

Can Southeast Asia Play Its Part For The Climate?

**21 September 2023
10.00 am – 12.00 pm (UTC +8)**

**ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Singapore 119614**

As climate change impacts intensify and affect more and more people in the region, concerns about the absence of concerted efforts to for a more ambitious climate agenda grow. From more ambitious climate pledges promised by regional governments to increasingly proactive business communities and environmental groups in integrating climate considerations into their practices, there is growing awareness in the region that a “business-as-usual” scenario is no longer an option. But how do Southeast Asian citizens perceive these developments and view their countries’ climate policy direction? How are businesses’ climate actions received by Southeast Asian countries? Do individual actions count in the bigger scheme of things?

About the Survey Launch

Against this backdrop, the Climate Change in Southeast Asia Programme at the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute initiated the Southeast Asia Climate Outlook Survey, a region-wide annual survey to understand the climate awareness and perceptions of Southeast Asian citizens. This year’s survey is the fourth iteration and was designed to analyse the attitudes and concerns of Southeast Asian citizens towards climate change, governmental policies and actions and the role of different stakeholders in climate action. This year’s survey also drew views on renewable energy transition, agriculture and food security, and international cooperation. This hybrid seminar will launch the Report and discuss key findings with a panel of four expert discussants versed in regional climate and environmental policy.

PROGRAMME

(Timings in Singapore time)

- 9.30 am **Registration**
- 10.00 am – 10.10 am **WELCOME REMARKS**
Mr. CHOI Shing Kwok
Director and Chief Executive Officer
ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute
- 10.10 am – 10.40 am **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**
Can Southeast Asia Play its Part for the Climate?

H.E. Nik Nazmi Bin Nik Ahmad
Minister of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate
Change
Malaysia
- 10.40 am – 10.50 am **Q&A WITH MINISTER NIK NAZMI**

Moderated by *Mr CHOI Shing Kwok*
- 10.50 am – 10.55 am **INTRODUCTION TO THE SURVEY**

Dr. Mirza HUDA
Lead Researcher
Climate Change in Southeast Asia Programme
ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute
- 10.55 am – 11.40 am **SURVEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Moderator: *Ms. Sharon SEAH*
Senior Fellow and Coordinator
ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute

Discussants: *Ms. Jessica CHEAM*
Founder, Managing Director
Eco-Business

Dr. Winston CHOW
Associate Professor of Urban Climate
Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow
Singapore Management University

Dr. Angel HSU
Assistant Professor of Public Policy

Environment, Ecology and Energy
Program
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Dr. THANG Nam Do (virtual)
Fellow, Zero-Carbon Energy for Asia-
Pacific Grand Challenge Program
Crawford School of Public Policy
Australian National University

11.40 am – 12.00 pm **Q&A**

12.00 pm **End of programme**

Keynote Speaker



H.E. Nik Nazmi Bin Nik Ahmad is the Minister of Natural Resources, Environment & Climate Change and Member of Parliament for Setiawangsa. He is also the KEADILAN Vice President. Born in Kuala Lumpur, he graduated with LLB (Hons) from Kings College London . In the 2008 General Elections, he was elected as Selangor State Assemblyman for Seri Setia, the youngest winning candidate. He has served several Parliamentary Special Select Committees: member of Budget (2018-19), Chair of Defence and Home Affairs (2019-20) and member of Education (2020-22). After defending the Setiawangsa parliamentary seat in 2022 and forming the Unity Government led by Anwar Ibrahim, Nik Nazmi was appointed Minister of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change. Nik Nazmi has authored multiple books. He also founded the Mentari Project, an urban educational access program as well as a community football club, Setiawangsa Rangers FC.

Speakers / Moderators



Mr. Choi Shing Kwok is the Director & CEO of the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, which does research on the political, economic and socio-cultural developments in Southeast Asia. He is also the Chairman of SP Services Limited, an energy services company, Deputy Chairman of the ComfortDelGro Group, a global transportation company, and a board member of the St Andrew's Mission Hospital, a medical charity. In addition, he also serves on the National Records Advisory Committee in the Ministry of Communications and Information, and the Management Board of the Singapore Nuclear Research & Safety Initiative in the National University of Singapore. Before his retirement from the civil service in October 2017, Shing Kwok was the Permanent Secretary of the then Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) for 5 years. He also served 7 years as the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and 9 years as a senior official in the Ministry of Defence earlier in his career. During his military service, Shing Kwok held a variety of command and staff appointments in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). Promoted to Brigadier-General in 1996, he took early retirement from the SAF in 2000 to join the Administrative Service. Shing Kwok obtained his Bachelor and Master's degrees in Engineering Tripos from Cambridge University in 1981 and 1985 respectively. He also received a Master of Public Administration degree from Harvard University in 1994 as an Edward Mason Fellow. During his public sector career, Shing Kwok was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Silver) in 1993 and the Meritorious Service Medal in 2000.



Ms. Jessica Cheam is the Founder and Managing Director of Eco-Business, Asia Pacific's leading independent media and business intelligence organisation dedicated to sustainable development. She is recognised as a sustainability pioneer with two decades of experience in media, sustainable development and ESG issues globally. She serves as an independent, non-executive director for Singapore-listed Wilmar International, Asia's leading agribusiness group, and ComfortDelGro, one of the world's largest land transport companies. She chairs ComfortDelGro's Board Sustainability

Committee, and is a member of its Audit & Risk; and Digitalisation Committees. She is a regular columnist for national newspapers, is a member of the Singapore Institute of Directors (SID), and serves as its ESG committee member. She is also a member of the Institute of Corporate Directors Malaysia and the UK's Institute of Directors. She is also accredited with INSEAD's Certificate of Corporate Governance and the CFA Institute Certificate in ESG Investing. Jessica specialises in advising the Boards of a wide range of government and multi-national organisations on ESG strategy and governance, and has a particular interest in issues at the intersection of sustainability, technology, diversity and inclusion.



Dr. Winston Chow is an Associate Professor of Urban Climate and Lee Kong Chian Research Fellow based at Singapore Management University's (SMU) College of Integrative Studies. He has been a Principal Investigator for the multi-institute Cooling Singapore initiative since 2017, and currently leads interdisciplinary research on how Singapore's urban climate risks will change as its climate warms. His previous research projects focused on urban heat island science, impacts and mitigation, as well as on climate change vulnerability in subtropical cities. In July 2023, he was elected as Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Working Group II, focusing on the impacts, vulnerability and adaptation of climate change for the Seventh Assessment Cycle from 2023-2030.



Dr. Angel Hsu is an Assistant Professor of Public Policy and the Environment, Ecology and Energy Program (E3P) at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and holds a PhD in Forestry and Environmental Studies from Yale University. She is the Founder and Principal Investigator of Data-Driven EnviroLab. Angel previously held appointments at Yale-NUS college in Singapore as Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, and the World Resources Institute (WRI) where she managed and led WRI's efforts to develop corporate greenhouse gas accounting and reporting initiatives in developing countries, including China. Angel was also the lead author of the 2018 UNEP Emissions Gap report chapter on non-state actors and an author for the IPCC AR6. Angel holds an M Phil in Environmental Policy from the University of Cambridge, and a BS in Biology and BA in Political Science from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC.



Dr. Thang Nam Do is a Fellow in the Zero-Carbon Energy for Asia-Pacific Grand Challenge Program in the Resources, Environment and Development program, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University (ANU). His policy-oriented research includes energy transition, climate change, water governance, environmental policy, ecosystem valuation, and sustainable cities, and a focus on Vietnam, Mekong, and Southeast Asia.



Ms. Sharon Seah is Senior Fellow and concurrent Coordinator of the ASEAN Studies Centre and the Climate Change in Southeast Asia Programme at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute. Prior to academia, Ms Seah spent 15 years in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore and the National Environment Agency. Her research interests are in ASEAN, multilateralism, rule of law, and climate change. Ms Seah graduated with a Master's in Public and International Law from the University of Melbourne in 2018. She is co-editor of *50 Years of ASEAN and Singapore* (World Scientific: 2017) and editor of *Building a New Legal Order for the Oceans* (NUS Press: 2019) by Tommy Koh. She is also the lead author of *The State of Southeast Asia Survey Report* and the *Southeast Asia Climate Outlook Survey Report*.



Dr. Mirza Huda is Lead Researcher at the Climate Change in Southeast Asia Programme (CCSEAP) of the ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute. He contributes to CCSEAP projects on energy, climate change and natural resource governance in Southeast Asia. His work focuses on energy transition and climate change in Southeast Asia, the European Union's (EU) Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and cross-border electricity grids in Asia. Prior to ISEAS, Mirza worked at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Academy and the Nanyang Technological University. He also provided consultancy services as an Energy Security Expert to the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), Vienna. Mirza received the 2020-2021 Clean EDGE Asia Fellowship sponsored by the National Bureau of Asian Research and the Bureau of Energy Resources at the U.S. Department of State. He is a Research Fellow at the Earth System Governance Project.