Asia Pacific PFD regional meeting

Regional Partnerships for Shared Prosperity

2-3 June 2026

Jakarta

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Executive summary

The Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of the Policy Forum on Development (PFD) was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 2–3 June 2026 with the theme "Regional Partnerships for Shared Prosperity: Scaling Green Transformation and Climate Resilience in Asia and the Pacific." The meeting brought together more than 100 participants, including development partners and regional stakeholders from across Asia and the Pacific, representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs), local authorities (LAs), the European Commission, EU Delegations, EU Member States, and financial institutions. The event aimed to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on climate resilience, climate finance, climate mobility and the localisation of Global Gateway investments. Through plenary discussions and thematic working groups, participants explored how development investments can better respond to local priorities, and promote inclusive, sustainable development.

1. Localising the Climate Agenda for Shared Prosperity

The opening session established the central theme of the Forum: climate resilience, economic development and social inclusion must advance together. Speakers highlighted the growing impacts of climate change on food security, livelihoods, biodiversity, energy systems and economic stability across the region. Discussions emphasised the need to improve access to climate finance for communities and local governments, strengthen partnerships among governments, CSOs, Indigenous Peoples, youth and the private sector, and ensure that climate responses are inclusive, rights-based and community-centred. Participants stressed that development success should be measured by improvements in community wellbeing, resilience and quality of life rather than investment volumes alone.

2. Localising Climate Governance and Finance

This session explored how climate finance can better support local action and resilience. Speakers from development finance institutions, local government networks, philanthropic organisations and cooperative finance institutions examined financing modalities and barriers to access. A key conclusion was that climate finance is available but remains difficult for local actors to access due to limited technical capacity and complex funding requirements. Participants highlighted the need to strengthen local governments' ability to develop bankable projects, improve financial literacy and simplify financing mechanisms. The session also underscored that adaptation must be funded along with mitigation, as both are essential for vulnerable communities facing climate impacts.

3. Breakout Sessions: Climate Finance, Green Investment, Inclusion and Indigenous Governance

Four thematic breakout sessions explored critical dimensions of localisation and climate justice. **Climate Finance and Local Institutions** focused on improving access to climate finance through stronger local institutions, direct funding channels, blended finance approaches and increased capacity-building. **Responsible Businesses and Green Investments** examined environmental, social and governances (ESG) standards, responsible business conduct and sustainable investment, stressing that green investments must deliver social and economic benefits alongside environmental outcomes while ensuring transparency and accountability. **Youth, Gender and Disability-Inclusive Governance** highlighted barriers faced by women, youth and persons with disabilities in accessing climate finance and participating in decision-making, calling for greater accessibility, representation and targeted support. **Indigenous Governance, Knowledge and Practice** showcased Indigenous-led climate solutions and called for stronger recognition of Indigenous rights, governance systems and knowledge in climate policies and financing frameworks.

4. Global Gateway and Just Transition: Localising Global Gateway in Asia-Pacific

Day Two focused on the European Union's Global Gateway strategy and its role in supporting sustainable infrastructure, climate action and economic development in the region. Speakers presented examples from Indonesia, Laos and the Pacific demonstrating how Global Gateway investments combine infrastructure financing with policy reform, skills development, governance strengthening and stakeholder engagement.

Discussions highlighted a strong interest among participants in better understanding the Global Gateway strategy and its potential relevance for cooperation in the region. At the same time, exchanges suggested that awareness of the initiative remains uneven, including among stakeholders already engaged in discussions on international partnerships. This underlined the value of continued outreach, communication and dialogue to support a broader understanding of the strategy's objectives, modalities and added value.

Participants emphasised the importance of ensuring that large-scale investments generate tangible local benefits, including improved livelihoods, decent work opportunities, SME development and strengthened climate resilience. Participants stressed that local authorities, civil society organisations and affected communities must be engaged throughout the project cycle—from design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. In this context, discussions pointed to several enabling factors that can help maximise the impact and credibility of Global Gateway investments. These included effective consultation processes around flagship projects, appropriate transparency and accountability arrangements, and clear communication regarding the broader rationale and priorities guiding international partnerships. Participants also stressed that community engagement should be understood not only as an important safeguard, but as a meaningful contribution to an enabling business environment.

The need for transparency, accountability, environmental and social safeguards, and long-term partnerships emerged as key conditions for ensuring that Global Gateway investments contribute to sustainable and inclusive development.

Breakout sessions on renewable energy and critical raw materials and urban and rural climate resilience further emphasised the importance of community participation, human rights due diligence, responsible business conduct, local capacity-building and robust monitoring systems. Overall, participants called for stronger multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms and greater support for local actors to participate meaningfully in just green transition projects.

5. Climate Mobility: From Displacement to Dignity

The Forum also addressed climate mobility as one of the most pressing human consequences of climate change. Speakers from Fiji, Sri Lanka, New Zealand and regional migrant networks highlighted the growing impacts of climate-induced displacement, migration and relocation on communities across the region.

Discussions emphasised that climate mobility responses must be rights-based, community-led and focused on protecting dignity, cultural identity and livelihoods. Participants highlighted the critical role of local governments, Indigenous institutions, community organisations and civil society in supporting displaced populations and managing relocation processes. The session underscored the need for stronger social protection systems, dedicated climate finance, improved legal protections for migrants, better regional cooperation and greater recognition of vulnerable groups, including women, children, Indigenous Peoples and persons with disabilities. Across both breakout discussions, participants stressed that affected communities should be recognised not only as beneficiaries but also as partners and providers of solutions.

6. Concluding session

The final plenary session outlined the key conclusions and recommendations put forward by the civil society and local authority participants during the meeting:

1. All partners, particularly the EU, investment banks and private sector**, should scale up their climate commitments**, especially in the area of climate finance, and ensure that **local stakeholders are supported and have access to diverse and flexible financing models and tools**. These should include cooperative finance, blended finance, philanthropic funding, community-owned funds, green bonds, and small-scale grants, to enable investments in energy-efficient equipment and renewable energy solutions, among others.

2. All partners should **support climate investments that respond to climate-induced conflict and fragility**. Climate investments should have a **holistic approach that empowers and respects worker's rights to decent jobs and livelihood, upholds Indigenous people's rights to self-determination, and enables the inclusion of other marginalised groups**, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, farmers, fisherfolks, pastoralists and Dalits.
3. The EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions and national governments in partner countries should **place equal and democratic partnerships** at the core of the Global Gateway strategy **through structured, participatory, and meaningful dialogue mechanisms among stakeholders, including local authorities, civil society, policymakers, and other relevant development actors**. This includes ensuring inclusive governance, transparency and accountability, prior consent and information to local communities in all decision-making processes and upholding the principles of development effectiveness and locally-led development at all levels of partnership.
4. The EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions and national governments in partner countries should **ensure that CSOs, LAs, and other stakeholders**, such as SMEs, are **included throughout the entire cycle of climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives - from planning and designing to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.** Their role should extend beyond implementation to include co-creation, decision-making, and accountability. This can be achieved by leveraging and strengthening existing platforms and partnerships, including decentralised development cooperation mechanisms, and by establishing coordinated multi-stakeholder bodies that foster inclusive, accountable, and people-centred climate governance, while responding to local economic and environmental needs.
5. The EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions, national governments in partner countries local authorities and civil society should **integrate, adapt and replicate local, national, and regional experiences and best practices** to inform global policy discussions on climate action in ways that advance social justice, equity, accountability, sustainable livelihoods, and community resilience. All partners should support and invest in peer learning and capacity-building of local communities, CSOs and LAs, ensuring the active involvement and ownership of local actors in climate-related investments, including under the Global Gateway strategy.

Detailed Report

Localising the Climate Agenda Matters for Shared Prosperity

The moderator of the session, **Michela Tomasella, Head of Sector, Civil Society Policy Dialogue and Foundations, Directorate General for International Partnerships (G2), European Commission,** kicked off the Regional Policy Forum on Development meeting by highlighting its role as a platform for dialogue among civil society organisations, local authorities, and institutional partners on key regional partnership priorities and development challenges.

Leonardo A. A. Teguh Sambodo, Deputy Minister for Food Affairs, Natural Resources and Environment, Bappenas, noted that climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are already affecting economic stability, food security, energy systems and livelihoods, underscoring the need for stronger regional leadership and collective action. He called for sustainable finance, regulatory reforms and international cooperation to accelerate green investments and infrastructure development. He also highlighted the value of partnerships with the EU, stressing the importance of policy coherence, technology transfer and capacity building in support of sustainable and inclusive development.

H.E. **Mr Sujiro Seam, EU Ambassador to ASEAN**, reaffirmed the EU's commitment to the development agenda at a time of increasing global uncertainty and stressed that the green transition and climate resilience remain central priorities of EU external action, highlighting the need to address climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation while supporting a transition towards low-carbon and sustainable economies. Referring to the Global Gateway initiative, he highlighted the EU's commitment to supporting sustainable infrastructure, connectivity, health, education and digital transformation. He also noted the growing relevance of digital transformation, economic security, peace and stability as interconnected elements of sustainable development and regional prosperity.

Dr Bernadia Tjandradewi, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific (UCLG ASPAC) reiterated that shared prosperity must go hand in hand with climate resilience and that development outcomes should be measured by their impact on communities and local wellbeing. She called for local authorities and civil society organisations to be meaningfully involved not only in the implementation of development initiatives but also in their planning, decision-making and monitoring, emphasising that effective localisation requires bringing people closer to decision-making processes. She further underlined the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships involving governments, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, youth, the private sector and development partners, and called for climate finance and investment mechanisms to become more accessible, inclusive and responsive to local realities. She concluded by urging partners to translate dialogue into concrete action at the local level.

The second part of the opening plenary was moderated by **Shivangi Hasmukhlal Chavda, Head of Programs in India, Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR),** who highlighted that climate change should be addressed as a development, governance and social justice challenge rather than solely as an environmental issue. Chavda stressed that communities most exposed to climate risks remain largely excluded from decision-making processes and face significant barriers in accessing climate and disaster-related financing. Calling for a shift towards locally led and anticipatory approaches, she advocated for more accessible financing mechanisms and transformative partnerships that empower local actors and strengthen community-led resilience.

From a youth participation perspective**, Monalisa Kashyap, Program Coordinator & Advocacy Officer, International Cooperative Alliance Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP), Committee on Youth,** underlined that youth participation in climate governance remains largely tokenistic, with limited opportunities to influence decision-making. She noted that many young people, particularly those from rural areas, continue to face systemic barriers to participation, unequal access to resources, and exclusion from policy discussions. Therefore, Kashyap called for stronger institutional mechanisms, including formal representation and voting rights for youth within decision-making bodies, and stressed the need to strengthen youth capacities to engage effectively with complex climate and policy processes through targeted education and training initiatives.

Jodel Dacara, Regional Coordinator, WINGS Regional Asia and the Pacific, approached the topic from the point of view of philanthropy and spoke about its growing role in supporting climate resilience and adaptation through flexible, long-term and locally driven funding approaches. He stressed the need to strengthen support for frontline communities and locally-led solutions and further identified restrictive regulatory frameworks and barriers to cross-border giving as key challenges limiting the ability of local civil society organisations to access philanthropic funding.

Pefi Kingi, Coordinator, Pacific Migration Partners, partner of Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO) called for stronger recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights within climate and development initiatives, emphasising free, prior and informed consent (FPIC), self-determination and meaningful participation throughout the project cycle. Kingi further underscored the need for climate projects to respect Indigenous rights to land, waters, culture and natural resources, in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

During the final part of the discussion and with the direct involvement of the audience, participants discussed the need to increase access to climate finance for local actors, simplifying funding mechanisms and investing in community capacities to engage effectively in policy and financing processes. The discussion also underscored the need to address the impacts of conflict and militarisation on vulnerable communities, and ensure that climate responses do not contribute to resource grabbing or exclusion. Panellists concluded by emphasising that effective partnerships require shared accountability, recognition of diverse forms of knowledge and expertise, and sustained commitment from all stakeholders to support localisation and inclusive climate governance.

Localising Climate Governance and Finance

Moderated by **Usha Menon, Trustee Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR),** the session explored different climate finance modalities and their role in supporting locally led climate action and resilience across Asia and the Pacific. Discussions examined perspectives from local authorities, development finance institutions, philanthropic organisations and the private sector, highlighting both successful practices and persistent barriers to accessing finance.

Lazeena Rahman, Senior Climate Finance Specialist, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Indonesia, presented ADB's main climate finance modalities, including policy-based, results-based and project financing. She highlighted ADB's support for both mitigation and adaptation initiatives across sectors such as energy, agriculture, water and urban development. She stressed the importance of consulting local communities and authorities through environmental and social safeguards, while acknowledging the need for stronger integration of local knowledge and participation in project design and implementation.

The second panellist, **Ravi Ranjan Kumar Guru, Deputy Director General, All India Institute of Local Self Government,** spoke about the growing role of local authorities in mobilising and managing climate finance. Drawing on the Indian experience, he noted a shift from reliance on government grants towards more strategic approaches focused on resource generation, long-term planning and engagement with private sector partners. He further emphasised the increasing interest of cities in developing climate-related projects and accessing innovative financing mechanisms to support local climate action and resilience. Responding to a question on successful climate financing mechanisms and lessons for local governments, Ravi Ranjan Guru argued that the main challenge is not the availability of finance but local governments' ability to access it, particularly in smaller cities with limited technical capacity. He therefore stressed the need for greater investment in capacity-building, project preparation, and technical support to help local authorities develop bankable projects and secure climate funding.

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Former Mayor of Kuala Lumpur; Property Advisor, PETRONAS; Former UN-Habitat Executive Director, stressed that localising climate finance depends on strong leadership, institutional capacity, technical expertise, effective governance, and community participation. She argued that adaptation measures are often underfunded compared to mitigation, despite being critical for local resilience. She emphasised the need to translate climate policies into concrete action plans linked to budgets and implementation, focusing on measurable outcomes and impacts rather than outputs.

Sukhreet Bajwa, Head of GROW+, EdelGive, India, highlighted the importance of place-based approaches that integrate local realities and community needs into climate action and financing strategies. She stressed the need for more flexible and accessible philanthropic funding for civil society organisations, and emphasised the importance of transparency, data availability and pooled funding mechanisms to improve access to finance and demonstrate impact.

When asked about the role of credit unions within the climate finance landscape, **Elenita San Roque, CEO, Asian Confederation of Credit Unions,** explained how credit unions have developed practical tools to help members reduce their environmental impact, integrate climate considerations into their operations, and promote sustainable and resilient community initiatives. In addition to that, she reiterated that education and behaviour change are critical components of climate action and described initiatives such as environmentally sustainable credit union operations, green savings and loan products, and climate-awareness programmes.

The panellists wrapped up the discussion by reaffirming that **key priorities** must include strengthening local institutions, improving access for SMEs and vulnerable groups, integrating gender and decent-work considerations, and addressing systemic barriers such as debt, tax injustice, and financing complexity. The session concluded with a call to focus on practical solutions, collaboration, and turning local knowledge into actionable, scalable climate responses.

Ensuring Just Climate Finance, Business and Partnerships

During this session, participants were divided into four breakout rooms where they discussed different topics and produced recommendations.

Breakout room 1: Climate Finance and Local Institutions

Bernadia Tjandradewi, UCLG ASPAC, opened the first breakout session by reiterating that, while climate finance is available, access to it remains highly unequal. The challenge lies not in the availability of funds, but in the ability of local actors to access and influence them. The breakout room discussion was framed around practical ways of ensuring that climate finance remains accessible, accountable and responsive to local needs. Participants were encouraged to identify both bottlenecks and solutions, with the aim of developing concrete recommendations for the final plenary session.

Donna Dizon, SVP, CLIMBS Life and General Insurance, CEO and Principal of the Co-op College of the Philippines, presented "Integrating Cooperative Energy Systems and Climate

Insurance with Nature-based Solutions: CLIMBS and RECO-OP**"**. She showcased a cooperative-led climate finance model from the Philippines that combines parametric insurance, renewable energy initiatives and nature-based solutions. Dizon explained how a federation of cooperatives had developed weather-indexed insurance products to provide rapid payouts to vulnerable farming and fishing communities affected by typhoons, droughts and other climate-related shocks. The initiative also links insurance premiums to mangrove restoration, creating a direct connection between climate adaptation and environmental protection. In this context, participants noted the value of rapid parametric payouts, targeted support for vulnerable farmers, and ongoing efforts to secure public subsidies and blended finance mechanisms to make climate insurance more accessible and sustainable.

The second project, presented by **Juliette Segard, Expertise France, and Linda Yuliani, CIFOR-ICRAF**, focused on climate finance and governance challenges in Papua New Guinea through the EU-funded Forestry, Climate Change and Biodiversity Programme (EU-FCCB). The speakers outlined efforts to strengthen national climate finance systems through the country's first National Climate Finance Strategy, aimed at improving coordination and ensuring finance reaches provincial and community levels. Drawing on the Managalas Conservation Area, they highlighted the challenges faced by remote Indigenous communities and stressed that transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms, strong local governance and greater participation of women and young people are essential to ensuring climate finance is equitable, locally owned and responsive to community needs.

In the second part of the breakout session, participants reflected on practical measures to improve access to climate finance, strengthen local institutions and ensure that climate action delivers equitable and inclusive outcomes at community level. Therefore, they elaborated the following key messages:

Key messages to the European Commission, EU Delegations and international development partners

- Ensure that climate finance reaches local governments, communities and grassroots organisations directly, while maintaining strong accountability and transparency mechanisms.
- Support blended finance approaches that combine public funding, private investment and community-led initiatives to increase the scale and sustainability of climate action.
- Invest in capacity development, financial literacy and technical assistance to enable local actors to access, manage and monitor climate finance effectively.
- Recognise cooperatives, community organisations and local institutions not only as beneficiaries but also as co-designers, implementers and monitors of climate finance programmes.

- Prioritise worker-centred and socially just transition pathways, including support for reskilling, livelihood protection and social protection mechanisms for communities affected by the phase-out of carbon-intensive industries.
- Increase the predictability, accessibility and delivery of international climate finance commitments, particularly for developing countries and vulnerable communities.

Key messages to national governments

- Strengthen national climate finance frameworks and coordination mechanisms to improve access to international funding and facilitate the flow of resources to subnational and local levels.
- Establish enabling policy and regulatory environments that support local climate action, including dedicated financing instruments, climate-responsive budgeting and national development bank mechanisms.
- Integrate climate resilience and environmental considerations into all development projects from the planning stage, rather than treating them as add-on components.
- Promote participatory governance processes that involve local governments, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, women, young people and workers in climate-related decision-making.
- Support local revenue-generation mechanisms and incentives, including green taxation and other fiscal measures, to finance climate action at the local level.

Key messages to local governments and local institutions

- Embed climate and environmental considerations into local planning, infrastructure development and public investment decisions.
- Strengthen collaboration with communities, cooperatives and civil society organisations to ensure that climate interventions respond to local needs and priorities.
- Invest in local leadership, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing to improve project design, implementation and access to finance.
- Develop monitoring and evaluation systems that promote transparency, accountability and good governance while reducing the risks of corruption and elite capture.
- Ensure that women, young people and other underrepresented groups are actively involved in decision-making processes and leadership structures related to climate action.

Breakout room 2: Responsible Businesses and Green Investments

This session was moderated by Sarah Torres, CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness Responsible Businesses and Green Investments, who introduced the discussion on responsible business conduct and green investments as key drivers of sustainable development and climate resilience. She highlighted the need to strengthen partnerships among governments, businesses, civil society organisations and local communities to ensure that investments contribute to environmental sustainability, social inclusion and equitable economic development. The session aimed to identify good practices, challenges and recommendations for fostering responsible and community-centred investment approaches.

The first case study was presented by **Dhiraj Katari, Indian Green Building Council,** presenting Policy Advocacy and Green Financing, which showcased India's experience in promoting sustainable construction and green investments. The presentation highlighted how certification systems, policy incentives and collaboration with government authorities have encouraged the adoption of environmentally sustainable building practices. It also demonstrated how clear standards, regulatory support and market incentives can help attract private investment while reducing environmental impacts and improving resource efficiency.

Gineng Sakti, Senior Officer, Senior Investment Structuring Officer, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), then presented "Strengthening Local Financing for Renewable Energy and Green Investment through Sustainable Finance Instruments in Indonesia". The presentation emphasised the importance of project preparation, stakeholder engagement and blended financing mechanisms in making investments both bankable and socially inclusive. It also highlighted efforts to strengthen local capacities, mobilise private and public finance, and ensure that green investments generate tangible benefits for communities while contributing to climate and development objectives.

The following floor discussion focused on the role of responsible businesses and green investments in supporting a just and sustainable transition. Participants exchanged views on the importance of community participation, transparency, accountability and environmental and social safeguards in investment projects. Discussions also highlighted the challenges faced by local authorities, small businesses and civil society organisations in accessing green finance, as well as the need for stronger partnerships, capacity building and inclusive decision-making processes to ensure that investments respond to local needs and priorities. During the second part of the session, the following key messages were gathered:

Key messages to the European Commission, development partners and donors

- Increase support for project preparation and capacity-building initiatives to help local authorities, civil society organisations and small businesses access green finance and investment opportunities.
- Expand the use of grants, blended finance and innovative financing mechanisms to de-risk sustainable investments and support projects that generate social and environmental benefits.

- Ensure that financing mechanisms remain accessible, inclusive and responsive to local realities, particularly for smaller organisations and communities.

Key messages to national governments

- Create enabling policy and regulatory frameworks that encourage responsible business conduct, sustainable investment and private-sector participation in the green transition.
- Strengthen environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards and ensure their effective implementation and monitoring.
- Invest in institutional capacities to support project development, implementation and oversight at national and subnational levels.

Key messages to local governments and civil society organisations

- Integrate climate resilience, sustainability and social inclusion objectives into local development planning and investment strategies.
- Promote meaningful participation of communities and local stakeholders throughout project design, implementation and monitoring processes.
- Strengthen local capacities to develop bankable projects and access available green financing opportunities.

Breakout room 3: Youth, Gender and Disability Inclusive Governance

This breakout session, moderated by **Julia Puno, Asia Pacific Research Network, APRN** explored how climate finance and climate governance can become more accessible and inclusive for women, young people and persons with disabilities. Discussions focused on barriers that prevent marginalised groups from accessing climate finance, as well as practical solutions to ensure their meaningful participation in climate action and decision-making processes.

The session began with a presentation by **Lishia Erza, Committee Chair, Capacity Building & Inclusive Economy, Indonesian Employers' Association (APINDO)**, on "TEMANI Inclusive Finance Ecosystem", a digital platform designed to connect underserved entrepreneurs with climate finance opportunities. She explained that the platform addresses the disconnect between climate finance providers and local communities. The initiative demonstrated that many barriers to finance stem not from a lack of capacity, but from inaccessible systems, complex terminology and a lack of communication between stakeholders. The project highlighted the importance of inclusive design, accessibility and multi-stakeholder collaboration in ensuring that climate finance reaches those who need it most.

Hemanthi Goonasekera, CEO, Federation of Sri Lankan Local Governments Association (FSLGA), presented the second case study, "Integrating Climate Resilience and Disaster

Management into Local Governance Systems", that focused on strengthening local climate governance through community participation and local ownership. In collaboration with local authorities, the initiative aimed at developing climate resilience measures, including legal frameworks and local by-laws that enabled councils to allocate resources for climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The project also promoted youth engagement through climate education programmes and demonstrated how community participation can create sustainable solutions that continue beyond the lifespan of externally funded projects.

The discussion that followed highlighted several common challenges across the region. Participants noted that climate finance mechanisms often remain inaccessible to grassroots organisations due to complex procedures, technical requirements and limited awareness of available opportunities. Women, young people and people with disabilities continue to face structural barriers that restrict their participation in decision-making and access to resources. Participants also emphasised that climate-induced migration and displacement are creating new vulnerabilities, particularly for young people, while disability inclusion is too often treated as an afterthought rather than an integral component of programme design. At the same time, a recurring theme throughout the session was the need to place affected communities at the centre of climate action and to recognise local knowledge and lived experience as valuable assets in designing effective climate solutions.

The session concluded with a shared recognition that inclusive climate governance is essential to achieving climate justice and participants agreed on the following key messages and recommendations:

Key messages to the European Commission, international donors and climate finance institutions

- Simplify climate finance application and reporting processes to improve access for grassroots organisations and marginalised groups.
- Increase direct funding opportunities for women-led, youth-led and disability-led initiatives.
- Ensure accessibility and inclusion are embedded in programme design from the outset.
- Support intermediary mechanisms that help bridge the gap between financial institutions and local communities.

Key messages to national and local governments and civil society organisations

- Integrate gender, youth and disability perspectives into climate policies, adaptation plans and financing frameworks.
- Address structural barriers that limit participation in climate decision-making processes.

- Develop policies that respond to climate-induced migration and displacement, particularly among young people.
- Strengthen participatory governance mechanisms that enable meaningful engagement of women, youth and persons with disabilities.
- Allocate local resources for climate adaptation and resilience-building initiatives.
- Support climate education and leadership opportunities for young people.

Breakout room 4: Indigenous Governance, Knowledge and Practice

Moderated by **Pefi Kingi, PIANGO,** the session explored the role of Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems, governance structures and cultural practices in strengthening climate resilience, supporting sustainable livelihoods and informing more inclusive climate finance mechanisms. Through a series of case studies and participant contributions, the discussion highlighted the value of Indigenous-led approaches to climate adaptation and environmental stewardship, while also examining the barriers that continue to limit their recognition and integration into policy and financing frameworks.

Altantuya Tseden-Ish, President, National Association of Mongolian Agricultural Cooperatives (NAMAC), presented the Sustainable Cashmere initiative in Mongolia. The case study demonstrated how traditional pastoralist knowledge can be combined with sustainable land management practices to address pasture degradation, desertification and climate vulnerability. By promoting rotational grazing, animal welfare, cooperative development and sustainable production methods, the initiative has helped improve livelihoods while protecting fragile ecosystems. The presentation was a demonstration of how Indigenous and traditional practices can contribute directly to climate resilience and sustainable development when adequately recognised and supported.

Building on this example, participants shared experiences from a range of contexts. Contributions from India highlighted the integration of Indigenous weather forecasting knowledge with scientific forecasting systems to improve anticipatory climate action and reduce climate-related losses among pastoralist communities. Participants from Fiji discussed community-led planned relocation processes in response to climate change, emphasising the importance of recognising Indigenous mobility traditions, kinship systems and local governance structures. Experiences from Aotearoa New Zealand demonstrated the role of Indigenous governance and traditional environmental knowledge in climate adaptation and natural resource management, while examples from migrant Indigenous communities in Asia underscored the importance of preserving cultural identity, maintaining community connections and ensuring that Indigenous voices remain visible despite migration and displacement.

In the second part of the discussion, participants reflected on the common challenges emerging from the various case studies and experiences shared throughout the session. Three overarching bottlenecks were identified:

1. **Lack of awareness and recognition of Indigenous knowledge systems, governance structures and practices.** Many Indigenous solutions already exist and have demonstrated their effectiveness over generations, yet they are often overlooked by policymakers, donors and development actors. At the same time, Indigenous communities are frequently required to adapt their knowledge and experiences to external frameworks and technical language in order to access support and financing.
2. **Loss of identity and cultural connections, particularly in contexts of migration, displacement and climate-induced relocation**. Cultural identity, language, traditions and community relationships are essential components of resilience and wellbeing. The erosion of these connections can undermine both social cohesion and the transmission of knowledge across generations.
3. **Persistent inequalities, discrimination and the limited inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in decision-making.** Related concerns included the absence of Indigenous data, insufficient recognition of Indigenous data sovereignty and climate finance mechanisms that fail to reflect Indigenous governance systems, values and priorities.

A recurring theme throughout the discussion was the need to "Reaffirm, Reconnect and Reinvest" in Indigenous people and their solutions. Participants stressed the importance of reaffirming Indigenous knowledge systems, governance structures and cultural identities as valuable sources of resilience and sustainable development. They highlighted the need to reconnect indigenous communities with decision-making processes, climate finance mechanisms and broader policy discussions, while also strengthening links between indigenous and scientific knowledge systems. Finally, participants called for greater investment in Indigenous-led initiatives, local governance structures and long-term partnerships that support community resilience, environmental stewardship and sustainable livelihoods. While Indigenous solutions exist, they remain insufficiently recognised and supported. Addressing this gap requires moving from transactional approaches towards transformative partnerships based on mutual respect, reciprocity and shared responsibility.

During the final part of the discussion, participants identified a number of key messages directed at policymakers, donors and development partners.

Key messages to the European Commission, EU Delegations, international donors and climate finance institutions

- Recognise Indigenous Peoples as partners, leaders and knowledge holders in climate action, rather than solely as beneficiaries of climate finance.

- Design climate finance mechanisms that are accessible to Indigenous communities and support Indigenous-led initiatives directly.
- Increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous governance systems, cultural practices and knowledge systems when designing funding programmes.
- Support approaches that combine Indigenous and scientific knowledge to strengthen climate adaptation, resilience and disaster preparedness.
- Promote Indigenous data sovereignty and support the collection of locally relevant data that reflects Indigenous priorities and realities.
- Move beyond transactional funding models and support long-term partnerships based on trust, reciprocity and mutual learning.

Key messages to national governments and policymakers

- Strengthen legal and policy frameworks that recognise and protect Indigenous rights, knowledge systems and governance structures.
- Ensure the meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples in climate-related decision-making processes at all levels.
- Integrate Indigenous knowledge and traditional practices into climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction and environmental management policies.
- Recognise and address the disproportionate impacts of climate change, displacement and environmental degradation on Indigenous communities.
- Improve coordination between government institutions and Indigenous organisations to ensure that policies reflect local realities and priorities.

Key messages to local governments and public authorities and civil society organisations

- Work directly with Indigenous communities when designing and implementing climate adaptation and resilience initiatives.
- Recognise existing Indigenous governance structures, community networks and social support systems as assets for climate action.
- Support community-led approaches to climate adaptation, environmental stewardship and planned relocation where relevant.
- Promote culturally appropriate consultation processes that respect Indigenous values, traditions and decision-making systems.

In conclusion, participants agreed that Indigenous solutions already exist but remain under-recognised and under-utilised. Climate action and climate finance frameworks should therefore build upon Indigenous knowledge, governance systems and cultural strengths to deliver more equitable, sustainable and locally led solution. During the next plenary session, moderators of the previous breakout rooms reported in plenary the main key messages identified during the former discussions.

Usha Menon, kicked off the closing session stressing that ESG is not only about environmental performance, but also about social responsibility and good governance as foundations for long-term business sustainability. She highlighted the importance of involving communities, civil society and local authorities in decision-making processes, while stressing that localised and context-specific approaches are most effective when built on trust, strong relationships and long-term engagement.

Bernadia Tjandradewi reported key messages from the panel on Climate Finance and Local Institutions. By highlighting examples from Papua New Guinea and the Philippines, the panel demonstrated how climate finance can support both environmental sustainability and community livelihoods. Participants stressed that climate finance is most effective when designed around local realities, with local governments, cooperatives, trade unions and community organisations playing a central role in building trust, ownership and long-term sustainability. A key message was that successful climate investments must combine environmental objectives with livelihood benefits, social inclusion and meaningful community participation. Participants also noted that access to finance remains a major challenge, not only because of funding gaps but also due to limited technical capacity to develop bankable projects and navigate financing mechanisms. Strengthening local capacities, simplifying access to funding and promoting locally-led approaches were identified as essential for advancing climate resilience and sustainable development.

Sarah Torres presented the outcomes of the previous discussion on Responsible Businesses and Green Investments and briefly reported the main key messages. She stressed that investing in environmental, social and governance standards and business and human rights frameworks at an early stage generates long-term benefits by strengthening infrastructure, institutional capacity and sustainable business practices. Participants also stressed that governments and development partners should incentivise companies that already uphold strong ESG standards, as this can encourage wider adoption of responsible business conduct. Another key point emerging from the discussion was that solutions must be context-specific, recognising that challenges and opportunities differ significantly across countries and communities. Torres also underlined the importance of due diligence, accountability and transparent monitoring systems, ensuring that businesses remain accountable not only to governments and investors but also to affected communities. Strong community participation, multi-stakeholder engagement and trust-building were identified as essential elements of successful investment projects. Finally, participants emphasised the need to invest in capacity development for businesses, particularly those that are not yet prepared to implement ESG frameworks, and to support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as drivers of inclusive growth, national industrialisation and sustainable development.

Julia Puno, moderator of the panel on Youth, Gender, Disability and Inclusive Governance, highlighted that there is no shortage of successful examples of inclusive governance across Asia and the Pacific, with participants sharing experiences ranging from community-led microfinance initiatives and climate insurance schemes to local employment generation, sustainable agriculture and resource management. However, Puno reported that participants also recognised that significant structural barriers remain, including bureaucratic obstacles, limited political will, persistent gender inequalities and cultural practices that restrict participation. Accessibility was identified as a major challenge, particularly in relation to information, climate finance and opportunities for persons with disabilities. Finally, Puno stressed the need to strengthen support for inclusive and locally led solutions, promote co-creation and accessibility in all policies and programmes, and further explore the role of digital tools and artificial intelligence in expanding access to finance and decision-making processes.

Pefi Kingi, moderator of the panel on Indigenous Governance, Knowledge and Practice, reported the panel's key messages. Kingi reported that people, relationships and mutual trust must remain at the centre of climate and development initiatives. A key concern was the disproportionate impact of climate change, displacement and migration on Indigenous Peoples, including loss of identity, language, land and access to resources. Participants stressed the importance of combining Indigenous and scientific knowledge, strengthening awareness and policy advocacy, and using rights-based frameworks such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The discussion also drew attention to the growing challenges faced by climate migrants and displaced communities, including statelessness, poverty and vulnerability, underscoring the need for more inclusive and equitable climate responses.

In her intervention, Sukhreet Bajwa, noted that, despite different perspectives and narratives, all stakeholders share the common goal of advancing climate action and sustainable development. Responsible business cannot exist without people, and that Indigenous knowledge and community perspectives should be integrated into climate and business solutions alongside the contributions of all stakeholders.

Elenita San Roque emphasised that localising climate finance is essential to translating global climate commitments into tangible improvements in people's lives. Climate finance should not only address environmental challenges but also contribute to poverty reduction, resilience and sustainable development. Drawing on the experience of the cooperative finance sector, San Roque highlighted commitments to support enabling regulatory frameworks, provide training and best-practice resources, facilitate the exchange of successful climate finance initiatives, and promote cooperatives as key actors in delivering inclusive and equitable climate solutions.

Ravi Ranjan Kumar Guru concluded by emphasising three priorities emerging from the discussions: strengthening local government capacities, fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, and improving access to climate finance. He highlighted the importance of peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange to support effective climate action. He also stressed that collaboration between local authorities, civil society, academia, youth, women's organisations and the private sector is essential for delivering inclusive solutions. Finally, he called for dedicated financing mechanisms and stronger project preparation support to ensure climate finance reaches local communities and municipalities.

Global Gateway and Just Transition: Localising Global Gateway in ASPAC

Michela Tomasella, opened the session by introducing the European Union's Global Gateway Strategy as the overarching framework guiding EU partnerships and investments worldwide, including in the Asia-Pacific region. She emphasised the EU's shift towards a partnership-based approach, focused on building and strengthening cooperation with partner countries, and outlined the session's objective of exploring both the strategic vision behind Global Gateway and its practical implementation through concrete examples from EU institutions, development agencies and field programmes.

Thibaut Portevin, International Aid / Cooperation Officer – Geographic coordination – ASEAN, European Commission, DG INTPA C2 presented the Global Gateway as the EU's external investment strategy aimed at promoting sustainable connectivity and infrastructure. He stressed that the strategy goes beyond infrastructure by also supporting policy reform, skills development and institutional capacity building through a comprehensive "360-degree approach". He noted that climate action is a cross-cutting priority, with more than half of Global Gateway flagship projects in Asia and the Pacific focused on climate and energy. Responding to questions on local impact, he emphasised that the EU prioritises the quality, sustainability and long-term benefits of investments rather than simply their scale or speed of delivery. He also underlined the importance of stakeholder participation throughout project design and implementation, while acknowledging the practical challenges of ensuring meaningful consultations within complex political and investment processes. Finally, he stressed that civil society organisations and local authorities are not only consulted but are actively supported through dedicated programmes, capacity-building initiatives and multi-year partnerships aimed at ensuring that communities directly benefit from the green transition and wider Global Gateway investments.

The second panelist, **Faaris Pranawa, Director of Public Financing and Project Development, PT Sarana Multi Infrastruktur (PT SMI)**, presented "Infrastructure Investment – Indonesia (S4i)" and explained how the organisation supports the implementation of Global Gateway investments by transforming project concepts into bankable projects. He stressed the importance of rigorous project preparation, including technical, financial, environmental and social assessments, as well as meaningful consultation with affected communities through free, prior and informed consent processes. He particularly emphasised the value of blended finance mechanisms in mobilising public and private investment, while strengthening governance and accountability.

Cécile Leroy, Programme Manager, EU Delegation to Laos, presented "[Trade Investment and Connectivity for Agriculture and Forestry (TICAF)]**"** programme as a flagship Global Gateway initiative that combines sustainable agriculture, forestry, social protection, connectivity and private sector development. She explained that the programme applies the Global Gateway's 360-degree approach, integrating infrastructure investments with labour rights, skills development, governance, market access and support for small and medium-sized enterprises. Civil society organisations and local authorities are involved both as implementing partners and beneficiaries through capacity-building, consultations and service delivery at community level. Leroy emphasised that TICAF aims to strengthen rural livelihoods by diversifying income opportunities, improving market access, supporting social protection, and integrating local and traditional knowledge into sustainable agricultural and forestry practices.

Finally, **Caroline Edant, Deputy Director, French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement, AFD) in Jakarta**, presented "Kiwa Initiative," a Global Gateway flagship programme supporting climate resilience across 17 Pacific Island countries and territories through nature-based solutions. The initiative combines regional cooperation with locally led action and currently supports 45 projects focused on ecosystem restoration, sustainable agriculture, fisheries management and community resilience. The programme places strong emphasis on Indigenous knowledge, community participation, inclusive governance and free, prior and informed consent. Beyond financing projects, KIWA has fostered a regional community of practice, enabling knowledge-sharing, peer learning and collaboration on climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation across the Pacific.

The discussion that followed focused on how Global Gateway investments can deliver tangible benefits to local communities while ensuring meaningful participation, accountability and sustainability. Panellists reiterated the importance of involving civil society organisations, local authorities and affected communities throughout the project cycle, from design and priority-setting to implementation and monitoring. Questions were also raised regarding the balance between grants and loans, debt sustainability, public participation, transparency mechanisms and safeguards for communities affected by large-scale infrastructure projects.

In response, EU representatives stressed that the Global Gateway's added value lies in its 360-degree approach, combining infrastructure investments with capacity building, policy support and stakeholder engagement. Speakers highlighted existing mechanisms for consultation with civil society and local authorities, as well as efforts to strengthen local capacities and promote inclusive governance. The discussion also underscored the importance of community-led approaches, peer learning, environmental and social safeguards, and long-term partnerships to ensure that investments contribute to sustainable development, climate resilience and improved livelihoods across the region.

Renewable energy and critical raw materials (CRM)

The session explored how Global Gateway investments linked to the green transition can deliver sustainable and inclusive benefits for local communities. Discussions focused on critical raw materials, renewable energy, transport connectivity and just transition initiatives across Asia-Pacific, highlighting the importance of transparency, accountability, community participation and multi-stakeholder partnerships in ensuring that large-scale investments contribute to equitable and sustainable development. Participants also noted that inclusion depends not only on formal participation, but equally on affordability and credible consultation processes, particularly where transition measures affect jobs, livelihoods and household costs.

Monalisa Kashyap and Marc Noel, moderating the session and representing the International Cooperatives Alliance (ICA), highlighted the role of cooperatives in supporting inclusive development and community resilience within the green transition. They explained how cooperative models can strengthen local ownership, create decent work opportunities and ensure that economic benefits are more equitably distributed. Their intervention emphasised the importance of democratic governance, social dialogue and community participation in Global Gateway investments. They argued that local economic actors should be involved not only as beneficiaries but also as active partners in shaping development priorities and ensuring long-term sustainability.

Rekson Silaban, Head of the National Advisory Board of KSBSI (Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Unions), presented the *Just Energy Transition Partnership Indonesia (JETP)*. He stressed that the transition to a low-carbon economy must be socially just and centred on workers and affected communities. Silaban highlighted the need for decent employment opportunities, reskilling programmes, social protection measures and effective social dialogue between governments, employers and trade unions. He also noted that consultations on the JETP policy and investment plan had provided only limited time for meaningful engagement and raised the concerns that the Ministry of Labour had not been involved sufficiently despite the potentially significant effects of JETP on employment. Finally, Silaban argued that the JETP still lacks a clear definition of what constitutes a just transition. He emphasised that successful energy transitions require balancing climate objectives with economic security, labour rights and social inclusion.

Assel Kurmantayeva, Project Manager at the Civil Society Development Association ARGO, presented experiences from civil society monitoring of critical raw materials projects in Kazakhstan. She explained that growing investments in mining, renewable energy and transport infrastructure offer important opportunities for economic diversification and EU-Kazakhstan cooperation, but also generate concerns regarding water use, land access, environmental monitoring and community participation. Kurmantayeva noted that access to environmental and social information remains uneven, while many local communities and civil society organisations lack the technical capacity to engage effectively in ESG processes. She highlighted the importance of transparency, accessible project information and stronger local monitoring mechanisms to ensure meaningful community participation throughout project implementation.

Betty Yolanda, from the **Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC),** presented the Corporate Accountability, Resilience and Participation for an Equitable Transition (CARPET) project and the Renewable Energy and Human Rights Benchmark. Her intervention focused on strengthening corporate accountability and ensuring that renewable energy investments respect human rights and community interests. Yolanda highlighted the importance of robust human rights due diligence, transparent grievance mechanisms and independent monitoring systems. She argued that governments, businesses and investors share responsibility for ensuring that green transition projects deliver social as well as environmental benefits, while providing affected communities with meaningful opportunities to participate in decision-making processes.

During the discussion that followed, participants emphasised that large-scale Global Gateway investments frequently face challenges related to transparency, access to information and meaningful community participation. Concerns were raised that local communities, women, young people and vulnerable groups are often consulted too late in project processes, limiting their ability to influence decisions. Participants also noted that environmental and social impact assessments are frequently difficult to access or understand, particularly in rural and remote areas. Several speakers highlighted the need to strengthen local capacities for monitoring, improve public access to project information and ensure that benefits such as employment, skills development and local business opportunities are visible at community level. Participants also drew attention to the affordability dimension of the energy transition. Several reported that renewables are associated with increased costs, including in Mongolia, where it was noted that households have to pay for renewable energy projects, and in Indonesia, where renewables were described as more expensive than coal. In this context, participants recommended placing stronger emphasis on affordability in the design and implementation of transition-related investments and policies.

The discussion also underscored the role of civil society organisations as trusted intermediaries that can bridge communication between communities, companies and public authorities while supporting accountability, transparency and risk mitigation.

The following key recommendations emerged from the discussion:

- Embed multi-stakeholder engagement from project inception, ensuring local authorities, communities and CSOs participate in project design, implementation and oversight.

- Make environmental and social impact assessments, ESG disclosures and project performance data publicly accessible and understandable to affected communities.

- Build long-term capacity for local governments, CSOs and community groups to engage effectively in ESG processes, project monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

- Establish permanent local consultation and community monitoring platforms throughout the lifecycle of Global Gateway and green transition investments.

- Prioritise local economic benefits by creating decent jobs, supporting SMEs, expanding vocational training and promoting women's economic participation.

- Strengthen safeguards to protect land rights, water resources and local livelihoods, particularly in renewable energy and critical raw materials projects.

- Ensure accessible grievance mechanisms that enable communities to raise concerns, seek remedies and track responses transparently.

- Support independent civil society oversight and evidence-based monitoring to improve transparency, accountability and public trust.

- Integrate human rights, labour standards and gender equality into all green transition, renewable energy and critical raw materials investments.

- Strengthen cooperation among the EU, governments, investors, civil society and local communities to ensure Global Gateway investments deliver sustainable and socially inclusive outcomes.

Urban and rural climate resilience

Moderated by **Claire Frost, Commonwealth Local Government Forum, CLGF,** the session examined the role of local authorities and civil society in Global Gateway initiatives, focusing on how partnerships, financing mechanisms and governance approaches can be strengthened to ensure investments are inclusive, locally driven and sustainable.

Ghana Shyam Giri, Mayor of Chandragiri Municipality, Nepal, opened the discussion by presenting "Cities4women: inclusive and climate resilient urbanization" a project that supports seven municipalities in planning and developing gender-responsive, inclusive and climate-resilient public spaces. Giri explained that the project successfully combines urban planning, climate adaptation and community participation to improve public infrastructure and quality of life. The project applies nature-based solutions, universal accessibility standards and participatory planning processes that actively involve women, youth, older persons and marginalised groups. Public spaces incorporate features such as green infrastructure, stormwater management, child-friendly areas, accessible facilities and safer urban design. A key lesson learned was that inclusive participation strengthens community ownership, trust and long-term sustainability of urban investments. The project also demonstrated that gender-responsive and climate-resilient design can deliver both social and environmental benefits, while sustained capacity-building and collaboration among municipalities, communities and development partners are essential for lasting impact.

The second speaker, **Arianne Bettina M. Morales, Executive Assistant,** presented "EU Green Economy Partnership with the Philippines (EU-GEPP)", a waste-to-resource facility focused on plastic recovery and reuse. The initiative aims to transform plastic waste into economic opportunities by supporting small businesses, entrepreneurs and informal waste collectors, while promoting circular economy practices. A key lesson has been the importance of establishing a dedicated local governance mechanism—the Local Circular Economy Action Team—to ensure ownership across municipal departments and sustain the programme beyond political cycles. The city is also developing a circular economy ordinance to institutionalise these efforts and facilitate replication in other municipalities. The experience demonstrates that successful circular economy initiatives require strong local leadership, cross-departmental coordination and supportive policy frameworks to achieve long-term sustainability and scalability.

Emil Dardak, Vice Governor of East Java, emphasised the need to ensure that rural areas receive equal attention within climate adaptation frameworks, and encouraged the EU Global Gateway to further integrate rural realities into its climate and circular economy programming. He noted that East Java, a highly densely populated province where land-use pressures extend beyond urban centres, is exposed to hydrometeorological disasters, including floods, landslides and related events. In this context, he underlined the importance of introducing more detailed spatial planning for rural areas. He also referred to relocation experiences following volcanic eruptions of Mount Semeru, illustrating the complexity of resettlement processes and the central role of livelihoods and community acceptance. Finally, he outlined adaptation measures such as aerial seeding and weather modification operations as part of broader disaster risk management efforts.

During the discussion that followed the presentation of the projects, participants emphasised that local authorities and civil society organisations are often insufficiently involved in the design and implementation of large-scale development and climate projects. Concerns were raised about lengthy approval procedures, complex procurement requirements and co-financing obligations, which can limit access for smaller municipalities. Several speakers highlighted the need for stronger coordination among stakeholders, structured multi-stakeholder dialogue mechanisms and more sustainable capacity-building efforts, including peer-to-peer exchange and mutual learning, rather than one-off training activities. Participants also stressed that projects must deliver tangible benefits to local communities, particularly in terms of livelihoods, decent work and social protection. The importance of ensuring accountability through monitoring, evaluation and social audits was also discussed. Furthermore, concerns were expressed that many successful initiatives struggle to continue once external funding ends, highlighting the need for stronger local ownership and institutionalisation of good practices.

The following key recommendations emerged from the discussion:

- Integrate climate resilience, inclusion and community participation into local planning, infrastructure and public space development.
- Simplify funding, procurement and co-financing requirements to enable smaller municipalities to access climate and development financing.
- Strengthen local government capacity through long-term technical support, peer learning and knowledge exchange on climate-resilient urban and rural development.
- Establish sustainable local governance mechanisms, such as circular economy and resilience platforms, that can continue beyond project and political cycles.
- Ensure climate resilience investments generate tangible local benefits, including livelihoods, decent work, social protection and opportunities for local enterprises.
- Strengthen participatory monitoring, evaluation and social accountability mechanisms to improve transparency, local ownership and project sustainability.
- Promote the replication and scaling of successful local solutions, including nature-based approaches, circular economy initiatives and inclusive public infrastructure.
- Institutionalise effective climate resilience practices through local policies, ordinances and regulatory frameworks.
- Strengthen structured partnerships between the EU, local authorities, civil society and communities to ensure Global Gateway investments respond to local priorities and needs.

Climate Mobility: From displacement to Dignity

Eugène Zapata Garesché, Team Leader, Territorial Approach to Local Development (TALD) Facility managed by DG INTPA, opened the session by highlighting climate mobility as one of the most pressing human consequences of climate change, affecting people forced to leave their homes, livelihoods and communities due to both sudden disasters and slow-onset environmental changes. He explained that the session aimed to explore rights-based and dignified approaches to climate mobility, identify governance challenges and opportunities, and discuss how countries across the Asia-Pacific region can strengthen cooperation and develop shared solutions for affected populations.

Vani Catanisiga, Executive Director, Fiji Council of Social Services, spoke about the unique context of climate mobility in Fiji, where approximately 90% of land is owned by indigenous communities. She argued that strong cultural ties to ancestral land, traditional knowledge and kinship networks provide an important foundation for community-led relocation processes. Drawing on the experience of Fiji's first community-led planned climate relocation project, she noted that government-led approaches can sometimes undermine existing community solutions and create unnecessary delays. Catanasiga stressed that prolonged bureaucratic processes often increase hardship for displaced communities, leaving families in temporary settlements with limited access to services. She advocated for shifting decision-making power back to communities and strengthening community-led relocation frameworks that respect cultural connections to land, ensure dignity and promote long-term resilience. She also presented regional efforts to develop minimum standards for climate relocation that prioritise community agency, inclusive planning and psychosocial support.

Rey Asis, Advocacy and Campaigns Manager, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), highlighted the close relationship between climate change and labour migration, arguing that many migrant workers are already "climate migrants" whose livelihoods have been disrupted by droughts, floods, typhoons and other environmental shocks. He noted that migrant workers often face a "climate of vulnerability", experiencing unsafe working conditions, inadequate housing and limited protection from extreme weather in destination countries. Asis pointed to examples of exploitation, including migrant workers being exposed to extreme heat or poor living conditions, despite contributing significantly to host economies. At the same time, he highlighted the resilience and agency of migrant communities, which have developed self-help networks, digital tools, advocacy initiatives and cross-border solidarity mechanisms to support one another. Concluding his intervention, Asis argued that those most exposed to climate and migration risks should not simply be consulted but should be actively involved in decision-making processes and policy development.

Safiul Muthunabeen Mohamed Muszhaaraff, Chairperson Pottuvil Council, Sri Lanka, reflected on the severe impacts of climate change on coastal communities. He explained that the loss of natural coastal protection systems has threatened livelihoods dependent on tourism and small-scale fisheries, while forcing thousands of people to relocate. Drawing on local government experience, he described the challenges of resettlement, including limited funding, bureaucratic delays and the difficulty of restoring livelihoods for displaced families. He stressed that local authorities are often the first responders during disasters but lack the resources and technical expertise needed to address increasingly complex climate risks. Musharraf called for direct climate finance for local governments, stronger technical support for coastal protection and ecosystem restoration, and integrated approaches that combine housing, livelihoods and social protection. He concluded that empowering local authorities is essential to ensure climate mobility responses protect both the dignity and long-term resilience of affected communities.

The last speaker Michelle McIlroy, Tātau Tātau o Te Wairoa Director, New Zealand, shared her community's experience during the devastating floods that struck Wairoa in 2023, leaving many families displaced and critical infrastructure severely damaged. She highlighted how local Māori institutions, particularly marae, became centres for refuge, coordination and support when formal systems failed. McIlroy emphasised that climate mobility is not only a physical issue for Indigenous peoples but also one of cultural identity, connection to ancestral land and self-determination. She warned that climate adaptation policies risk repeating historical patterns of dispossession if Indigenous communities are not meaningfully involved in decision-making. Rather than focusing solely on relocation, she argued that climate finance should also strengthen communities' ability to remain safely connected to place through resilience measures such as renewable energy systems and water security infrastructure. She concluded that climate mobility responses must protect the dignity, culture and authority of Indigenous peoples while supporting long-term community resilience.

After the panel presentations, several speakers stressed the importance of community-led solutions, noting that local networks, faith-based organisations, women's groups and Indigenous institutions are often the first to respond during disasters and can provide more effective support than formal structures alone. Participants highlighted the need for stronger inclusion of vulnerable groups, particularly women, children, persons with disabilities and Indigenous communities, throughout planning and decision-making processes. Concerns were also raised about tensions between displaced and host communities, the protection of livelihoods, and the need to ensure equitable access to services and assistance. The discussion further underlined the importance of recognising and strengthening informal community systems, improving local capacities, and ensuring that affected populations are treated as partners and providers of solutions rather than passive beneficiaries. Participants called for greater cooperation between national and local authorities, stronger regional frameworks, improved recognition of identity documents for displaced persons, and increased support for community participation, monitoring and advocacy. A recurring theme was that climate mobility policies should prioritise local ownership, cultural preservation and social cohesion while addressing the underlying vulnerabilities that drive displacement.

During the second phase of this panel, participants were divided into two breakout groups to discuss further by subregions.

Breakout 1: Southeast Asia

Moderated by Rey Asis, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants, this session explored policy and practical approaches to climate mobility in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, focusing on how safeguards, local governance, community networks and regional cooperation can support people affected by climate-related displacement while protecting their rights, livelihoods and dignity.

During the discussion, participants reiterated that climate mobility policies must be grounded in human rights, inclusivity and local ownership. Several speakers highlighted the disproportionate impacts of climate-related displacement on women, girls, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+ communities and other vulnerable groups, noting risks such as gender-based violence, limited access to services and exclusion from decision-making processes. Concerns were also raised about the lack of reliable data on climate mobility, the absence of protection mechanisms for undocumented migrants, the challenges faced by returning migrant workers, and the burden placed on local governments responding to sudden population movements. Participants further emphasised that climate mobility should not be viewed solely as relocation, but also as a question of resilience, preparedness, social protection and the ability of communities to remain safely in place where possible.

Breakout 2: Other subregions

The second breakout room, moderated by **Safiul Muthunabeen Mohamed Muszhaaraff, Pottuvil Council, Sri Lanka**, focused on other subregions and explored how climate mobility policies and programmes can be designed to protect affected communities, strengthen local resilience, and ensure that displacement responses are rights-based, inclusive and locally driven, with effective cooperation between communities, local authorities and regional actors.

During the session, participants noted that climate mobility responses must go beyond legal frameworks and government-led interventions, recognising the critical role of communities in both preparedness and response. Several speakers stressed that communities should not be viewed solely as beneficiaries but as providers of solutions, with meaningful participation in planning, monitoring and decision-making. Concerns were raised about the vulnerability of displaced populations, particularly women, children, persons with disabilities and migrant workers, as well as tensions that may arise between host and displaced communities if support is not delivered equitably. Participants also noted the importance of recognising informal community systems that already provide essential services, and the need to strengthen local capacities rather than create parallel structures. Finally, concerns were expressed regarding loss of documentation, weak protection mechanisms for migrant workers, limited local government resources, and the absence of robust regional frameworks to coordinate responses to climate-induced displacement.

Shared Recommendations Across Both Groups

- Adopt rights-based, community-led approaches that recognise affected populations as partners in planning, implementation and oversight.

- Strengthen the capacity and financing of local governments to manage climate mobility, resilience-building and service delivery.

- Integrate climate mobility into climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction and local development planning.

- Improve coordination among local, national and regional actors to support preparedness, response and long-term resilience.

- Invest in resilient livelihoods, social protection and community resilience measures to reduce displacement risks and support sustainable adaptation.

Southeast Asia Priorities

- Strengthen protections for migrant workers through legal migration pathways, labour rights safeguards, social protection and reintegration support.

- Improve data collection, monitoring and research on climate mobility to inform evidence-based policymaking.

- Develop regional cooperation mechanisms to address cross-border displacement, undocumented migrants, stateless persons and labour mobility challenges.

- Ensure climate mobility policies address the specific vulnerabilities of women, children, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and LGBTQ+ communities.

Other Subregions Priorities

- Strengthen community networks and informal support systems as first responders in displacement, relocation and recovery processes.

- Safeguard identity and legal documentation before, during and after displacement.

- Promote equitable support for both displaced and host communities to strengthen social cohesion and reduce tensions.

- Establish stronger regional and international frameworks to coordinate responses to large-scale climate displacement and relocation events.

Closing Session

In the closing discussion, moderated by Sara Simon and Teresa Cavero from the PFD Technical Assistance Team, Claire Helly, PLATFORMA and Julia Puno, APRN, brought together many of the themes that had emerged throughout the Forum, reaffirming that sustainable development and climate resilience require genuine partnerships between governments, civil society organisations, local authorities, Indigenous Peoples, communities and development partners. Participants repeatedly stressed that those most affected by development and climate challenges must be recognised not only as beneficiaries, but also as decision-makers and co-creators of solutions. They summarised and sought validation from the group around key conclusions from the two days.

On climate finance

All partners, particularly the EU, investment banks and private sector**, should scale up their climate commitments**, especially in the area of climate finance, and ensure that local stakeholders are supported **and** have **access to diverse and flexible financing models and tools. These should include cooperative finance, blended finance, philanthropic funding, community-owned funds, green bonds, and small-scale grants, to enable investments in energy-efficient equipment and renewable energy solutions, among others.**

Climate finance should create sustainable livelihoods, ensure workers' rights, and engender decent jobs while advancing environmental objectives. This could be achieved if governments and financial institutions expand access to affordable financing, technical assistance, and training that enable SMEs to adopt low-carbon technologies and other mitigation initiatives and implement climate risk management and adaptation strategies.

Pacific civil society stakeholders highlighted that climate finance should be predictable, adequate, accessible and, wherever possible, grant-based, with simplified procedures that enable direct access for local communities, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, local authorities and civil society organisations. Financing mechanisms should recognise the disproportionate climate impacts borne by Pacific peoples despite their negligible contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, and prioritise locally-led adaptation, resilience-building, and the safeguarding of cultural heritage, languages and Indigenous knowledge systems.

Increased support for community-led initiatives, nature-based solutions, climate-resilient infrastructure and Blue Pacific priorities is essential to ensure that climate investments contribute to long-term resilience, prosperity and sustainable development across the region.

On climate investments

All partners should **support climate investments that respond to climate-induced conflict and fragility.** Climate investments should have a **holistic approach that empowers and respects worker's rights to decent jobs and livelihood, upholds Indigenous people's rights to self-determination, and enables the inclusion of other marginalised groups,** including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, farmers, fisherfolks, pastoralists and Dalits.

Pacific stakeholders noted that investments should prioritise the protection of customary lands, oceans and natural resources, support Indigenous governance systems and traditional knowledge, and address the unique challenges faced by remote and outer island communities. Consistent with Pacific regional priorities emphasised by Pacific civil society and Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, climate investments should contribute to a secure, peaceful and prosperous Blue Pacific by reducing climate-related risks, preventing future displacement and instability, and enabling communities to remain, move or relocate with dignity, rights and self-determination.

On equal and democratic partnerships

The EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions and national governments in partner countries should **place equal and democratic partnerships** at the core of the Global Gateway strategy through **structured, participatory, and meaningful dialogue mechanisms among stakeholders, including local authorities, civil society, policymakers, and other relevant development actors.** This includes ensuring inclusive governance, transparency and accountability, prior consent and information to local communities in all decision-making processes and upholding the principles of development effectiveness and locally-led development at all levels of partnership.

For Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), equal and democratic partnerships must be grounded in self-determination, Indigenous rights, cultural diversity, customary governance and the principle of "nothing about us without us." Partnerships should strengthen local ownership, localisation and Pacific-led priorities, including the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent and the Pacific Framework for Climate Mobility, while upholding FPIC, transparency, accountability and development effectiveness. Targeted focus should include the remote and outer island communities.

On the role of civil society and local authorities

The EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions and national governments in partner countries should **ensure that CSOs, LAs, and other stakeholders**, such as SMEs, are **included throughout the entire cycle of climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives - from planning and designing to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.** Their role should extend beyond implementation to include co-creation, decision-making, and accountability. This can be achieved by leveraging and strengthening existing platforms and partnerships, including decentralised development cooperation mechanisms, and by establishing coordinated multi-stakeholder bodies that foster inclusive, accountable, and people-centred climate governance, while responding to local economic and environmental needs.

The European Commission and its partners should provide open platforms and transparent updates on Global Gateway processes to enable CSOs, LAs, and other stakeholders to meaningfully engage in climate and energy initiatives. Such mechanisms can help ensure that projects are implemented effectively and in ways that respect, protect, and uphold the rights of affected communities. Pacific stakeholders emphasised that local and subnational authorities, Indigenous Peoples, traditional leaders, women, youth, faith-based organisations, community groups and the private sector should be recognised as key decision-makers in climate governance.

On capitalising on the knowledge of communities

The EU and EU Member States with their financial and development institutions, national governments in partner countries local authorities and civil society should **integrate, adapt and replicate local, national, and regional experiences and best practices** to inform global policy discussions on climate action in ways that advance social justice, equity, accountability, sustainable livelihoods, and community resilience. All partners should support and invest in peer learning and capacity-building of local communities, CSOs and LAs, ensuring the active involvement and ownership of local actors in climate-related investments, including under the Global Gateway strategy.

The community of practices present in different parts of the Asia Pacific region in confronting climate change should be further supported and integrated in national action plans and regional strategies to scale up regional partnerships for climate justice and shared prosperity. Communities should be recognised as rights-holders, knowledge-holders and leaders in climate action. Climate policies and investments should build on Indigenous knowledge systems, customary governance and the stewardship of lands, waters and oceans, and community-led approaches should be supported through inclusive decision-making, strengthened local capacity and direct access to climate finance. Pacific participants called for protection of cultural heritage, languages, identities, traditional livelihoods and other forms of non-economic loss and damage.

Michela Tomasella and **Bernadia Tjandradewi** closed the meeting and warmly thanked all participants.