling Pledge which targets a 68% reduction in emissions resulting from refrigeration and air conditioning by 2050, compared to 2022 levels. This initiative addresses the urgent need for sustainable cooling practices amidst rising temperatures and population growth.

[Cambodia](#) has committed to seven key actions to combat climate change, including shutting down a coal-fired power project and adopting liquefied petroleum gas facilities, promoting clean energy through dam construction, aiming for a 70% increase in renewable energy usage by 2030, implementing strategies to reduce plastic use and manage waste, and banning coal plants and hydropower dams across the Mekong River.

France, along with several countries, including [Indonesia and Malaysia](#), and various relevant organisations, has unveiled the Coal Transition Accelerator alongside the Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA). This initiative focuses on facilitating just transitions from coal to clean energy through three key pillars: the World Bank's strategies to reduce clean energy investment costs in developing markets, a Coal Transition Commission to unlock new funding sources for transitioning existing coal fleets, and the OECD's, supported by the IEA, development of a "gold standard" for evaluating climate and financial risks related to private investments in new coal assets. Indonesia and Malaysia are integral contributors to this global effort towards replacing coal with cleaner energy solutions.

[Laos](#) joined 122 nations in supporting the Declaration on Climate and Health, acknowledging the significant risks that climate change poses to the country. With rising temperatures and increasing frequency of extreme weather events, Laos is calling for urgent actions to cut emissions, combat air pollution and promote sustainable living worldwide. The Lao Ministry of Health is actively involved in initiatives such as the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH), which is striving to transform health systems towards low-carbon models and achieve net-zero emissions from the health sector.

A Way Forward for ASEAN's Climate and Energy Initiatives

Looking ahead, the path for ASEAN nations in the climate and energy landscape is both challenging and filled with opportunities. The commitments made at COP 28 lay a solid foundation, but the true test will be in the implementation and scaling of these initiatives. A multifaceted approach is essential for a successful transition to a sustainable future.

Enhancing regional cooperation is imperative. The AMS can greatly benefit from sharing resources, knowledge and technologies. Establishing a more integrated energy market and fostering cross-border renewable energy projects can significantly bolster the region's capacity to meet its energy and climate targets.

Investing in innovation and technology is another critical step. Embracing renewable energy technologies and investing in research and development for sustainable practices in agriculture, industry and urban planning are key. Collaboration with international partners and the private sector can accelerate technological advancement and bring in necessary investments.

Capacity building and public awareness are vital. Governments need to invest in education and training to equip their populations with the knowledge and skills needed for a low-carbon economy. Public awareness campaigns are also essential in shifting consumer behaviour and building public support for climate policies.

Finally, ensuring that the transition is inclusive and just is imperative. This involves factoring in the socio-economic impacts of climate policies and ensuring that vulnerable communities are supported through this transition. Policies must be designed to be equitable, providing opportunities and minimising hardships for all segments of the population.

ASEAN must build on the momentum gained from COP 28 and turn its pledges into action. Geared to enhancing the coherence between the energy and climate policies in the region, the ASEAN Climate Change and Energy Project (ACCEPT) encourages and supports climate-friendly energy development in the AMS. ASEAN can lead by example in the global efforts to combat climate change and transition towards a net-zero future by focusing on cooperation, innovation, capacity building and inclusive policies.

This Insight is a product of the ASEAN Climate Change and Energy II (ACCEPT)

ACCEPT II is a 48-month project (2022-2026) by the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), funded by the Norwegian Government. This project supports the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) on energy and climate nexus. At its core, ACCEPT II elevates ASEAN member states' capacity to transition to Low-Carbon Energy Systems, steering the region towards carbon neutrality and a net zero future.


Implemented by:		Supported by:	
 ACCEPT II ASEAN Climate Change and Energy Project	 ASEAN Centre for Energy One Community for Sustainable Energy	 NUPI Norwegian Institute of International Affairs	 Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs


Contact us


 Soemantri Brodjonegoro II Building, 6th fl,
Directorate General of Electricity,
Jl. HR. Rasuna Said Blok X-2, Kav. 07-08,
Jakarta 12950, Indonesia


 (62-21) 527 9332

 accept@aseanenergy.org

 accept.aseanenergy.org

 @asean_accept

 @asean_accept

 ARNECC: go.aseanenergy.org/3okRr