

Draft as of Oct. 22

Statement of Action: Bangkok Forum for a Sustainable Asia

Structure of statement

Why Bangkok Forum?

What do we mean by social sustainability, why?

What is Bangkok Forum?

How to move forward (general scope of activities)

Why the Bangkok Forum?

The heightening challenges of economic inequality, social disparity and injustices, political violence, environmental degradation, unsustainable lifestyles, habitat and biodiversity destruction are all interconnected and creating new challenges for Asian societies. There is a growing awareness and sense of urgency that if these challenges are to be met, global and regional realities due to unsustainable development require more critical analysis and understanding. We therefore gather here at the Bangkok Forum 2018 to forge new partnerships for a Sustainable Asia.

Social Sustainability requires greater attention

Sustainability has largely been framed in ecological and economic technological terms. Yet *social* sustainability is equally important: how can our relationships with one another, our relationships with nature, and our values progress and thrive? We need to transform our fundamental assumptions, modes of thinking, and knowledge production. Creating social sustainability requires respecting and promoting the many dimensions of human values—including equity, diversity, the quality of both physical and spiritual life, access to democracy and governance institutions, and a culture of respect, dialogue and peace.

What is the Bangkok Forum?

Bangkok Forum is an evolving platform for knowledge co-creation, dialogue, civic engagement, and action. It aspires to be a hub for networking ideas, people, and innovations to help create a Sustainable Asia.

Such a mission needs re-imagining institutional ecologies. It cannot be achieved in academic settings alone. The university must play a larger role beyond teaching and researching, by catalyzing change to address the dire challenges facing our societies. Those within and outside the academe must foster interaction leading to progressive change. This mission cannot be achieved by working within existing frameworks and approaches, which are largely the outcomes of the very problems we need to overcome.

Principles

- The Bangkok Forum **respects the diversity of cultures, ideas and concerns** in Asian societies, and will strive to actively engage a wide range of stakeholders, including scholars, public intellectuals, policy makers, civil society

groups, community-based associations, government entities, academic institutions, corporate entities, development partners and foundations.

- The Bangkok Forum recognizes that a sustainable future requires a diversity of solutions and pathways
- The Bangkok Forum encourages innovative solutions to the social dimensions of sustainable development challenges
- The Bangkok Forum **respects the right of future generations to meaningful life, enjoying freedom, dignity, religious and civic rights**. To address this very fundamental principle, the Bangkok Forum specifically promotes the participation of younger generations in building a Sustainable Asia.

Moving forward

In launching the Bangkok Forum today, we commit to work toward a Sustainable Asia. To do this, we will take the following steps:

- Encourage the **co-creation of knowledge, collaborative initiatives and actions** supporting individuals and institutions working together for a Sustainable Asia through research and training.
- Network with existing platforms and movements to build social and cultural support for a Sustainable Asia
- Conduct appropriate capacity and capability building programs
- Strengthen existing courses on sustainability and develop new sustainability curricula including trans-disciplinary and transformative approaches
- Develop global citizenship and leadership courses for sustainability
- Provide participatory action research opportunities
- Advocate relevant policy changes