



FINAL

ASEAN Framework and Action Plan
For a Just and Inclusive Transition to Green Jobs
(2025 – 2030)

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Executive Summary

This document presents a high-level action plan to advance green jobs and skills across the ASEAN region to contribute to the region's efforts in responding to the increasing impacts of climate change – particularly driven by the growing intensity and magnitude of extreme weather events and increasing risk of impacts of unsustainable economic activities, all of which are aggravated by environmental and social challenges stemming from both natural disasters and imprudent use of resources. With a consideration that climate change leaves disproportionate impacts on women and vulnerable communities due to social, economic and political constraints, this action plan also operationalises a just and inclusive transition approach to promoting green jobs and skills development through social dialogue, establishing key goals, and creating finance-to-skills pipelines, finance-to-green solutions and green enterprises pathways to support workers.

Guided by the 2018 ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Green Jobs for Equity and Inclusive Growth and the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Guidelines for a Just Transition, the goal of this framework and action plan is to enable a green transition that promotes upskilling, enhance equity and inclusiveness, incorporates social protection, and supports poverty reduction through the development of green skills adoption and promotion. Special attention is given to ensuring accessible pathways to green careers for youths, lowering skill barriers for all workers including women and persons with disabilities, and that informal workers receive recognition and transition support.

Given these issues, there is a pressing need for greater regional and sectoral policy coordination to develop green jobs that can promote decarbonisation and climate adaptation. The diversity in national capacities, policy readiness, regulatory structures, and investment climates presents challenges to progress and in ensuring multi-stakeholder involvement.

To address these issues, the framework and action plan identifies three strategic objectives for relevant Ministries in ASEAN Member States (AMS)¹ to consider:

- **Strategic Objective 1: Enhancing skills policies to be green, digital, just and inclusive**
- **Strategic Objective 2: Integrating training, digital technologies and social protection to support workers**
- **Strategic Objective 3: Coordinating green skilling efforts across the region**

Implementation of these pillars requires clear governance structures, well-defined roles and responsibilities, resource allocation, and effective monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge sharing. In addition, it is proposed that the annual ASEAN Green Jobs Forum (AGJF) will serve as a key regional platform for sharing knowledge, policy innovation, and progress toward promoting green jobs.

¹ These Ministries, which are part of the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM), encompass entities involved in labour-related matters including (but not limited to) promoting worker protection, human capital development, labour migration or social mobility.

ASEAN FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN FOR A JUST AND INCLUSIVE TRANSITION TO GREEN JOBS (2025 – 2030)

1. Background to this Framework and Action Plan

1.1 The urgent opportunity to greenify ASEAN's economies

As the pace of climate change rapidly develops, the ASEAN region continues to be impacted by climate-induced natural disasters and pollution-driven repercussions, forcing the region to undergo significant economic, environmental and social upheaval. Already the Philippines, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam have been among the top ten most affected countries by climate-induced disasters over the past two decades.² The Asian Development Bank (ADB)'s Asia-Pacific Climate Report projects that Southeast Asia could lose at least 20% of its GDP by 2100 due to disasters such as rising sea levels, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and agricultural disruptions.³

Beyond these, pollution and climate change is also expected to increase the risks of infrastructure damage, human health, labour productivity and livelihood instability.⁴ The region's geographic vulnerability due to low-lying coastal cities and dependence on agriculture exacerbates ASEAN's exposure to sea-level rise, crop failure, and extreme weather⁵, which could potentially upend traditional livelihoods. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Climate Change and Land (2019) also emphasises that low-income communities, women, the young, and the elderly are the most vulnerable to environmental disruptions and climate change trends⁶ while communities along coastlines and in low-lying areas often lack resources to adapt in changing environmental conditions.⁷

Given these factors, the effects of environmental disruptions and climate change are expected to also be disproportionate across ASEAN Member States (AMS). The [ASEAN State of Climate Change report](#)'s baseline estimates of the impact of sea level rise alone shows how heterogeneous climate change impacts will be (Table 1).

² ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute (2020), *ASEANFocus*. Issue 1/2020. Available at: <https://cssn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2020-ClimatechangesecurityandregionalcooperationinASEAN-ASEANFocus.pdf>

³ Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2024), *Asia-Pacific Climate Report 2024*. Available at: <https://www.adb.org/climate-report/editions/2024>

⁴ Renaud, F.G., et. al. (2021) *Adaptation and Resilience in ASEAN: Managing Disaster Risks from Natural Hazards* (p30). UK Government, UK-Singapore COP26 ASEAN Climate Policy Report Series. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1027813/Adaptation_and_Resilience_COP26_Universities_Network_Policy_Report.pdf

⁵ Government of the UK (2021), *Adaptation and Resilience in ASEAN: managing disaster risks from natural hazards*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-singapore-cop26-universities-network-policy-reports/adaptation-and-resilience-in-asean-managing-disaster-risks-from-natural-hazards#compound-hazards-in-a-warming-world>

⁶ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2019), *Change and Land: An IPCC Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*. Available at: <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/11/SRCL-Full-Report-Compiled-191128.pdf>

⁷ ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute (2020), *ASEANFocus*. Issue 1/2020. Available at: <https://cssn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2020-ClimatechangesecurityandregionalcooperationinASEAN-ASEANFocus.pdf>

Table 1. Average projected climate change impacts from climate models on sea level rise and heat stress in the ASEAN region by 2050*

Country	Projected inundated area (km ²)	Affected population	Economic impact (US\$ billion)
Brunei Darussalam	7 km ²	60	US\$78 billion
Cambodia	1,495 km ²	205,703	US\$676 billion
Indonesia	20,671 km ²	1,540,802	US\$3,155 billion
Lao PDR**	-	-	-
Malaysia	2,689 km ²	105,103	US\$1,743 billion
Myanmar	3,851 km ²	471,695	US\$1,261 billion
The Philippines	4,720	315,440	US\$1,198 billion
Singapore	128 km ²	89,170	US\$1,630 billion
Thailand	2,012 km ²	680,468	US\$3,157 billion
Viet Nam	37,810 km ²	17,517,443	US\$6,482 billion

Note:** These estimates are based on a Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) of 4.5 (i.e., global temperature rise of between 2 °C and 3 °C by 2100). *Note:** No estimates for Lao PDR given its landlocked geographical status.

By greenifying its economies, ASEAN would be able to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change – all of which also creates significant economic opportunities for the region. With carbon dioxide contributing 77% of ASEAN's GHG emissions, successful decarbonisation could add up to US\$1.0 trillion to region's economies, attract up to US\$1.1 trillion of green investments, and contribute to the creation of up to 12 million jobs by 2030.⁸ These require dedicated policies to develop green industries, promote interoperable renewable sectors, and promote green talent and skills.

ASEAN therefore stands at a pivotal time to robustly respond to climate change issues by adopting sustainable and green policies to ensure its people and economies can continue to thrive.

1.2 Broader ASEAN efforts and the role of green skills policies

The multifaceted elements of climate change and green economy policies mean that coordinated efforts must be built upon a common understanding of circularity and sustainability. At the same time, these policies must also address inequalities to prevent worsening social tensions, effects of migration, and resource competition.⁹

Unifying ASEAN's overarching regional-level socioeconomic efforts is the [ASEAN Community Vision 2045](#), which builds upon the prior ASEAN Community Vision 2025. The declaration, recently endorsed in May 2025, commits the regional bloc to realise a

⁸ ASEAN (2025), *ASEAN 2045 Our Shared Future*. Available at: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/ASEAN-2045-Our-Shared-Future.pdf>

⁹ ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute (2020), *ASEANFocus*. Issue 1/2020. Available at: <https://cssn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2020-ClimatechangepolicyandregionalcooperationinASEAN-ASEANFocus.pdf>

resilient, innovation, dynamic and people-centred ASEAN by 2045, with broad goals envisioning sustained economic growth and competitiveness, ensuring peace and stability, a people-centred and interconnected community, and a green ASEAN that achieves sustainable growth through green and blue economy policies. Underpinning the declaration's green goals is the [ASEAN Economic Community Strategic Plan 2026-2030](#), where Strategic Goal 2 outlines “A Sustainable Community” through engendering and mainstreaming climate-responsive elements and policies, and the [ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community \(ASCC\) Strategic Plan](#), where Strategic Goal 12 aims to realise a Green ASEAN.

Complementing this effort to stem the effects of climate change are other ongoing initiatives. For example, ASEAN has made substantive progress to create standardised green economy approaches through initiatives such as the [Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community](#), which outlines five high-level priorities: (1) create standards harmonisation and mutual recognition policies; (2) promote trade openness and trade facilitation; (3) enhance the role of innovation, digitalisation, and emerging technologies; (4) promote sustainable finance and investments; and (5) promote efficient use of energy and resource. Other ongoing initiatives include the development of the [ASEAN Climate Change Strategic Action Plan \(ACCSAP\)](#) which aims to outline a regional roadmap for low-carbon and climate-resilient development, and the [ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility \(ACGF\)](#) which helps scale investment into circular and green infrastructure. Supporting green policy development are other relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, such as the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME) which promotes MSME involvement in green plans and strategies, as well as the ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment (ASOEN) which steers the regional-level direction of environmental policies among the AMS.

Recognising that the transition to sustainable practices is intrinsically linked to workforce transformation, AMS have highlighted green jobs and skills development as a priority area to achieving the region's sustainable goals – and is expected to remain a key agenda item among AMS labour ministers in the longer term. As economic policies continue to invest in greener industries, expanding green jobs will be crucial to provide a stable and resilient source of employment as industries undergo green transitions. In essence, these jobs ensure workers can play a role in promoting the sustainable agenda while also having decent work opportunities. Additionally, promoting such jobs and skills also contributes to overarching initiatives of developing a greener and people-centric ASEAN under the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

Guiding this effort is the 2018 [ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Green Jobs for Equity and Inclusive Growth](#), which emphasises the need for action to promote and develop green skills and jobs to expedite and facilitate a smooth transition towards greener industries and economies. A central element guiding efforts to developing green jobs across the world includes the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#), a key

policy guidance document to assist governments to design policy that is aligned with international best practice in managing the workforce's green transition. In effect, it aims to enable transitions to become strong drivers of job creation, job upgrading, economic empowerment for underrepresented groups, social justice and poverty eradication. In this respect, ASEAN has the opportunity to also become a collective co-shaper and co-crafter of future green labour standards that can contribute to the development of global green labour standards.

1.3 Policy developments and challenges around green skills

Building off these principles and the declaration, ASEAN has made significant progress in promoting green skills. The [Regional Study on Green Jobs Policy Readiness in ASEAN](#), led by Malaysia's Ministry of Human Resources and done in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat, has laid the analytical foundation of identifying key policy strengths and gaps around skills development. The assessment found that while most AMS have policies to establish the green agenda, there is room to strengthen effective policies for green skills development or proactively protect workers who may be affected by the transition.

The study underscored several key challenges that include:

1. **Tighter regional and cross-sectoral coordination of green economy policies is needed.** The cross-cutting and transboundary nature of climate change demands a coordinated multi-country and multi-sectoral response. While some AMS have developed robust national circular economy roadmaps and sustainability policies, the scope and level of ambition varies widely across the region due to different capacities, regulatory frameworks, and investment climates. The [ASEAN State of Climate Change report](#) in 2021 notes how different AMS have different institutional arrangements and a wide variety of mechanisms to promote decarbonisation or climate change adaptation. Additionally, not all countries prioritise multi-sectoral or multi-stakeholder involvement.
2. **There is a no consensus on how to define and promote relevant green skills.** Analysis published by the ADB suggests that up to 30 million green jobs may be created by 2030, yet a considerable segment of the current workforce lacks the necessary upskilling, highlighting an urgent need for a robust region-wide strategy for reskilling and workforce development.¹⁰ While AMS generally agree on the need to reskill their workforce to mitigate any negative impacts from a green transition, regional-level efforts have yet to define these green skills and how they can benefit AMS. At the same time, there is also a lack of common understanding on the type

¹⁰ Asian Development Bank (2022), *Implementing a Green Recovery in Southeast Asia*. Available at: www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/793536/implementing-green-recovery-southeast-asia.pdf

of workers who would require the most support – and how their profiles may differ across AMS.

3. **Deeper collaboration with industry is needed to ensure green transition efforts are effective.** Many industries have taken a voluntary approach to inculcating sustainable practices and developing greener supply chains, including finance, infrastructure, and logistics. However governmental support will continue to be necessary to ensure businesses – particularly those in carbon-intensive industries and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) – are not significantly disadvantaged when green commitments become institutionalised.¹¹ Access to knowledge, financing, and cost-effective solutions are key to ensuring these businesses and their workers are able to participate in the green transition efforts.
4. **As climate change leaves disproportionate impacts across societies, the transition to greener economies must not leave marginalised communities behind.** Conventional skilling efforts also tend to be more accessible to individuals with means and resources – particularly time and awareness. Gender roles and norms also shape labour market inequalities, influencing job assignments and sectoral segregation, all of which will continue to limit women’s access to green jobs.¹² As such, green skilling efforts must also account for the needs and circumstances of marginalised communities to ensure all types of workers can participate in new green economies.
5. **Green transition priorities are also coalescing with other economic shifts – particularly the rise in digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI).** Against the backdrop of climate change is the wide proliferation of digital technologies. The most noteworthy digital tool in recent years includes generative AI applications which have seen both widespread adoption and concern among policymakers.¹³ Research by the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) highlights how jobs held by women and medium-skilled workers tend to be disproportionately more affected by automation and augmentation as generative AI becomes more advanced at undertaking more tasks, underlining the need for targeted interventions to prevent widening inequalities that could be exacerbated by a green transition.¹⁴

¹¹ OECD and ASEAN (2021), *Facilitating the green transition for ASEAN SMEs: A toolkit for policymakers*. Available at: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Facilitating-Green-Transition-for-ASEAN-SMEs.pdf>

¹² ILO and ASEAN (2021), *Regional Study on Green Jobs Policy Readiness in ASEAN*. Available at: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/ASEAN-Regional-Green-Jobs-policy-readiness-Report-web.pdf>

¹³ ASEAN for Business Bulletin (2024), *The Quest Toward Developing an AI Governance in ASEAN*. Available at: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/ASEAN-for-Business-Bulletin-Special-Edition.pdf>

¹⁴ ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (2024), *Regional Economic Outlook 2024*. Available at: <https://amro-asia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/AREO-2024-Box-2.6.pdf>

2. Overall vision and objectives

2.1 Vision of this initiative

Promoting green jobs is key to supporting decarbonisation efforts through enabling countries to keep to environmental commitments while ensuring they can meet socioeconomic objectives. In particular, efforts at expanding renewable energy, promoting eco-friendly products, and institutionalising sustainable practices is expected to provide a stable and resilient source of employment that can be accessed by all in the longer term.

At the same time, more emphasis must be given to ensure a **just transition**, where skills policies and initiatives must also safeguard workers affected by the dual shift to a green and digital economy while promoting the development of new, sustainable employment opportunities. This also must be set alongside an **inclusive** approach to skilling, where all types of workers regardless of socioeconomic background (including aspects such as age, gender, education level, disability status, and geographic location etc.) are given the opportunity to participate in these new economies. Concerted green skilling efforts will therefore be necessary.

The ASEAN Framework and Action Plan for a Just and Inclusive Transition to Green Jobs (hereinafter referred to as "**the Framework and Action Plan**") was developed to foster a green, just, and inclusive transition amidst growing environmental and societal concerns, the accelerating pace of digital transformation, and the evolving nature of work across ASEAN. It also recognises the urgent need for a coordinated governmental response built upon a common policy framework in the face of economic transformation.

Overall, it seeks to support AMS in enabling an inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-driven workforce transformation through the promotion of green jobs and skills – and ultimately contribute to ASEAN's overarching objectives of achieving a greener and people-centric region.

2.2 Key objectives of the Framework and Action Plan

The Framework and Action Plan serve as a non-binding strategic framework to guide coordinated action among ASEAN governments, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) partners, the private sector, employers' and workers' organisations, civil society/non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and development partners.

It aims to:

1. Enhance policy coherence and stakeholder collaboration among labour and skills government entities to coordinate green jobs and skills promotion.
2. Outline specific labour and skilling initiatives to support a just and inclusive transition to green jobs and skills.
3. Integrate training and social protection to support workers and safeguard employment, incomes, and working conditions in the green economy.
4. Facilitate knowledge exchange, research, and cooperation across ASEAN Labour Ministries to anticipate green skills demand and disseminate best practices.
5. Advance cross-sectoral initiatives for consideration to create a more holistic approach to green jobs promotion, ensuring alignment with ASEAN development agendas and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

2.3 Approach to developing this Framework and Action Plan

This Action Plan was developed and led by Malaysia's Ministry of Human Resources to build upon the Regional Study on Green Jobs Policy Readiness in ASEAN, where recommendations for AMS included:

- **Foster demand for green jobs** by building a common regional definition of green jobs and priority sectors, identifying key hotspots, and to highlight how these jobs would be distributed by demographic indicators (age, gender, education level, disability status, geographic location etc.).
- **Foster supply for green jobs** by creating a knowledge sharing platform to showcase examples of national-level best practices of skills development, sector specific strategies, financing mechanisms and incentives, as well as policy evaluation.
- **Strengthen institutional arrangements** by further developing occupation safety and health (OSH) framework to manage risk, social protection policies to promote a just transition, and promote policy coordination across AMS.

This Framework and Action Plan is developed based on multistakeholder inputs. First, a review of past ASEAN reports and analyses was conducted to ensure recommendations align with previous iterations of assessments. Second, a literature review of best practices from leading economies globally was also conducted. Finally, inputs from industry, academia, and other societal stakeholders were also distilled from panel discussions held during the ASEAN Green Jobs Forum which was conducted in August 2025 in Putrajaya, Malaysia (AGJF 2025).

To ensure alignment with other AMS stakeholders, Malaysia's Ministry of Human Resources also conducted two rounds of regional workshops in 26-27 February 2025 and 26 May 2025 respectively. These workshops were attended by relevant AMS and Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM) representatives and were held to facilitate AMS inputs on specific considerations, aspirations and challenges outlined in this document. Further evaluation of each AMS' level of development in specific policy areas were also explored, including on the: (a) presence and breadth of national green job policies; (b) extent of integration of green and digital skills in national TVET systems; (c) level of commitment to green job creation; (d) support rendered to industry to promote the green economy; and (e) potential monitoring, evaluation and knowledge sharing platforms. A third regional validation workshop was held on 19 September 2025 to seek feedback and inputs on this Framework and Action Plan. The third workshop delved into the framework structure, specific initiatives, and other policy considerations. Attendees included representatives from AMS labour and human resource ministries. A final round of ad-referendum consultation was conducted to seek written feedback to finalise this framework.

Additionally, recommendations were formulated in alignment with the aforementioned [ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Green Jobs for Equity and Inclusive Growth \(2018\)](#), the latest [ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community \(ASCC\) Strategic Plan](#), and [the ASEAN Economic Community \(AEC\) Strategic Plan 2026-2030](#), namely to develop policies that:

- Deeply engage stakeholders including industry and the wider community such as academia, civil societies, MSMEs and vulnerable groups;
- Promote inclusivity and sustainable development;
- Develop resilient communities that can withstand disruptions and crises; and
- Promote greener industries and supply chains across the region.

2.4 A preliminary definition of green jobs

To build this framework, a working definition of green jobs was used to provide conceptual clarity and a foundation to build policy approaches upon. As noted in the Regional Study on Green Jobs Policy Readiness in ASEAN, the most effective use of this definition is to delineate green jobs and non-green jobs to account for the skills and reskilling needs of green industries.

The definition set out below builds upon the 2018 [ASEAN Declaration on Promoting Green Jobs for Equity and Inclusive Growth](#) which highlights green jobs to be “**decent jobs in economic sectors which reduce negative environmental impacts**”. Given this and the varying economic structures and levels of development among the AMS, a broader definition was developed to propose specific parameters of what activities constitute “negative environmental impacts” and how decent jobs can be defined.

The definition was therefore further developed with reference to the latest definitions set out by the ILO and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2023, where they note that “good jobs” refer to ones that can meet the needs of workers such as adequate wages, safe working conditions, and preservation of worker rights.¹⁵

As such, the working definition for AMS is:

Green jobs can be defined as green when they contribute substantially to enhancing environmental quality, which specifically (but not exclusively) includes jobs that help to protect and restore ecosystems and biodiversity, reduce energy, materials and water consumption, support decarbonisation, develop green technologies and solutions, minimise all forms of waste or pollution, reduce negative environmental impacts or directly create value to the environment – covering both completely new industries and existing traditional sectors that are undergoing transitions. In recognition of the diverse environmental and economic contexts of ASEAN member states, it is noted that green jobs can exist across a wide variety of industries and stages of economic development. Additionally, these jobs are also decent jobs that can promise access to adequate wages, safe working conditions, social protection, social dialogue mechanisms and worker rights.

2.5 Components of the Framework

This Framework consists of three key components: the **four relevant policy levers** that governments can leverage, the **three pillars of strategic objectives** that outlines specific priority areas, and the **accompanying outcomes**, which consist of initiatives to be undertaken.

¹⁵ ILO (2023), *Green jobs, green economy, just transition and related concepts: A review of definitions developed through intergovernmental processes and international organizations*. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/@emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_883704.pdf

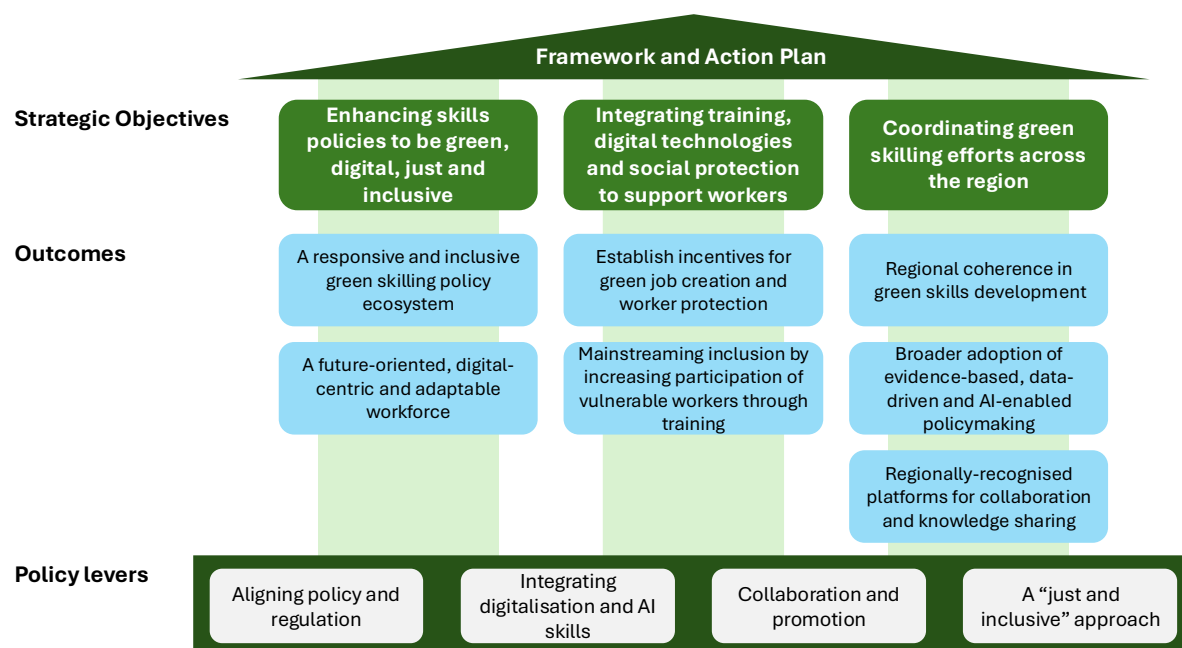
ASEAN FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN FOR A JUST AND INCLUSIVE TRANSITION TO GREEN JOBS (2025 – 2030)


Figure 1: Framework for a Just and Inclusive Transition to Green Jobs

3. Key policy levers to accelerate green jobs development

The four key policy levers represent the foundational policy actions of the Framework and Action Plan, guiding specific initiatives to promote green jobs and skills.

- Aligning policy and regulatory frameworks:** Establishing and implementing robust policies and regulations at both national and regional levels will be necessary to foster green job growth and facilitate a just and inclusive transition to a sustainable economy. Key to supporting effective efforts would be exploring alignment of national strategies with regional and global sustainability goals such as the [Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community](#) and the UN SDGs, subject to national contexts and regulations. Cross-border policy interoperability is also essential for enabling worker mobility and recognition of skills accreditation from different AMS.
- Integrating digitalisation and AI skills:** Governments could also account for trends around digital technologies that are relevant to advance energy efficiency, waste management, and sustainable production. Promoting digital literacy and adoption will be a necessary foundation toward developing more efficient green industries built upon advanced technologies such as AI, big data, blockchain, and Internet of Things (IoT). To minimise the impact of a shift in skills demand, economies could also deeply integrate digital job platforms to facilitate job seeking and upskilling for green job opportunities for all.
- Collaboration and promotion:** Developing green skills and industries requires a common understanding of what green skilling opportunities entail. AMS must therefore collaborate and engage with each other, industry, and other non-governmental entities to develop a regional-level knowledge base to define green skills, highlight the most impacted segments of workers, and assess how to manage these shifts. Conducting awareness campaigns and providing career guidance as well as skills development programmes will also be key to promoting green jobs and highlight pathways into green careers for workers. Collaboration with education providers, industry leaders, non-government and multilateral organisations will be necessary to achieve these objectives.
- A “just and inclusive” transition approach:** The most critical lever to ensuring that the shift to green economies is equitable and inclusive would be to embed a *just and inclusive transition* approach when designing policies. As per the ILO’s guidance, it involves incorporating social protection, promoting the participation marginalised communities in green and digital sectors, and offer reskilling and employment services for workers affected by the transition. The aim is to ensure vulnerable groups, including women, youth, rural communities, elderly, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities and informal sector workers, are involved in policy development.

4. Three strategic objectives

This section explores the strategic objectives and initiatives needed to facilitate a just and inclusive transition to green jobs within ASEAN. It delves into the necessities of creating standardised approaches to green skills and jobs and underscores the need for robust policy frameworks aligned with both national and regional sustainability goals. Emphasis is placed on harnessing digitalisation, alongside fostering financial support, capacity building, and collaboration among AMS. Central to these efforts is the adoption of a *just and inclusive transition* with gender and marginalised perspectives to ensure that these policies are inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups.¹⁶

Acknowledging ASEAN's diverse policy and digital readiness levels, the framework prioritises bridging policy and digital skills gaps among AMS, with each set of initiatives categorised as either “foundational” or “follow-on”. Foundational initiatives are those deemed necessary to create a baseline policy environment that can facilitate green jobs and digital skills, while follow-on initiatives specify more advanced stages of policy implementation that can better fit AMS that have made significant headway into developing and promoting green jobs. This categorisation enables AMS to stagger their progress and development while also creating an opportunity for more advanced AMS to share policy implementation best practices and ideas. Additionally, given the non-binding nature of this initiative, timelines may be further readjusted owing to any concerns or capability gaps among AMS as implementation is carried out. Overall, comprehensive social protection systems must be first established to support workers during transition periods as technological change may outpace reskilling efforts in some AMS and less so in others.

Overall, these strategic policy objectives span across three key pillars:

- **Strategic Objective 1: Enhancing skills policies to be green, digital, just and inclusive**
- **Strategic Objective 2: Integrating training, digital technologies and social protection to support workers**
- **Strategic Objective 3: Coordinating green skilling efforts across the region**

In essence, these strategic objectives are designed to support relevant ASEAN Ministries¹⁷ to expand the supply of workers who are trained in green skills and are ready for green jobs; and ensure their access to decent green jobs. Complementary actions on identifying priority sectors, supporting businesses, and involving other cross-sectoral

¹⁶ For the purposes of this Framework and Action Plan, “vulnerable groups” may refer to (but not exclusively) women, youth, persons with disabilities, rural communities, ethnic minorities or migrant workers. This explanation is not meant to serve as an authoritative definition and is instead meant to provide a broad context as relevant groups may differ across AMS.

¹⁷ These Ministries, which are part of the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM), encompass entities involved in labour-related matters including (but not limited to) promoting worker protection, human capital development, labour migration or social mobility.

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stakeholders to tackle supply-side opportunities (i.e., linking skills development with jobs creation and industry demand) are also briefly elaborated.

Strategic Objective 1: Enhancing skills policies to be green, digital, just and inclusive

Key outcomes	Foundational initiatives	Follow-on initiatives	Timeframe	Proposed lead entities
1. A responsive and inclusive green skilling policy ecosystem	Mainstream green skills development within existing skills and educational policies where applicable	Promote development of specialised training and certification programmes in green skills among education providers and in consultation with industry	Foundational initiatives: 3 years i.e., 2026-2028	Relevant AMS ministries or agencies that oversee labour matters, education providers, and employers' and workers' organisations
	Establish formal partnerships between education providers, industry, and labour unions that focuses on facilitating the development of green skills disciplines	Conduct awareness and career guidance campaigns to increase worker engagement of up-and-coming green jobs	Follow-on initiatives: 2 years i.e., 2029-2030	
	Explore mechanisms to promote green skills that considers modular-based learning, micro-credentials, and recognition of prior learning (RPL), such as for non-formal, informal and indigenous knowledge / local and traditional knowledge	Strengthen industry uptake of people who have undertaken specialised training and certification programmes in green skills provided by education providers		
2. A future-oriented, digital-centric and adaptable workforce	Create mechanisms to encourage continuous learning and upskilling for	Integrate foresight and scenario planning using statistical and qualitative	Foundational initiatives: 3 years	Relevant AMS ministries or agencies that oversee labour matters

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workers and employers, especially in industries that will be significantly affected by the green transition	forecasts into workforce development policies to anticipate future demand	i.e., 2026-2028
Complement existing digital transformation policies by promoting cross-cutting skills that focus on digital literacy and digital adoption within emerging green sectors – particularly labour-complementing applications	Conduct benchmarking exercises to assess the current green skilling ecosystem against regional and global leaders	Follow-on initiatives: 2 years i.e., 2029-2030
	Deploy digital, AI-powered platforms to promote green jobs matching and placement services that are driven by real-time labour market insights – while maintaining accessibility to workers of diverse backgrounds and abilities	

Strategic Objective 2: Integrating training, digital technologies and social protection to support workers

Key outcomes	Foundational initiatives	Follow-on initiatives	Timeframe	Proposed lead entities
1. Establish incentives for green job creation and worker protection	Conduct case study-based assessments to measure and document evidence of the	Create a database or repository of case studies to showcase the impact of green	Foundational initiatives: 3 years	Relevant AMS ministries or agencies that oversee labour matters, education providers, and

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	positive impact of green jobs on industry	jobs on businesses and industry	i.e., 2026-2028	employers' and workers' organisations
	Explore mechanisms to encourage on-the-job training and learning of green and digital skills – and to extend access to these mechanisms to workers in the informal economy	Expand social protection mechanisms such as unemployment protection and job displacement insurance schemes to manage economic disruptions faced by vulnerable workers affected by the green transition, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, rural communities, and migrant workers	Follow-on initiatives: 2 years i.e., 2029-2030	
	Align existing social protection measures with existing climate change adaptation strategies, especially policies that specify which groups are vulnerable or require economic transition, subject to national contexts and regulations			
2. Mainstreaming inclusion by increasing participation of vulnerable workers through training of green and digital skills	Engage with civil society and non-governmental organisations to tailor capacity building and skilling programmes that support vulnerable workers such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, rural communities	Create digital platforms that integrate carbon credits or alternative financing instruments to businesses with capacity building programmes to ensure workers affected by the green transition can remain relevant	Foundational initiatives: 3 years i.e. 2026-2028 Follow-on initiatives:	Relevant AMS ministries that oversee labour matters and non-governmental entities

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and ethnic minorities – particularly on labour-complementing green, digital and AI skills

in green industries by adopting new green and digital skills

Link training programmes with AI-enabled job placement services to ensure pathways into real employment in green jobs

2 years
i.e., 2029-2030

Strategic Objective 3: Coordinating green skilling efforts across the region

Key outcomes	Foundational initiatives	Follow-on initiatives	Timeframe	Potential lead entities
1. Regional coherence in green skills development	Create a regionally aligned definition of green jobs and green skills for domestic policies	Explore establishing prospective domestic, cross-sectoral working groups consisting of representatives from TVET, MSME, labour, non-governmental, civil society and broader industry groups to inform the development of policies to address skills gaps that can arise from a green transition	Foundational initiatives: 3 years i.e., 2026-2028	Relevant AMS ministries or agencies that oversee labour matters, ASEAN TVET Council
	Explore mechanisms for mutual recognition of green skill certifications across AMS, such as through the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRf)		Follow-on initiatives: 2 years i.e., 2029-2030	
	Explore establishing prospective domestic working groups consisting of industry, educational/TVET institutions, labour unions, MSMEs and non-governmental stakeholders to identify up-and-coming green jobs and skills and their impact on the workforce and vulnerable populations	Outline potential standard occupational classifications (SOC) and competency requirements for green jobs and skills		
2. Broader adoption of evidence-based, data-	Continue efforts at establishing accessible regional LMIS, especially	Develop a regionally aligned database of green jobs and skills which could describe	Foundational initiatives: 3 years	Relevant AMS ministries or agencies that oversee

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driven and AI-enabled policymaking	investing in domestic statistics infrastructure that leverage AI to identify and address gaps	prevalence of green jobs and skills with disaggregated data on age, gender, income, skill level, educational level, disability status, and geographic location – with AI-enabled analytics to identify gaps and propose recommendations	i.e., 2026-2028	labour matters and statistics agencies
	Create regionally aligned indicators that are relevant in tracking the prevalence of green skills across AMS	Conduct peer learning reviews on LMIS integration across AMS	Follow-on initiatives: 3 years i.e., 2028-2030 (Timelines overlap to enable AMS without any sufficient LMIS to catch-up)	
3. Regionally-recognised platforms for collaboration and knowledge sharing	Align terms of reference for a proposed ASEAN Green Jobs Centre of Excellence (AGJCOE) and secure financing through existing ASEAN funds or programmes as well as development partners	Work towards establishing the proposed AGJCOE as a platform to develop, promote and track green skills policies as well as to provide capacity building programs and toolkits across the region – this centre should also serve as platform to develop regional-level taxonomies, guidelines, and knowledge outputs	Foundational initiatives: 2 years i.e., 2026-2027	Relevant AMS ministries or agencies that oversee labour matters
	Continue running the ASEAN Green Jobs Forum (AGJF) as an annual platform for knowledge		Follow-on initiatives: 3 years i.e., 2028-2030	

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sharing and regional-level
collaboration

Establish regional-level
resource sharing platforms
(within or alongside the
proposed AGJCOE) to facilitate
collaboration between AMS
and minimise disparities in
progress

Establish a potential working
group with the ASEAN Centre
of Excellence for MSMEs in
Green Transition to develop
targeted measures and
policies that promote green
employment within MSMEs
across AMS

Broader cross-sectoral considerations

As the scope and complexity of greening economic industries covers a wide range of sectors, stakeholders and demographics, creating effective policies to support the development of green jobs would naturally involve cross-sectoral coordination to address crucial aspects that may go beyond the remit of labour ministries. These include identifying specific sectors that would be impacted by the green transition, creating financing and incentive mechanism for businesses, or leveraging existing digital transformation initiatives.

As such, additional considerations to create a holistic, whole-of-government approach toward green jobs and skills development are elaborated below.

- **Prioritising sector-specific roadmaps and inter-sectoral collaboration.** National green transition efforts would be effective if they fit an economy's structure – for example, integrating greener practices in services and export-oriented economies would require a very different set of priorities as compared to tourism and manufacturing-oriented economies. Additionally, the relevant green skills needed to be promoted would vary widely across different AMS. It is therefore recommended that ASEAN Labour Ministries engage with other ASEAN sectoral bodies including ASEAN Economic Ministries or ASEAN Confederation of Employers to identify and prioritise which sectors are of importance while keeping in mind the structural differences of each AMS. These sectors should be prioritised based on the potential job creation and emission reduction they have. At the same time, creating inter-sectoral platforms or working groups can strengthen policy efforts in developing (or identifying) green jobs and skills that are cross cutting across various industries (e.g., skills that promote efficient natural resource utilisation can be relevant in construction, manufacturing, or agriculture).
- **Creating targeted support for mechanisms MSMEs.** As MSMEs contribute the majority of employment and count of enterprises, green jobs and transition policies should also account for the level of capability and resources that average MSMEs possess. Typically, MSMEs lack the knowledge or resources in implementing green transition policies or reskilling their employees.¹⁸ As such, targeted training and tools – ideally simple, straightforward, incentives-based and progressive – should be designed to assist MSMEs to promote green jobs and skills. Policies should ideally promote compliance mechanisms that are simplified, broaden access to green innovation incentives, improve access to climate and skills financing, deepen integration into green value chains, and develop relevant indicators to track these outcomes and ensure they create positive impact for employment and the environment. They should also not bind MSMEs to onerous regulations or allow for temporary reprieve of specific

¹⁸ OECD and ASEAN (2021), *Facilitating the green transition for ASEAN SMEs: A toolkit for policymakers*. Available: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Facilitating-Green-Transition-for-ASEAN-SMEs.pdf>

requirements up to a certain threshold based on factors such as time period or employee count. It is therefore recommended that ASEAN Labour Ministries engage with other ASEAN sectoral bodies including ACCMSME or the ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC) to develop a specific approach to developing green skills within MSME employees.

- **Partnering with other working groups to advance interests of marginalised communities, including women and rural workers.** The Regional Study of Green Jobs Policy Readiness in ASEAN highlights that although the labour force participation rate in ASEAN region was 70.3%, significant gender disparities exist, with female participation rates being 18 percentage points lower than men. As such, it is essential to integrate employment and job creation objectives for women, as well as other underrepresented demographics, into the green jobs and skilling framework. It is recommended that ASEAN Labour Ministries engage with platforms such as the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurship Network, ASEAN Ministers Meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (AMRDPE), the ASEAN Disability Forum, and the ASEAN Inclusive Business Forum to involve key stakeholders representing these marginalised groups into policy development.
- **Integrating green skills development with digital transformation initiatives.** As the green transition converges with ongoing technological developments, skilling initiatives should also account for exposure to automation and AI. Most workers in ASEAN are involved in medium-skilled professions¹⁹, creating significant exposure to AI and automation as well as the need for upskilling to meet emerging green economy demands.²⁰ As such, it is recommended that SLOM engage with ASEAN Digital Senior Officials Meeting (ADGSOM) to identify and consolidate initiatives that can tackle current skilling gaps across the entire region through a sustainability and productivity lens.
- **Creating financial mechanisms to share resources and support workers.** There are current platforms to leverage financial resources to support green skilling efforts implemented by other ASEAN bodies and AMS. This includes the [ASEAN Climate Finance Access and Mobilization Strategy](#) implemented by the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC) to avail funding for climate-related initiatives across the region, particularly through *Strategic Area V: Capacity-building and Enabling Environment*. Regional-level knowledge platforms, such as ASEAN Access, the dedicated one-stop platform for business information and training hosted by the ACCMSME, are also effective mechanisms to share and promote green jobs and skills development. It is recommended that

¹⁹ The ILO classifies this as “skilled manual workers” that are characterised by routine and repetitive tasks in cognitive and production activities. They can include occupations such as skilled agriculture and fishery, clerical work, machine operators and assemblers. See ILO’s Glossary of Skills and Labour Migration, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/resource/glossary-skills-and-labour-migration>

²⁰ ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (2024), *Regional Economic Outlook 2024*. Available at: <https://amro-asia.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/AREO-2024-Box-2.6.pdf>

ASEAN Labour Ministries engage with such platforms to channel resources toward funding and support skilling programmes.

5. Governance and implementation

Successful implementation will hinge upon consistent support of ASEAN Member States alongside the ASEAN Secretariat, with relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies, industry partners, labour unions, stakeholders, and the wider community. This section elaborates the mechanisms and governance framework to lead and sustain regional-level green skilling and jobs transition effort.

It is built on key principles of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement while acknowledging that AMS may have different challenges to making progress in the outlined policy action areas. Additionally, collaboration with private sector stakeholders and broader industry groups will be needed to develop effective policies that are economically sustainable.

5.1 Roles, responsibilities and resources

The governance mechanism for implementing the Framework and Action Plan includes:

1. **Institutionalising implementation through the Senior Labour Officials Meeting (SLOM), and oversight through the ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting (ALMM).** SLOM, which is held annually, shall be the key platform to coordinating, consulting, and tracking the Framework and Action Plan's progress. SLOM will then report the state of progress to the ALMM biennially and receive strategic direction or recommendations from the body. This should be done with close support by the ASEAN Secretariat, specifically through the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Department. The ASEAN Secretariat will therefore assist in facilitating meetings and reviews, while coordinating inputs and attendance of AMS and other dialogue partners.
2. **Prioritising multi-stakeholder engagement and social dialogue.** Engagement with the employers' and workers' organisations, private sector, civil society / NGOs, academia, and development partners is essential to shared ownership and mobilisation of resources. Other regional sectoral bodies and stakeholders, such as ASEAN Business Advisory Council, the ASEAN TVET Council, ASEAN Women Entrepreneur Network and the ASEAN Inclusive Business Forum, could also be consulted during the design of key projects and initiatives. As such, leads of initiatives under the Framework and Action Plan should prioritise multi-stakeholder involvement and social dialogue at pivotal stages of development. This can be done by establishing multiple rounds of consultation and open feedback, as well as

assigning roles for carrying out capacity building programmes or policy reviews to non-governmental entities.

3. **Establishing resource sharing and funding mechanisms to access regional resources for green skills development.** Given the different tiers and stages of implementation across the region, AMS should also endeavour to create platforms to share knowledge and technical resources to promote the development of green jobs and skills. This includes sharing policy evaluation studies, promoting access to skills platforms and best practices, and highlighting case studies of successful implementation. Additionally, SLOM or ALMM may consider exploring mechanisms to channel funding to any AMS who require financial support either through existing funds, programmes and development partners or creating new mechanisms if necessary. Platforms to promote these efforts could be through the proposed ASEAN Green Jobs Centre of Excellence (AGJCOE), which is envisioned to serve as a hub for sharing and developing policy advice, research, technical cooperation and capacity building. All abovementioned approaches serve to support AMS that may experience gaps during implementation where such issues can be highlighted by the relevant AMS or by the AGJCOE.

5.2 Monitoring, evaluation and knowledge sharing

Monitoring and evaluating the progress of the ASEAN Framework and Action Plan for a Just and Inclusive Transition to Green Jobs (2025-2030), including green job initiatives, is essential to ensure its effectiveness and long-term impact on sustainable economic development. As highlighted in Section 4, successful implementation is tied to the roll-out of each proposed initiative in this Framework and Action Plan. A strong evidence-based data helps guide policy decisions, improve programme design, and track outcomes. Equally important is the sharing of knowledge and best practices among AMS to foster learning, innovation, and regional cooperation.

A proposed tracking and results matrix is in development and is expected to be further revised after successive SLOM sessions as indicators and outcomes continue to be tracked over the implementation period.²¹ Ideally, it is expected that the Framework and Action Plan will be continually refined over time to ensure accurate measurement of progress in creating just and inclusive outcomes for vulnerable communities. The governance and coordination across all the elements in the matrix will be through SLOM,

²¹ A separate matrix of results, indicators and outcomes to track and measure progress of the Framework and Action Plan implementation is under development by SLOM.

AGCOE, ASEAN LSCC, and AMS focal points. The upcoming monitoring framework aims to:

- Track implementation progress and outcomes against clearly defined baselines and targets;
- Strengthen evidence-based policymaking through systematic data collection and analysis;
- Facilitate learning, innovation, and regional collaboration among ASEAN Member States (AMS); and
- Inform policy reviews and resource allocation through periodic assessments.

Supporting these initiatives are overarching action items which include:

- **Assigning the proposed AGJCOE as a platform to track regional progress, promote cross-collaboration, and provide technical assistance to AMS.** SLOM could collaborate with the proposed AGJCOE to assess the progress of each AMS. This could potentially be done by the AGJCOE implementing a questionnaire-based, self-reporting mechanism to ensure AMS are on track in carrying out action items in each Strategic Objective of the Action Plan.
- **Further refine specific indicators and targets for regional and national green job initiatives as progress continues.** Evaluation of whether outcomes have been achieved involves defining and measuring qualitative and quantitative indicators that cover employment levels, skills prevalence, and demographic data (e.g., number of new jobs, labour mobility etc.). As such, there is room for deep consultation with relevant cross-sectoral stakeholders across labour, environmental, and economic ministries and agencies to set specific measurable and timebound targets. These targets should tie to the objectives of this Framework and Action Plan – that is, to promote a just and inclusive transition of green jobs. Indicators should be derived based on efforts to develop labour market information, specifically the [Regional Mapping of Labour Market Information for Skills and Employment Policies](#). Ideally, these indicators and targets should be preliminarily developed by the AGJCOE’s research team and further co-developed and subsequently endorsed by SLOM. These indicators are envisioned to be measurements of relevant green jobs activity (e.g., count of green jobs, count of workers with relevant green skills etc.) to track implementation progress.
- **Assigning the ASEAN Green Jobs Forum as an annual platform for knowledge sharing among AMS.** The ASEAN Green Jobs Forum, having been held in 2024 and 2025 consecutively, serves as a natural fit as an annual platform for knowledge

sharing among AMS which can be managed and coordinated by the proposed AGJCOE. Through this forum, government representatives, private sector stakeholders, academia, and civil society / NGOs shall have a neutral platform to convene, exchange insights, and discuss emerging trends and challenges related to green employment. Moreover, it will provide opportunities for capacity building and networking, enabling participants to jointly develop solutions and coordinate initiatives that support a just and inclusive shift towards sustainable economic development across the region. As such, in the spirit of cross-country collaboration, the hosting of the ASEAN Green Jobs Forum could also be rotated among AMS based on mutually-agreed and voluntary arrangements where locations and hosts could be proposed by the AGJCOE.

6. Conclusion

As ASEAN embarks on its journey toward a just and inclusive transition to green jobs, the collaborative governance structures and policy actions outlined in this Framework and Action Plan will serve as vital foundations for success. By institutionalising oversight, centralising expertise, and fostering engagement across sectors, stakeholders and borders, the region is poised to accelerate sustainable economic development and build resilience for a rapidly evolving future.

Overall, the Framework and Action Plan aims to drive measurable impact to support the vision for a digitally-empowered and green-ready workforce. The potentially deep synergy of the proposed AGJCOE, the annual ASEAN Green Jobs Forum, and robust multi-stakeholder partnerships enables ASEAN to lay the groundwork for enduring progress. A commitment to integrating equity and inclusive approaches in the implementation, monitoring, evaluating, and harmonising progress ensures that each AMS and stakeholders are able to play part in contributing to a regional ecosystem where green job opportunities flourish.