Asian Circular Cities Declaration Expands to 43 Cities and Launches Its First Action Plan at the APCC-Forum in Yokohama





YOKOHAMA, JAPAN, September 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On September 3 and 4, the City of Yokohama and ICLEI Japan hosted the inaugural Asia-Pacific Circular Cities Forum (APCC-Forum). Participants included cities across Asia advancing a circular economy, 52 local governments and organizations from Japan and abroad, and other stakeholders.
15 sessions were held at Pacifico Yokohama, where participants discussed the transition toward circular cities in Asia. In addition to representatives from local governments and organizations, participants from businesses and students also took part.

During the closing session on September 4, Jun Matsuura, Deputy Mayor of Yokohama, highlighted the forum's key outcomes:
"Several concrete outcomes have been achieved. ICLEI Japan announced new signatory cities to the Asian Circular Cities Declaration (ACCD) and presented a concrete action plan, including the establishment of three working groups under the ACCD framework. The City of Yokohama also launched a new project to bring the voices of young people to the global stage."

New Signatory Cities to the Asian Circular Cities Declaration (ACCD)
At the forum, Togo Uchida, Executive Director of ICLEI Japan, announced 17 new signatory cities

to the ACCD, a framework for promoting circular cities in Asia. The ACCD network has expanded from 26 cities in 7 countries, representing a combined population of more than 57 million, to 43 cities in 11 countries, representing a combined population of more than 82 million.



[17 new signatories]
Barishal City (Bangladesh), Cebu Province (Philippines), Damauli City (Nepal), Danao City (Philippines), Dhankuta Municipality (Nepal), George Town (Malaysia), Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (India), Hetauda Sub-Metropolitan City (Nepal), Jayapura City (Indonesia), Kushtia Municipality (Bangladesh), Kobe City (Japan), Kochi Municipal Corporation (India), Pokhara Metropolitan City (Nepal), Probolinggo City (Indonesia), Rawalpindi City (Pakistan), Sreepur Municipality (Bangladesh), Tilottama Municipality (Nepal)

First ACCD Action Plan: “ACCD Action 2026”
Before the forum, ICLEI Japan conducted a survey of ACCD signatory cities and presented the results. The survey found that all responding cities have already established circular economy goals and strategies and undertaken awareness-raising initiatives. However, market creation emerged as a common challenge for many cities. Local regulations, public procurement, and incentive schemes were the three weakest policy areas, while frameworks enabling repair, reuse, and secondary-material markets were the most significant shared gap.

Following Uchida's presentation, Kazuhiko Takemoto, Chair of ICLEI Japan, announced the first ACCD action plan, "ACCD Action 2026," to strengthen the policy-making capacity of signatory cities. The action plan includes the establishment of three working groups, whose roles will be to:

-Collect and share best practices from cities across Asia;
-Promote the adoption of private-sector solutions by cities; and
-Develop methodologies for monitoring progress under the ACCD framework.

Takemoto stated:
"Together with the 43 signatory cities, including the 17 newly added this year, we will continue to advance the activities of the ACCD and contribute to the realization of a circular society across Asia."

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, reflected on the growing circular economy movement among Asian cities and

emphasized:
"I particularly welcome the growing momentum behind city-led initiatives that are advancing a circular urban future where sustainability and prosperity go hand in hand, including the Asian Circular Cities Declaration and the Asia-Pacific Circular Cities Forum. Building on Yokohama's long-standing leadership in sustainable urban development and international cooperation, these initiatives can help accelerate efforts across the region."

Mike Josef, Lord Mayor of the City of Frankfurt am Main and a representative of one of the leading cities of the European Circular Cities Declaration, expressed his support for the Asian Circular Cities Declaration as a bridge between Europe and Asia. He shared Frankfurt's current initiatives aimed at achieving zero waste.

Nestor Dionson Archival, Mayor of Cebu City, commented after the forum:
"As a founding city of the ACCD, Cebu City is grateful for the opportunity to contribute its perspectives and experiences to the discussions. We look forward to the continued development of the ACCD as a dynamic platform for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and concrete action. Together with Yokohama and our fellow cities, Cebu City remains committed to advancing practical and inclusive solutions toward a more resilient and circular Asia-Pacific region."

A Student-Led Project to Share the Voices of the Next Generation with the World
The forum also involved participation from young people. The City of Yokohama launched a student-led project to amplify the voices of the next generation on the global stage in preparation for the 9th Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-9), scheduled alongside the APCC-Forum in 2027.
The project will engage additional student groups in developing policy recommendations, to present them at APUF-9 in 2027.

At the conclusion of the forum, Matsuura outlined plans for the following year and shared his vision:
"Next year's APCC-Forum will be held on a larger scale during GREEN × EXPO 2027. The week from 30 August to 3 September 2027 will be designated as 'Yokohama Circular Week,' creating an opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders in the circular economy from Japan and around the world to gather in Yokohama. Together with cities across the globe, Yokohama will continue advancing efforts toward the realization of a circular society."

About the Asian Circular Cities Declaration（ACCD）
The Asian Circular Cities Declaration (ACCD) is a regional framework for advancing circular cities across Asia. By signing the declaration, cities demonstrate their commitment to promoting circular economy principles, strengthening regional collaboration, and building sustainable and resilient urban systems. Inspired by the European Circular Cities Declaration, the ACCD was launched to provide a similar framework for Asia. The initiative was proposed by the City of Yokohama, and its establishment was announced by ICLEI Japan in November 2025.

About the Asia-Pacific Circular Cities Forum (APCC-Forum)
The APCC-Forum is an international forum organized by the City of Yokohama and co-organized by ICLEI Japan. Bringing together ACCD signatory cities, leaders and experts from governments, international organizations, research institutions, and the private sector, the forum serves as a multi-stakeholder platform for sharing knowledge and fostering collaboration to advance circular urban development across Asia.

For more information, please check the website of APCC-Forum 2026:
https://apcc.city.yokohama.lg.jp/

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