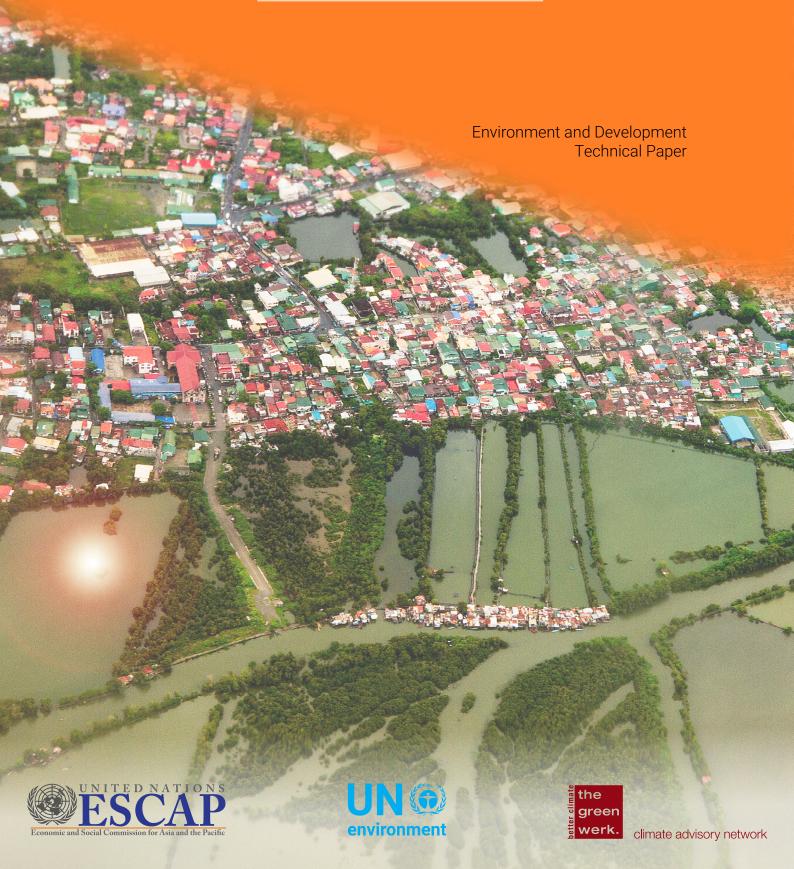
PROGRESS OF NDC IMPLEMENTATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC:

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK
AND PRELIMINARY FINDINGS





The shaded areas of the map indicate ESCAP members and associate members.*

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) serves as the United Nations' regional hub promoting cooperation among countries to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.

The largest regional intergovernmental platform with 53 Member States and 9 Associate Members, ESCAP has emerged as a strong regional think-tank offering countries sound analytical products that shed insight into the evolving economic, social and environmental dynamics of the region. The Commission's strategic focus is to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which it does by reinforcing and deepening regional cooperation and integration to advance connectivity, financial cooperation and market integration. ESCAP's research and analysis coupled with its policy advisory services, capacity building and technical assistance to governments aims to support countries'sustainable and inclusive development ambitions.

*The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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Environment and Development Technical Paper







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CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND

OBJECTIVE OF THIS RESEARCH

The Asia-Pacific region is in a critical stage of its development, being the industrial and food production powerhouse of the world for a decade. Accelerated economic growth has brought remarkable social benefits of considerable proportion for the region's poor, however, those achievements are on the backbone of the fragile regional ecosystems' health. The impacts of the increasing climate crisis arising from growing climate risks including slow and first onset risks and disasters require decisive climate action for accelerating the efficiency and decarbonization of the regional economies.

This research aims to review and analyse the

state of implementation and ambition of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) across Asia and the Pacific region to deal with this existential crisis. For this purpose, a joint research team from ESCAP, UNEP and the greenwerk has developed an assessment framework to assess enabling factors that can help countries in enhancing the ambition of their climate action and pledges.

This paper provides an overview of the methodological framework and preliminary findings of the assessment of the readiness for implementation of the NDCs in Asia and the Pacific region, ahead of the release of the full publication in 2021.

THE NEED FOR ENHANCED CLIMATE ACTION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

Countries in Asia and the Pacific urgently need to speed up climate action.¹ Despite greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions temporarily stalling due to COVID-19 lockdowns in the first half of 2020, cumulative emissions in Asia-Pacific are just below 35 GtCO₂. These projected emissions are almost equal to the record of 36.7 GtCO₂ that was reached in 2019. The UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2019² showed that the required global GHG emission reductions from 2020 to 2030 to limit global warming at 1.5°C are 7.6 per cent per year, or 29-32 GtCO₂, equivalent to the cumulative emissions of the six biggest world emitters.

In general, GHG emissions are projected to grow to 50 GtCO₂ in 2060³, revealing that the NDC commitments of the countries in the Asia-Pacific region fall short of keeping the

global temperature rise below 1.5°C or the available global climate budget of 400 GtCO₂, aligned with net-zero emissions in 2050 (see Figure 1).

Even when it comes to overall ambitions in the future and while nine countries (Bhutan, China, Fiji, Japan, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Singapore, Republic of Korea) from Asia and the Pacific region have announced their carbon neutrality target by 2050, and China by 2060 or before,⁴ as shown in the map below, there are still 41 other countries in the region that have yet to consider or make such pledges. At this critical juncture it is equally important to firmly commit to implementing those pledges as well as to raise the level of ambition of all other countries in the region for decisive climate action.

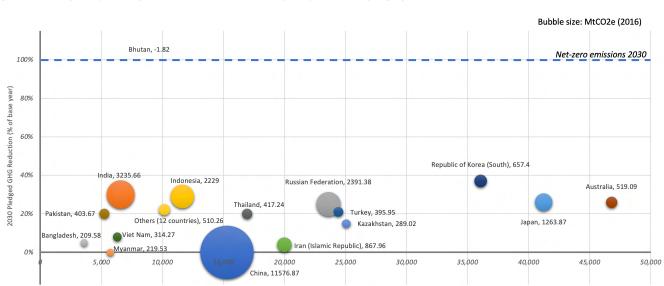


Figure 1. Asia-Pacific comparison of historical GHG emissions to GDP per capita and NDC pledges for GHG emission reduction

GDP per capita (Per capita PPP dollars)

Source: ESCAP

CHINA (2060)

TAPAN (2050)

MARSHALL ISLANDS (2050)

FIJI(2050)

NEW ZEALAND (2050)

Figure 2. Map of Asia-Pacific countries committed to carbon neutrality

Source: ESCAP

Indeed, further and more significant efforts to set up strategies and plans, initiate institutional and regulatory frameworks, engage with stakeholders and develop expertise and capacity for enhancing domestic climate policy are thus urgently required. An important possibility are the ongoing and forthcoming reviews of NDCs, specifically in critical sectors (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Priority sectors for mitigation in NDCs from ESCAP member countries

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