

The 19th Science Council of Asia Conference
“Research and Innovation for Sustainable Development in Asia”
3rd - 5th December 2019

Declaration

The 19th Science Council of Asia Conference with the theme “Research and Innovation for Sustainable Development in Asia” was held from 3rd - 5th December 2019, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

International and regional landscape was undergoing profound change, given the tremendous amount of time and pace. The change occurring around us was facing profound and daunting challenges at the global and regional levels. Fundamentals of norms and assumptions that had long shaped relations at the global and regional levels were being challenged and eroded. We need to act urgently, collectively and decisively to make efforts to achieve sustainable development that needs to be earned and respected.

To facilitate scientific cooperation in the Asian region towards progress in science and sustainable development, Science Council of Asia was established in the year 2000 and has contributed to society through collaboration with academic experts in Asia. The United Nations General Assembly in 2015 adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals to transform our world.

The 19th Science Council of Asia Conference has made a timely response to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals with an appropriate theme “Research and Innovation for Sustainable Development in Asia” which aimed to provide a venue where diverse views from many intellectual aspects were exchanged. “Inclusion” used in SDGs is defined as the state of being that no one will be left behind of this conference. This idea can be applied even to this Conference.

The conference created an interaction mechanism for communication between academicians and experts from a broad variety of expertise. About 220 participants from various research institutions, universities, representatives from Science Council of Asia’s member academies and members of Myanmar

Academy of Arts and Science along with those from Myanmar Academy of Technology and Myanmar Academy of Medical Science participated in the 19th Science Council of Asia Conference. This event brought together distinguished Keynote and Plenary Speakers from abroad and within the host country.

To encourage interactions and have a fruitful deliberation among researchers and scholars of multi-disciplinary studies related to research and innovation for sustainable development in Asia, the conference attempted to draw out interlocutor and scholars. At the Conference each of four sub-themes were discussed in respective sessions. The summaries and subjects are shown as follows:

(1) The session of **Revitalize Asian Partnership for Achieving Sustainable Development** discussed a wide range of issues including clean energy, rural electrification with mini-grid, sustainable and resilient Asian cities for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation in farming and forestry, and mercury pollution in ASGM (artisanal small-scale gold mining). We clarified a wide range of issues including those of shifting to renewable energy, developing agriculture in the region, increasing concerns over the peoples' health, and so on towards sustainable development in Asia. SCA should play a central role in the cooperative efforts among industry, academia, government, and civil society in Asian countries, the Public Private Partnership (PPP), and the partnership among academies beyond borders, for promoting R&D to solve those clarified issues in the region. (2) The session of **Promote Skills Development for Economic Growth** raised the issues influencing economic growth, for example, climate change, innovation, working environment, gender equality, and inclusive lifelong learning. To promote economic development in Asian countries, SCA participating academies have to do the improvements of educational service quality and social supports in these fields. (3) The session of **Diverse Utilization of Natural Resources for Sustainable Development** discussed the issues in utilizing natural resources such as sustainable solutions for growing demand of electricity, renewable energy, and values of (medicinal) plants grown in Asia. Many Asian countries are vulnerable to natural disaster, deteriorating natural environment and now facing the problems like drinking water shortage, health risk from dieting shellfish, and so on. Therefore, SCA participating academies should collaboratively tackle the research and development of these fields. (4) The discussion at the session of **Alleviate Poverty through socio-economic Development**, which includes endemic diseases, sanitation, health

insurance system, and so on, indicated that in Asia the people's health is one of the major concerns relating to poverty eradication. SCA should actively issue the policy recommendations based on research accomplishment to eradicate the poverty and improving human health.

As the above mentioned discussions at four sessions show, the perspectives of researchers and scholars paved the way for collective wisdom, will and capacity to manage differences and diversities, as well as mutual beneficial cooperation.

The 19th Science Council of Asia Conference provided a strong sense of purpose and reached a common understanding bonded by good will and good sense which were beneficial for research and innovation for sustainable development in Asia to sustain positive momentum for a way forward. In addition, the participants recognized that capacity building is vital for activating the research and innovation in the region, particularly among young researchers. The spirit of mutual understanding among the participants shaped ideas, thoughts and reactions, broke barriers, and strengthened empathies with each other's perspectives. The SCA should continue to play its central role, which is led by participating academies, to solve common challenges for sustainable development in Asia.