

Sustainability in Asia Pacific

November 2021

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Key findings

SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

The Environmental Sustainability Index

The six core pillars of environmental sustainability

Asia Pacific predicted to achieve only 10% of SDGs by 2030

Energy technology development improves Sustainability Index rank

Japan, China and Myanmar improve Sustainability Index rankings

ENERGY PILLAR

Energy ranking has worsened significantly for Singapore

Asia Pacific performs well in the Energy Security category globally

Access to clean fuels remains a problem

Fossil fuels remain a leading source of electricity in Asia Pacific

POLLUTION PILLAR

Bangladesh leads in pollution pillar in 2020

Municipal waste an unsolved problem for Asia Pacific cities

CO2 emissions remain dangerously high

Growth in livestock and crop farming increase methane emissions

FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY PILLAR

Indonesia struggles to protect its rich biodiversity

Malaysia and Sri Lanka fail to tackle biodiversity loss

International organisations stepping in to tackle wildlife crimes

The proportion of protected marine areas remains minuscule

WATER PILLAR

The water situation in Asia barely changed over 2016-2020

India and Pakistan facing the most serious water issues regionally

Renewable water reserves are diminishing

Agriculture – the key water user – facing highest water stress

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE PILLAR

Poverty in Kazakhstan contributes to deteriorating ranking

Food affordability remains a challenge in developing economies

Poorest countries spend more than a third of their budget on food

Policy developments ignite interest in organic farming in Asia

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE PILLAR

Thailand improved its position in terms of environmental resilience

Asia has the largest number of cities most exposed to sea level rise

Asia Pacific becoming more susceptible to extreme weather events

Losses caused by climate change remain significant

COUNTRY SNAPSHOTS

South Korea: Good food/agriculture availability, but high pollution

Among the highest CO2 emissions from fossil fuels globally

Japan: Food is an available and affordable resource

Japan is among the most energy-efficient economies in the world

Singapore: Global leader in water recycling and desalination tech

Forest and biodiversity availability is expected to remain low
China: High levels of pollution and poor water resources
China leads in terms of forest area growth
Thailand: Poor global position in terms of energy sustainability
One of the highest percentages of protected areas in Asia Pacific
Pakistan suffers from acute water shortages
Significantly lower CO2 emissions in a global context
India: Poor biodiversity protection, but stronger in agriculture
India struggles to shift from coal and other fossil fuels
Cambodia: Among the least environmentally resilient globally
Higher water availability in Cambodia
Bangladesh: Low energy availability, but higher in air quality
Population in Bangladesh struggles to afford food
The Philippines: Low environmental resilience
High water stress, although precipitation levels are high

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