

Asian Circular Cities Declaration Launched — Yokohama Leads as a First Signatory at ASCC 2025

CITY OF YOKOHAMA, JAPAN, November 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On November 25–26, at [the Asia Smart City Conference \(ASCC\) 2025](#) in Yokohama, the establishment of the Asian Circular Cities Declaration was announced. The Circular Cities Declaration is a framework launched in Europe in 2020, with about 90 European cities participating to date. Signatory cities promote ten commitments set out in the declaration, such as establishing goals and strategies for their local circular transition and sharing practices through the declaration's network to enhance each city's circular policies. Until now, no comparable region-wide declaration framework has existed in Asia.



Asian Circular Cities Declaration Launched

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*Mayor Takeharu Yamanaka of
Yokohama*

Mayor Takeharu Yamanaka of Yokohama, Japan emphasized the need for such a framework in Asia and took the initiative to launch it. At ASCC 2025, leaders from the City of Yokohama, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (Thailand), Cebu City (Philippines), the Centre for Liveable Cities (Singapore), Da Nang City (Vietnam), and Makassar City (Indonesia), together with CityNet (a network of cities and local governments across the Asia-Pacific) acting as a witness, jointly called on international organizations and stakeholders to support the transition of Asian cities toward a circular society, including the establishment of the Asian Circular Cities Declaration framework.

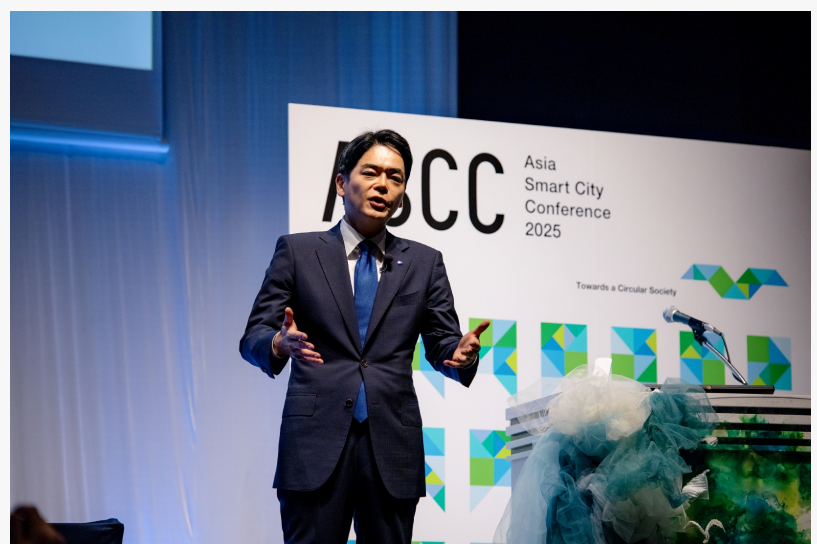
Following the remarks from the Asian cities, Jean-Eric Paquet, Ambassador of the European Union to Japan; F. Cleo Kawawaki, Director General, Sectors Department 2, Asian Development Bank; and Christoph Pusch, Program Manager, World Bank Tokyo Development Learning Center (TDLC) delivered messages of support for and confidence in the initiatives of Asian cities.

Furthermore, a message was also sent by the City of Amsterdam, one of the pioneering cities in promoting the circular economy. Deputy Mayor Zita Pels, responsible for this agenda, stated: "Amsterdam strongly supports Yokohama's vision of a cross-continental alliance of circular cities," expressing hopes for collaboration between Europe and Asia.

Over the course of two days, a range of sessions was organized by institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, Asian Development Bank Institute, World Bank TDLC, CityNet, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), and the City of Yokohama. These sessions introduced practical examples from cities related to the conference theme: "Towards a Circular Society."

In response to calls for support from Asian city leaders and the discussions held during these sessions, ICLEI Japan, the Japanese office of ICLEI, one of the largest global networks of local and regional governments, announced the establishment of the Asian Circular Cities Declaration. In addition, organizations such as ICLEI Europe, Japan's Ministry of the Environment, UNESCAP, UNDP, UN-Habitat, CityNet, the World Economic Forum, and Circle Economy expressed their support and expectations for the new declaration framework.

Mayor Yamanaka, who signed the Asian Circular Cities Declaration during the conference, stated: "We heard high expectations from many partners for the Asian Circular Cities Declaration, and Yokohama will work tirelessly to encourage more cities to join and expand this movement across



Takeharu Yamanaka, Mayor of Yokohama



Centre for Liveable Cities, Makassar City, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Da Nang

Asia.” ICLEI Japan Chair Takemoto also shared his aspirations for managing the declaration framework going forward: “Let us work together to develop circular cities in Asia by making full use of the declaration framework, realizing a circular future in Asia and beyond.”

Furthermore, during the conference, it was announced that Mayor Yamanaka will assume the role of ICLEI Global Executive Committee Member responsible for circular development. The Mayor of Turku, Piia Elo, who attended ASCC 2025, as an ICLEI Global Executive Committee Advisor and ICLEI Europe Vice President, expressed hopes of building momentum in promoting circular cities in Asia: “Turku supports Yokohama's leadership and the new declaration to create a city-led transition, co-creating solutions by empowering local stakeholders and collaborating with international partners.”

Finally, Mayor Yamanaka, reflecting Yokohama's strong commitment to the global community, announced that the conference will be rebranded as the “Asia-Pacific Circular Cities Forum (APCC-Forum)” starting next year. The next APCC-Forum will be held in Yokohama from September 2 to 4, 2026. The following APCC-Forum will be held together with UNESCAP's Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF) from August 31 to September 2, 2027, which will take place during [GREEN x EXPO 2027](#) (The World Horticultural Exhibition YOKOHAMA 2027).

The Asia Smart City Conference is an international conference hosted by the City of Yokohama, bringing together representatives from cities, international organizations, government agencies, academic institutions, and the private sector to discuss sustainable urban development that balances environment and economy. First held in 2012, this year marks its 14th edition. The theme this year was “Towards a Circular Society,” with participation from numerous cities and organizations. Plenary sessions were held by the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank Institute, World Bank, and CityNet, and about 44 companies and organizations, including circular startups, showcased technologies and solutions contributing to circular economy and urban problem-solving, and thematic public-private dialogues were also held.

Yokohama City looks forward to welcoming interested partners and invites them to save their dates for APCC-Forum 2026 from September 2 to 4, 2026, and work together toward the shared common goal of realizing a circular, decarbonized and sustainable future.

Masahiro Nishikawa
City of Yokohama, Representative to the Americas
+1 646-905-3758

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