



# Green Public Procurement (GPP) in ASEAN

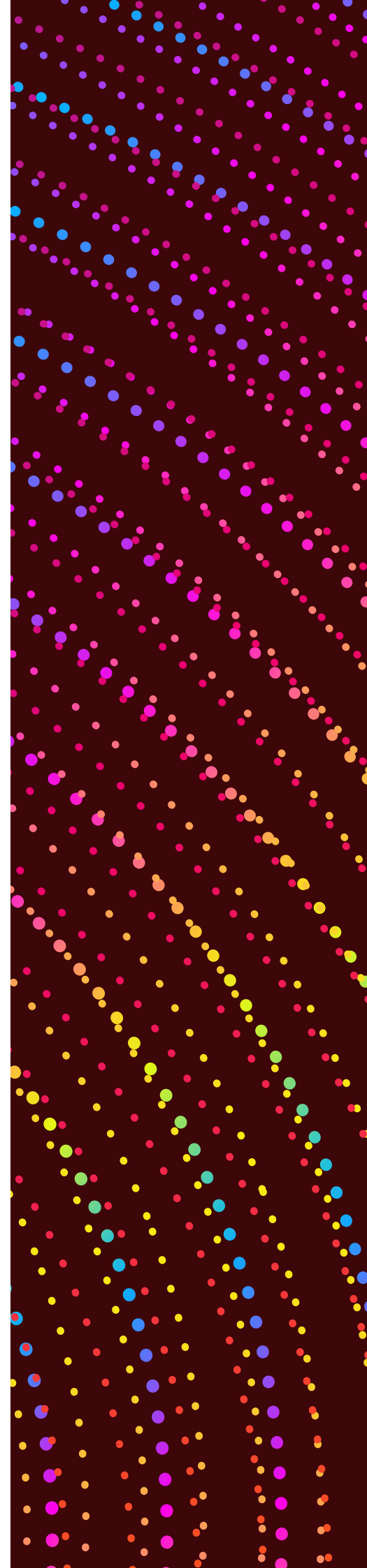
TECHNICAL  
GUIDANCE AND  
PRACTICAL  
TOOLS FOR  
IMPLEMENTATION

Working Paper

**switchasia**



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# Abbreviations

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<b>10YFP</b>	10-year Framework of Programmes on SCP
<b>ACSDSD</b>	ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue
<b>ACSS</b>	ASEAN Community Statistical System
<b>AEC</b>	ASEAN Economic Community
<b>AMSs</b>	ASEAN Member States
<b>APEC</b>	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
<b>APRSCP</b>	Asia Pacific Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production
<b>ASEC</b>	ASEAN Secretariat
<b>AWGCME</b>	ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment
<b>AWGCW</b>	ASEAN Working Group on Chemicals and Waste
<b>AWGEE</b>	ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Education
<b>AWGESC</b>	ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities
<b>CE</b>	Circular economy
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus disease 2019; SARS-CoV-1
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign direct investment
<b>GDP</b>	Gross domestic products
<b>GPP</b>	Green public procurement
<b>GSA</b>	General Services Administration
<b>KPI</b>	Key performance indicator(s)
<b>LCC</b>	Life-cycle cost
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring & Evaluation
<b>MRA</b> s	Mutual recognition arrangements
<b>MSME</b>	Micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises
<b>NAP</b> s	National action plans
<b>NDC</b> s	Nationally Determined Contributions (Paris Agreement)
<b>PFM</b>	Public Financial Management (PFM) Systems
<b>PPP</b>	Public-Private Partnership
<b>SCP</b>	Sustainable Consumption and Production
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SME</b>	Small- and medium-sized enterprises
<b>SPP</b>	Sustainable public procurement
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNESCAP</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

# 1. Executive Summary

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This working paper, Green Public Procurement (GPP) in ASEAN: Technical Guidance and Practical Tools for Implementation, was developed as an initiative of the SWITCH-Asia Policy Support Component (PSC) to support the acceleration of Green Public Procurement (GPP) implementation in ASEAN Member States (AMSs). The paper examines how GPP is recognised under different frameworks as a strategic tool to stimulate markets for sustainable goods and services, reduce environmental impacts, and enhance social equity. Leveraging SWITCH-Asia’s extensive experience in GPP across ASEAN, this paper provides actionable strategies to accelerate GPP adoption, address implementation gaps, and position GPP as a key driver of sustainable development, regional market integration, and economic resilience.

The paper begins by introducing the ASEAN context and highlighting the relevance of GPP for achieving the region’s long-term sustainability and economic resilience. It examines three key regional strategic frameworks—the **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025**, the **ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework**, and the **Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community**. These frameworks emphasize the need to integrate sustainability into procurement practices to support regional economic integration, resource efficiency, and circular economy principles. Given the significant public expenditure on procurement within AMSs, GPP is positioned as a strategic tool to stimulate markets for sustainable goods and services, reduce environmental impacts, and enhance social equity.

The paper then explores the current state of GPP across AMSs. It examines the legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks governing GPP, the institutional capacities needed for effective implementation, and the dynamics of public procurement operations, market practices, and accountability mechanisms. An in-depth analysis of opportunities and gaps reveals disparities in GPP maturity levels across AMSs, underscoring the need for tailored national strategies and coordinated regional efforts. Recognising the diversity of GPP policies and implementation experiences across AMSs, the paper combines a review of national experiences with a regional analysis. The country-level assessment is intended to identify common challenges, opportunities, and good practices that may inform regional cooperation and the operationalisation of GPP under existing ASEAN strategic frameworks. The analysis also highlights the importance of market readiness and engagement, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to ensure a reliable supply of sustainable products and services.

Drawing on international experiences, the paper offers insights into global trends in GPP implementation. It details the GPP policies and practices of the European Union (EU), including recent advancements and key lessons learned. Additionally, it examines GPP initiatives within APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), with a specific focus on the USA’s federal procurement policies promoting sustainability. The section highlights the emergence of regional procurement networks in regions such as Africa, Europe, and the Americas, illustrating how collaborative initiatives can facilitate knowledge exchange, innovation, and the harmonization of procurement practices. These global examples provide a valuable blueprint for ASEAN to develop its own regional strategies, ensuring policy coherence and market competitiveness across AMSs.

The paper further outlines the development of a strategic framework for mainstreaming GPP in AMSs. This framework focuses on enhancing the **Scale** (expanding GPP adoption across high-impact sectors), **Scope** (implementing GPP at all levels of government), and **Impact** (achieving measurable environmental, social, and economic benefits). The framework encourages AMSs to systematically assess their GPP maturity levels, identify strengths and gaps, and implement targeted actions to advance their programs. By adopting this structured approach, AMSs can lead in sustainable procurement, contributing to economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and inclusive growth in alignment with regional and global sustainability goals.

To support GPP implementation, based on the analysis of ongoing GPP practices, the paper introduces **two essential tools** for elevating GPP in AMSs in a **flexible yet coordinated manner**:

- 1. ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool:** This tool provides a structured approach for AMS to enhance the **Scale, Scope, and Impact** of their GPP programs. Centered around seven pillars - Policy, Institutional Structures, Capacity Building, Market Readiness, Harmonization of Standards and Ecolabels, Integration with Public Financial Management (PFM) Systems, and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) - the framework helps AMS assess their current GPP maturity levels, identify areas for improvement, and develop tailored strategies to advance GPP. This flexible approach allows each member state to progress based on its unique context while ensuring alignment with regional goals.
- 2. ASEAN GPP Rollout Roadmap:** This roadmap outlines **60 activities** under **10 strategic areas** aimed at supporting AMSs in mainstreaming GPP. These activities focus on policy development, capacity building, harmonization of standards, market engagement, and monitoring and evaluation. By implementing these initiatives, the ASEAN can provide consistent guidance, technical support, and regional coordination to enhance GPP efforts across AMSs. This roadmap ensures that national strategies benefit from shared resources, best practices, and a collaborative regional approach.

Recognizing the uneven levels of GPP maturity across AMSs, the paper encourages each country to develop tailored national roadmaps while incorporating relevant activities from the ASEAN roadmap. This approach promotes synergy between national and regional initiatives, enhancing policy coherence, efficiency, and mutual reinforcement. Strengthening market readiness and engaging SMEs are critical for ensuring a robust and resilient supply chain and fostering inclusive economic growth.

In conclusion, this paper is intended to serve as a strategic guide for accelerating GPP implementation in ASEAN, offering actionable recommendations and a phased roadmap to enhance GPP across the region. It provides a resource for policymakers, procurement professionals, businesses, and development partners to align national GPP policies with regional sustainability goals. Emphasizing the need to broaden the scale, scope, and impact of GPP programs, the paper supports capacity building, policy harmonization, and market transformation. It identifies priorities for high-impact sectors and outlines mechanisms to enable SME participation. By promoting a common understanding of procurement policies and fostering inter-regional trade, this document ensures AMSs can transition toward a resource-efficient, circular, and low-carbon economy while achieving sustainable development goals through short-, medium-, and long-term activities.

SWITCH-Asia extends its sincere appreciation to the focal points in Cambodia, Indonesia, and Malaysia for their comprehensive responses to the questionnaire, which provided critical data and country-specific insights, enriching the depth of this study. Also thanks to Rowena Candice M. Ruiz, Government Procurement Policy Board, Philippines for sharing GPP policy and practices in her countries. Further thanks to Isabella Loh, Chairperson, Singapore Environment Council, Singapore for providing insights on GPP practices in Singapore. Special acknowledgement is also given to the participants of the ASEAN+3 Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Leadership Programme (Vientiane, Nov 2 - 4 2024 and Manila, March 9 – 11 2026) whose extensive discussions were instrumental in identifying key gaps, challenges, and practical solutions for mainstreaming GPP across ASEAN. Their contributions have helped shape the strategic recommendations in this paper, ensuring they align with both regional priorities and on-the-ground realities. Additionally, SWITCH-Asia acknowledges the valuable input of Dr. Thoa NGUYEN BAO for her analysis of EU trade agreements with AMSs , offering crucial perspectives on the intersection of trade policies and green procurement. Furthermore, we extend our gratitude to all experts who generously took the time out of their busy schedules to review this paper, providing critical insights and feedback that strengthened its content and practical applicability. These collaborative efforts have significantly enriched this working paper, ensuring it serves as a valuable and actionable guide for accelerating GPP adoption and fostering green procurement practices across the region.

## 2. Introduction

Public procurement accounts for 15-30% of GDP in countries, making it a powerful tool for driving sustainability, innovation, and inclusive economic growth. By incorporating environmental and social considerations into purchasing decisions, GPP can accelerate the transition to resource-efficient, low-carbon, and circular economies. In the context of ASEAN, GPP offers a strategic opportunity to achieve these goals while fostering market transformation and regional competitiveness.

SWITCH Asia, through its Policy Support Component (PSC), has been at the forefront of supporting AMSs in shifting from business-as-usual to a sustainable consumption and production (SCP) pathway, with a particular emphasis on Green/Sustainable Public Procurement (G/SPP). The initiative has provided technical assistance to countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines in the past, and is currently collaborating with Cambodia, Malaysia, and Vietnam on G/SPP. Through these engagements, SWITCH Asia has gained valuable insights into both the progress and challenges of G/SPP implementation across the region. While AMSs have made notable progress, significant challenges remain, impeding the full realization of G/SPP's transformative potential. This initiative underscores SWITCH Asia's commitment to supporting ASEAN Member States in advancing G/SPP as a strategic tool for sustainability, ensuring that public procurement plays a pivotal role in driving meaningful progress toward sustainable development.

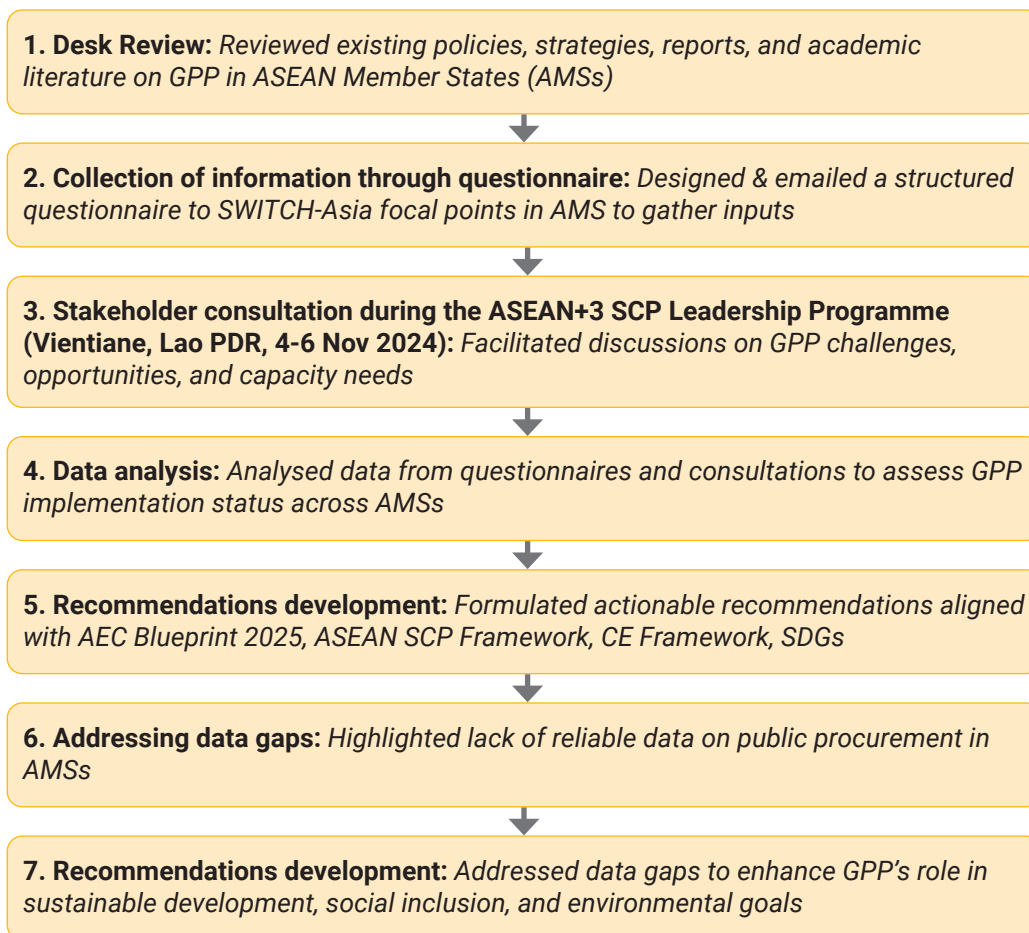
This working paper, *Green Public Procurement (GPP) in ASEAN: Technical Guidance and Practical Tools for Implementation*, provides a comprehensive analysis of the current state of GPP within AMSs. It examines challenges, opportunities, and best practices to help AMSs strengthen GPP implementation and align their national procurement policies with regional and international sustainability objectives. The paper contextualizes GPP within the **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025**, the **ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework**, and the **Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community** emphasize the critical role of GPP in achieving environmental stewardship, social equity, and economic resilience.

To support AMSs in mainstreaming GPP, this paper introduces two essential tools: the **ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool** and the **ASEAN GPP Rollout Roadmap**. These tools provide a structured approach to enhance the **Scale, Scope, and Impact** of GPP programs, offering guidance on capacity building, policy harmonization, and market engagement, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). By promoting regional cooperation and policy coherence, these efforts aim to drive innovation, strengthen institutional capacity, and facilitate cross-border trade in sustainable goods and services.

Designed for policymakers, procurement officials, businesses, and development partners, this paper serves as a strategic guide for fostering sustainable procurement practices across ASEAN. Through coordinated action and shared commitment, ASEAN can position itself as a leader in GPP, contributing to global sustainability goals and ensuring long-term economic, social, and environmental resilience.

### 2.1 Methodology

This working-paper has been developed through a meticulous, multi-step, and consultative approach to ensure it is relevant, comprehensive, and aligned with the regional priorities of AMS. The entire development process is depicted in Fig 1. The SWITCH-Asia team undertook an extensive desk review of existing policies, strategies, and best practices related to GPP across AMSs. This process involved examining a wide range of relevant documents, reports, and academic literature to build a solid understanding of the current landscape of GPP in the region. To gather more substantial and targeted insights, a well-structured questionnaire was emailed to SWITCH-Asia focal points in each ASEAN Member State. This step facilitated input collection from a relevant institution, ensuring a holistic perspective on the challenges and opportunities associated with GPP implementation.



**Fig 1: Development Process**

Following this data collection, a stakeholder consultation was organized during the 12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Plus-Three (ASEAN+3) Leadership Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) held in Vientiane, Lao PDR, from November 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This event provided a platform for in-depth discussions, enabling stakeholders to articulate their views on the current state of GPP, as well as the capacity needs and opportunities for operationalizing GPP within the ASEAN SCP Framework. The consultation drew participation from a wide range of actors, fostering dialogue and collaboration to identify critical gaps and practical solutions for mainstreaming GPP across the region. The report was further presented during the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-Plus-Three (ASEAN+3) Leadership Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) held in Manila, Philippines, from March 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 2026 to gather feedback.

Based on the inputs and feedback gathered from stakeholders, a thorough analysis was conducted to assess the status of GPP implementation in each ASEAN Member State. This analysis helped pinpoint key areas where additional support is required to integrate GPP more effectively into national procurement frameworks. The findings have been synthesized into a set of actionable recommendations aimed at scaling, expanding, and enhancing the impact of GPP programs. These recommendations are designed to align with the **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025**, the **ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework**, the **Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community** and the broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),

## 2.2 ASEAN Context

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is an economic grouping of 11 countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam) with common objectives and a Charter. One of the objectives of the group is to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development among members. ASEAN countries plan to establish a common market for free flow of goods, services, investment, labour and capital within the member countries.



**Fig 2: ASEAN Political Map**

ASEAN accounts for nearly 9% of the world's population, with almost half its population below 30 years of age.<sup>1</sup> ASEAN has witnessed a strong shift from rural to urban areas, with nearly half its population living in the cities in 2022. Unemployment rate has been decreasing over the last decade with slight spike during COVID pandemic and again tapering down to 4.1% in 2022. ASEAN countries, despite being at different stages of development, have demonstrated a consistent growth trajectory, with their economies more than doubling since 2000. ASEAN nominal GDP per capita stood as USD 5,395 at the end of 2022, an increase of 37.6% from that in 2015. The region's nominal GDP grew from USD 1.6 trillion in 2009 to USD 3.6 trillion in 2022, and it is projected to reach USD 4.5 trillion by 2030, positioning ASEAN as the fourth-largest economy globally.<sup>2</sup> ASEAN nations accounted for 7.0% of global GDP in 2023 and contributed 8.5% to global GDP growth between 2013 and 2023. This steady economic growth highlights the region's increasing importance on the global stage and underscores its potential as a hub for trade, investment, and innovation.

The total regional trade in goods reached USD 3.8 trillion in 2022 with trade surplus of USD 77.9 billion. The intra-ASEAN trade remained the highest contributing to 22.9% to the total trade, with China (14.8%), USA (14.8%), EU (9%) and Japan (6.8%) becoming as major export trading partners for the ASEAN.<sup>3</sup> As per the ASEAN Statistical Highlights 2023, the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the region has also been growing, with total FDI reaching USD 224.2 billion in 2022. As per S&P Global, the ASEAN region is expected to remain one of the fastest growing regions of the world economy.

Economic activity in ASEAN varies significantly across member states. Manufacturing is the leading contributor to GDP in countries like Thailand (27%), Myanmar (25.4%), Viet Nam (24.8%), Malaysia (23.4%), Singapore (21.6%), and Indonesia (18.3%).<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, Cambodia and Lao PDR rely more heavily on agriculture, forestry, and fishing, which account for 22.2% and 17.8% of their GDP, respectively. In Brunei Darussalam, the mining and quarrying sector dominates the economy, comprising 43% of GDP, while the

1 ASEAN Statistical Highlights 2023, ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia.

2 Available at <https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/mi/research-analysis/asean-economic-outlook-in-2024-jan24.html>, Accessed on 10.10.2024

3 ASEAN Statistical Highlights 2023, ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia.

4 ASEAN Statistical Brief, Volume IV, January 2024, Available at [https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/00.-ASEAN-Statistical-Brief-on-GDP\\_19Jan2024.pdf](https://www.aseanstats.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/00.-ASEAN-Statistical-Brief-on-GDP_19Jan2024.pdf).

Philippines' economy leans on wholesale and retail trade, which contributes 18.1%. These variations reflect the diverse economic foundations of ASEAN countries, each facing unique challenges and opportunities. Geopolitical dynamics, particularly the "China Plus One" strategy adopted by many Western countries to diversify supply chains, further position ASEAN as a preferred investment destination.<sup>5</sup> This trend could drive significant economic growth, provided the region enhances its infrastructure, energy systems, and policy frameworks to accommodate new investments and sustainable growth models.

As ASEAN's economic growth continues to surge, driven by rapid industrialization, urbanization, and a youthful population, the region faces the dual challenge of meeting escalating consumption demands while maintaining environmental sustainability. ASEAN's GDP has more than doubled since 2000, reaching USD 3.6 trillion in 2022 and is projected to hit USD 4.5 trillion by 2030. With a combined population of 672 million, including 213 million youth aged 14 to 34, the region holds immense potential for sustained growth. However, this demographic advantage also leads to a significant rise in resource consumption, necessitating substantial investments in infrastructure, services, and sustainable development. According to the [Global Resource Outlook 2024](#), domestic material extraction in ASEAN has increased by 89% since 2000 and the region's material footprint (domestic extraction plus raw material trade balance) now accounts for 56% of the global total, up from 41% in 2000. This escalating demand for materials globally has become a major driver of the triple planetary crisis - climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, contributing to 60% of global climate impacts, 40% of air pollution-related health effects, and over 90% of water stress and land degradation. To address these challenges, ASEAN must pursue a monumental shift toward sustainable materials management and circular economy principles, coupled with strategic investments in resource-efficient infrastructure and the decarbonization of energy systems and material production.

## 2.3 Relevance of GPP in the ASEAN Context

The concept of using public procurement to achieve horizontal policy objectives has a long history, including within ASEAN member states. While there is growing momentum at the ASEAN level to align procurement regulations with a broader policy agenda, some countries are still at the initial stage of harnessing the potential of public procurement for development. Despite challenges, sustainable and green procurement policies have gained significant traction globally, including in the ASEAN region. The inclusion of S/GPP in the SDG targets has solidified its role as a strategic tool for advancing broader development objectives. The conversation has shifted from whether to adopt S/GPP policies to how best to apply them to achieve national goals.

This shift in perception is driven by a stronger focus on "Value for Money." This principle has positioned public procurement as a powerful means of integrating sustainability with economic growth and social welfare. By considering the broader societal benefits, the inclusion of environmental and social considerations in procurement decisions has become just and necessary. Competitive bidding in public procurement also offers authorities the opportunity to achieve cost efficiencies while advancing public good. Ultimately, sustainable procurement leverages competition and innovation to unlock the market's potential for sustainable solutions, transforming markets and achieving broader public goals.

In the ASEAN context, GPP stands out as a strategic lever for addressing ASEAN's resource efficiency challenges while advancing its low-carbon, circular economy ambitions. By embedding sustainability criteria into public procurement practices, GPP has the potential to transform high-impact sectors such as construction, transportation, and food systems. For instance, GPP can drive energy efficiency in buildings, appliances and industrial processes, aligning with the 8th ASEAN Energy Outlook's recommendations for reducing energy intensity and operational costs.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, GPP can support ASEAN's climate commitments, with seven countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Viet Nam) pledging net-zero targets by 2050 and others committing to substantial greenhouse gas reductions by 2030.<sup>7</sup> Leveraging public procurement to prioritize sustainable goods and services not only accelerates resource efficiency but

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5 McKinsey & Company, *Diversifying Global Supply Chain: Opportunities in Southeast Asia*, Available at <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/logistics/our-insights/diversifying-global-supply-chains-opportunities-in-southeast-asia/>

6 ASEAN Centre for Energy (2024), *8th ASEAN Energy Outlook 2023-2050*; Available at <https://aseanenergy.org/publications/the-8th-asean-energy-outlook/>

7 International Energy Agency (2023) *Decarbonisation Pathways for Southeast Asia*, Available at <https://www.iea.org/reports/decarbonisation-pathways-for-southeast-asia>

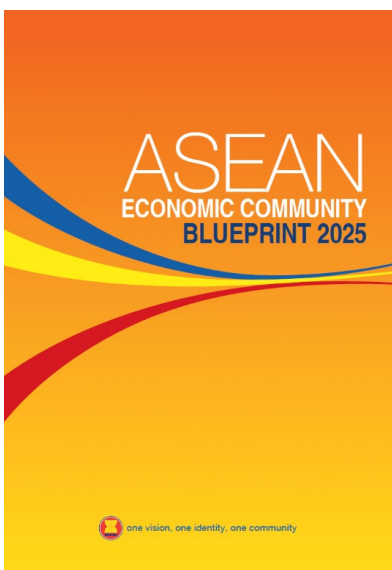
also catalyzes market transformation across supply chains and address the dual challenge of increasing resource needs to support the growing consumption needs of its population while remaining within the planetary limits and tapering down income inequality in the region.

## 2.4 Overview of Regional Strategic Frameworks and Economic Ambitions

While GPP policies and practices have been adopted by several AMS, discussions at the regional level have, to date, remained limited. The ASEAN has not yet fully leveraged GPP as a mechanism for achieving regional goals related to sustainable consumption, production, and circularity. However, in recent years, three significant strategic documents, the **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025**<sup>8</sup>, the **ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework**<sup>9</sup>, and the **Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community**<sup>10</sup>, have underscored the direct relevance of GPP. The ASEAN SCP Framework explicitly identifies GPP as a key pillar for its operationalization, while the Framework for Circular Economy highlights the necessity of a demand-side policy, effectively referring to GPP, for operationalizing circular economy goals.

GPP also has the potential to support the objectives of several other strategic ASEAN initiatives, such as the **ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan**, the **ASEAN Declaration on Green Jobs**, the **ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation**, the **ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development**, and the **ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Combating Marine Debris**. This alignment reflects the growing need for strengthening GPP as a critical demand-side strategy for driving sustainable investment and market transformation. By strategically harnessing public procurement, ASEAN can stimulate markets for sustainable products and services, foster innovation, and accelerate progress toward regional sustainability and circular economy goals. Therefore, these strategic documents mark a step-change in the way GPP is perceived by leaders and policymakers within ASEAN community.

### 2.4.1 ASEAN Economy Community Blueprint 2025



The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025 offers a transformative vision for ASEAN's evolution into a highly integrated, competitive, and inclusive economic region. It is built on five interlinked pillars: fostering economic cohesion, driving innovation and competitiveness, enhancing connectivity and sectoral cooperation, advancing inclusive and people-centered development, and strengthening ASEAN's global positioning. Central to this vision is the reduction of trade barriers through harmonized standards, mutual recognition arrangements, and aligned regulations, creating a seamless and unified regional market. The Blueprint underscores the vital role of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) as the backbone of ASEAN's economies, with strategic measures to enhance their access to finance, technology, and markets, as well as capacity-building initiatives to boost their resilience and global competitiveness. Recognizing the importance of adapting to global mega-trends, such as digitalization and green technology, the Blueprint prioritizes innovation, trade facilitation, and sustainable growth to secure ASEAN's relevance and leadership in the global economy.

Sustainability lies at the heart of the Blueprint, integrating environmental stewardship, clean energy adoption, and sustainable consumption and production into ASEAN's economic framework. It, thus, sets a robust foundation for advancing GPP across AMSs. GPP aligns with and can potentially accelerate key objectives outlined in the Blueprint by promoting environmental sustainability, enhancing market competitiveness, and supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). GPP serves as a strategic tool to advance key priorities outlined in the Blueprint. Elevating GPP within AMSs would not only contribute to achieving these objectives but also provide a framework for addressing emerging global mega-trends such as digital transformation, clean energy adoption, and sustainable consumption and production.

8 Available at <https://asean.org/book/asean-economic-community-blueprint-2025/>

9 Available at <https://environment.asean.org/fresources/detail/asean-scp-framework-implementation-mechanism-2022>

10 Available at [https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Framework-for-Circular-Economy-for-the-AEC\\_Final.pdf](https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Framework-for-Circular-Economy-for-the-AEC_Final.pdf)

Some of the interlinkages between GPP and the Blueprint are highlighted below:

### ***I. Facilitating Trade and Harmonizing Standards***

GPP can drive the harmonization of standards and technical regulations across AMSs, a key pillar of the AEC Blueprint for facilitation of trade among AMSs. By embedding green criteria into product standards and ecolabels, GPP encourages the alignment of national policies with international sustainability benchmarks, reducing non-tariff barriers and facilitating cross-border trade. Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) for ecolabels can further enhance trade flows, enabling businesses to reduce cost of compliance to different standards and to compete in a unified, sustainable ASEAN market.

### ***II. Empowering MSMEs and Strengthening Value Chains***

The AEC Blueprint emphasizes the development of MSMEs as a critical driver of regional economic integration. GPP supports this by creating demand for sustainable products and services, offering MSMEs opportunities to upgrade their capabilities and participate in green value chains across ASEAN. Targeted initiatives such as green financing platforms, capacity-building programs, and digital procurement systems would enhance MSMEs' competitiveness, enabling them to access new markets and integrate into regional and global value chains.

### ***III. Promoting Digital and Green Technology Integration***

GPP aligns with the Blueprint's focus on leveraging digital technology and green innovation to enhance trade and investments. Upgraded e-GP platform incorporating functionality for embedding sustainability in procurement decisions can streamline processes, improve transparency, and enable real-time tracking of sustainability impacts. Moreover, fostering the adoption of green technologies such as resources and energy efficient solutions and circular economy practices through GPP would catalyse innovation and strengthen ASEAN's position as a hub for sustainable innovations.

### ***IV. Driving Sectoral Cooperation and Sustainability***

GPP can target high-impact sectors identified in the AEC Blueprint, such as construction, energy, transport, and agriculture, to maximize environmental and social benefits. By integrating sustainability criteria into public procurement for these sectors, ASEAN can collectively address resource efficiency, reduce emissions, and promote the adoption of clean energy technologies. Regional collaboration in these areas would enable AMSs to pool resources, share knowledge, and implement scalable solutions tailored to ASEAN's unique context.

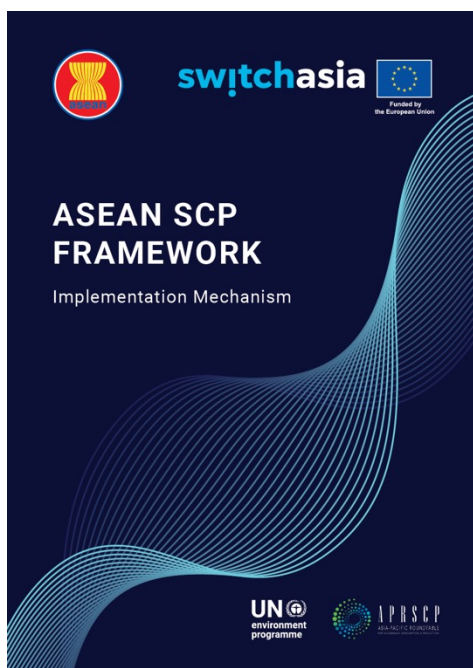
### ***V. Aligning with Global Sustainability Goals***

The AEC Blueprint recognizes the importance of sustainable economic development as integral to growth. GPP strengthens this commitment by embedding sustainability into public spending, ensuring that government procurement supports clean energy adoption, resource conservation, and the circular economy. Such efforts would align ASEAN with global frameworks like the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), enhancing the region's global competitiveness and reputation.

GPP provides a practical mechanism to translate the Blueprint's sustainability vision into actionable outcomes, fostering inclusive growth and environmental stewardship. The ASEAN, as a coordinating body, can facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration and engage stakeholders to operationalize GPP. By promoting strategic partnerships among governments, academia, and the private sector, ASEAN can ensure the seamless integration of GPP into broader economic initiatives, driving a sustainable and resilient future for ASEAN.

#### ***2.4.2 ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework***

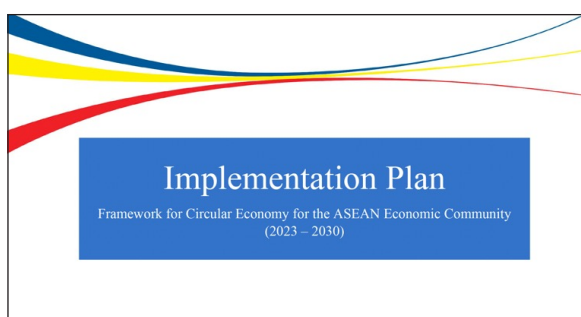
The ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework identifies GPP as one of the four key goals for regional action, guiding efforts to implement SCP in alignment with the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and Sustainable Development Goal 12 (SDG 12). This emphasis on GPP underscores its importance in promoting sustainable development and responsible consumption across ASEAN member states.



The Framework highlights the challenges faced by SMEs in greening their supply chains, which consequently hampers the progress of GPP in the region. It underscores the need to enhance SMEs' capabilities to transition towards producing greener products and services, emphasizing that this shift is crucial for the region to move towards a resource-efficient, circular, and low-carbon economy. Accelerating the implementation of GPP is positioned as a key catalyst in this process, as it can drive the transformation of production processes by generating strong demand for sustainable products and services. The Framework proposes several strategic actions to operationalize GPP and facilitate the region's green transition. These include developing regional guidance on GPP best practices to provide member states with a clear set of standards and examples to follow. It emphasizes the importance of enhancing technical skills and offering financial incentives to SMEs to support their green transformation, enabling them to adopt more sustainable production methods and technologies.

Additionally, the Framework advocates for establishing a community of practice and comprehensive capacity-building programs, fostering knowledge sharing and collaboration among stakeholders to strengthen GPP implementation. It also calls for the creation of a national green product directory, which would serve as a centralized resource for identifying and promoting environmentally friendly products and services. Lastly, increasing public awareness about green products is identified as a critical area of action, aiming to educate consumers and encourage demand for sustainable options. Together, these initiatives form a holistic approach to operationalizing the Framework and driving the region toward a sustainable future. The ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (ACCMSME) has been identified as a nodal agency for implementation of activities related to SMEs.

### 2.4.3 Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community



The Framework for Circular Economy (CE) for the ASEAN Economic Community outlines a transformative roadmap to guide the region toward a resource-efficient, resilient, and sustainable economic model. It identifies five strategic priorities essential for fostering circular products and services: (1) harmonization of standards and mutual recognition agreements to facilitate trade in circular goods; (2) promoting trade openness and facilitation for circular goods and services; (3) leveraging innovation, digitalization, and emerging green technologies to green supply chains; (4) enhancing access to competitive sustainable financing and innovative ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investments; and (5) ensuring the efficient use of energy and other resources. Together, these priorities aim to create an ecosystem that minimizes waste, maximizes the lifecycle value of resources, and supports AMSs in achieving their carbon reduction targets under the Paris Agreement.

and emerging green technologies to green supply chains; (4) enhancing access to competitive sustainable financing and innovative ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investments; and (5) ensuring the efficient use of energy and other resources. Together, these priorities aim to create an ecosystem that minimizes waste, maximizes the lifecycle value of resources, and supports AMSs in achieving their carbon reduction targets under the Paris Agreement.

A central tenet of the Framework is the implementation of demand-driven policies, such as GPP, to prioritize the use of circular products in the member states. Thus, GPP emerges as a key enabler of ASEAN's transition to a circular economy by driving market demand for goods and services aligned with circular principles. By aligning public procurement processes with harmonized CE standards and mutual recognition agreements, GPP can reduce trade barriers and facilitate the seamless movement of circular goods across borders. Embedding CE requirements into public procurement policies not only stimulates regional markets for circular goods and services but also encourages businesses to adopt sustainable production practices. GPP further promotes the adoption of innovative circular practices within supply chains, including take-back schemes, leasing models, and the use of renewable or recycled materials.

Moreover, GPP plays a critical role in empowering MSMEs to innovate and adopt circular economy practices by providing predictable and sustainable demand for green products. This, in turn, incentivizes investment in resource-efficient and resource recovery processes and supports regional economic competitiveness.

Overall, the three frameworks - the **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025**, the **ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework**, and the **Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community** - collectively underscore the urgent need to rethink and elevate GPP as a strategic tool for sustainable development within the region. These frameworks highlight the interconnected goals of trade facilitation, MSME development, digital transformation, and environmental sustainability. Discussion in above paras also showed how GPP could deliver those interconnected goals by aligning public procurement with sustainability objectives. The SCP Framework explicitly positions GPP as a pillar for achieving sustainable consumption and production, while the Circular Economy Framework calls for demand-driven policies like GPP to operationalize circularity goals. The AEC Blueprint reinforces these priorities by focusing on harmonized standards, innovation, and inclusive growth. Together, these strategic documents make a compelling case for accelerating GPP adoption in AMSs, recognizing it as a catalyst for economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and regional competitiveness in a rapidly evolving global economy. By fully integrating GPP, ASEAN can achieve its vision of a dynamic, sustainable, and inclusive future.

# 3. Assessment of Green Procurement Policies Across ASEAN Member States

In absence of any recognized framework to assess GPP implementation at the regional level, this paper explored GPP progress at the country level as per OECD's Methodology for Assessment of Procurement System (MAPS)<sup>11</sup> Supplementary module on Sustainable Public Procurement. Accordingly, the progress has been assessed across four pillars – Legal, Regulatory and Policy Framework, Institutional Framework and Management Capacity, Public Procurement Operations and Market Practices, and Monitoring & Evaluation of GPP Programme to get a complete picture of GPP implementation in the ASEAN countries.

This analysis is critical because ASEAN cooperation is built on the exchange of national experiences and the identification of areas where regional collaboration can add value. Accordingly, this paper reviews the current status of GPP implementation across AMSs not for the purpose of developing country-specific recommendations, but to identify common trends, implementation challenges, successful practices, and areas where regional guidance, capacity building, and cooperation may support further progress. The national analysis therefore serves as an evidence base for the regional recommendations and practical tools presented in the subsequent sections. Further, country level analysis contributes towards development of seven essentials pillars of the **GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool** discussed in details in Chapter 5.

## 3.1 Legal, Regulatory and Policy Framework

The region has a long history of adopting policy and practices aimed at furthering sustainable consumption and production. All countries except Brunei and Myanmar have broader strategic documents and action plans<sup>12</sup> at national level that encourage sustainable consumption and production practices, including GPP policy and practices to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth in their country. Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam have also adopted SCP Road Map & Action Plan that underlines importance of GPP as a transformative tool to transition their economy on resource efficient, low carbon, sustainable and inclusive development path.

Though most countries understood the potential of GPP policy for market transformation necessary for achieving broader national sustainability goals, they embraced it at different points of time, not all countries followed the same trajectory and achieved the same maturity level in GPP implementation. The analysis of the current GPP legal framework in AMSs reflects following broad characteristics.

### *a. Start of Activities - beginning of GPP adoption and initial implementation*

The Philippines (2004) and Thailand (2005) were early adopters. Vietnam, Timor-Leste and Cambodia are recent entrants, introducing GPP laws in 2023, 2024 and 2023 respectively. Myanmar supports GPP indirectly through sectoral policies.

### *b. Legal structure - existence of laws, executive orders, strategic action plans supporting GPP*

Comprehensive laws exist in the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand. Malaysia relies on executive orders and policies. Myanmar supports GPP through sectoral programs, and Singapore allows environment-friendly procurement without explicit policies.

### *c. Regulatory depth - extent of secondary legislation elaborating primary laws or policies.*

The Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam have developed secondary regulations or consistent updates to primary laws. Cambodia is working on elaborating secondary legislation. Timor-Leste is developing procurement manuals to guide implementation. Myanmar and Singapore have limited or no secondary regulatory frameworks.

<sup>11</sup> Available at <https://www.mapsinitiative.org>, Accessed on 03.03.2025

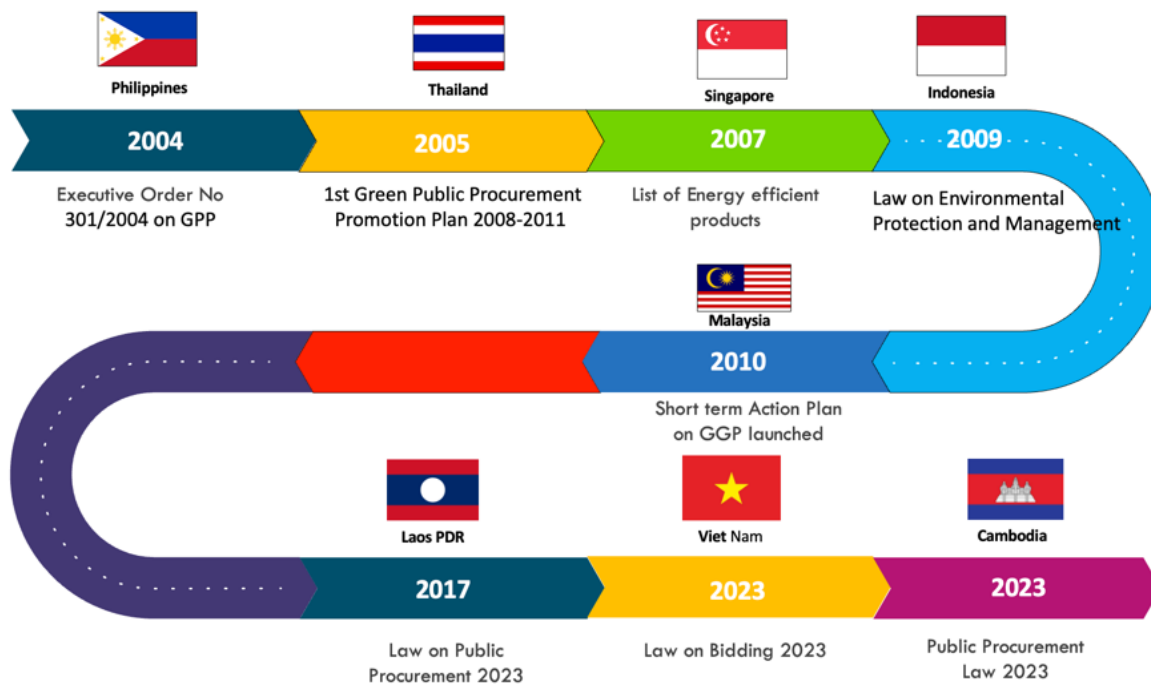
<sup>12</sup> Cambodia – Cambodia Vision 2050; Indonesia – National Action Plan on SDGs; Laos PDR – National Green Growth Strategy; Malaysia – 12th Malaysia Plan; Philippines – The Philippines Development Plan 2023-28; Singapore – Singapore Economy 2030; Thailand – 20 Years National Strategy; and Viet Nam – Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2021-30.

**d. Sustainability dimensions - Inclusion of environmental, economic, and social criteria in procurement.**

The Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Vietnam address environmental, economic, and social aspects in GPP. Malaysia and Indonesia primarily focus on environmental and economic dimensions, while Myanmar emphasizes sector-specific environmental policies.

**e. Policy integration - GPP integration into broader development strategies and national plans.**

Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines have integrated GPP into national development plans. Vietnam and Cambodia have standalone GPP policies but rooted in other strategic documents. Singapore and Myanmar lack formal integration of GPP into broader strategies.



**Fig 3: ASEAN Journey on GPP**

The evolving legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks for GPP in ASEAN countries reflect a dynamic and adaptive approach to achieving sustainable development goals. While the region has progressed at different paces and along diverse trajectories, the growing inclusion of GPP within national strategies, laws, and action plans underscores a collective recognition of its transformative potential. Recent legal advancements in countries such as Vietnam, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, and Laos PDR indicate a positive shift toward embedding sustainability directly into procurement legislation, supported by secondary regulations. This trend not only strengthens the legal foundation for S/GPP but also ensures a systematic approach to integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into public procurement decisions.

### **3.2 Institutional Framework and Management Capacity**

Japan's pioneering adoption of GPP laws has set a critical precedent for the Asia-Pacific region, providing a robust framework for promoting environmentally sustainable procurement practices. Mirroring Japan's approach, ASEAN countries such as the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia have not only developed their own GPP policies but have also established institutions responsible for managing national ecolabels and facilitating the adoption of GPP by practitioners. Their collaboration with government agencies ensures that procurement decisions are guided by credible ecolabel, strengthening sustainable purchasing practices across the region. However, as GPP has evolved into Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP), incorporating economic, environmental, and social considerations, institutional mechanisms have also adapted to meet these broader ambitions. The broad analysis of institutional framework in the region reflect following key characteristics.

#### ***a. Leadership in GPP – Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment taking lead in GPP implementation***

Mirroring Japan's approach, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand took lead in developing GPP policy development and implementation. While in newer entrants like Cambodia, Lao PDR, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam, Finance ministries are increasingly taking leading role as scope of GPP expanded to cover social concerns as well.

#### ***b. Inter-ministerial Coordination – A structured approach for effective implementation***

Malaysia excels with its GPP Steering Committee, while the Philippines has strong inter-ministerial coordination through its Procurement Policy Board. Cambodia, Lao PDR, Timor-Leste and Vietnam lack similar coordination mechanisms, hindering their ability to fully realize the potential of GPP.

#### ***c. Ecolabeling Programs – A critical tool for GPP adoption in early stage***

All countries in the region except Timor-Leste, Myanmar and Brunei have established Type 1 Ecolabeling program, though their maturity level varies, that supports GPP by making green choices clearer for public procurement professionals. Most countries, except Thailand, have not prioritised high impact sector such as construction, energy, transport, and agriculture, identified in the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025.

#### ***d. Building Management Capacity – Efforts to train procurement professionals and develop institutional capacities***

National Ecolabeling bodies in countries like Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines have taken lead in training procurement professionals to handle GPP and engage in outreach, education, and market development to foster a culture of sustainable procurement. In contrast, ecolabeling bodies in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam need to be strengthened internally to play such crucial role in accelerating GPP in their countries.

#### ***e. e-GP system – Simplifying GPP implementation and evaluation***

Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand are advanced at the application and use of e-GP, whilst others like Cambodia, Laos PDR, Myanmar and Timor-Leste are at early stages of developing the e-GP system. Enhancing these systems to include sustainability considerations offers a significant opportunity to streamline and scale GPP efforts.

The evolution of GPP across ASEAN highlights both progress and persistent challenges in embedding sustainability into procurement systems. While national ecolabeling institutions, inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, and finance ministries are playing an increasingly vital role in advancing GPP, gaps remain in linking procurement policies with broader Public Finance Management (PFM) systems and national development plans. Strengthening these connections will be critical to institutionalizing GPP and ensuring its long-term impact. Countries that have integrated GPP within national action plans, such as the Philippines and Lao PDR, demonstrate the benefits of a structured, strategic approach. Meanwhile, the digital transformation of procurement through e-GP systems remains uneven across the region, with many platforms lacking the functionality to systematically integrate sustainability criteria.

### **3.3 Public Procurement Operations and Market Practices**

GPP implementation across AMSs varies significantly across the region due to differences in procurement systems, institutional capacities, market readiness, and policy frameworks. Some countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, have developed robust procurement tools, ecolabelling schemes, and policy guidelines to support the identification and acquisition of environmentally friendly goods and services. Others are still in the early stages of embedding sustainability into their procurement frameworks. Key factors influencing GPP maturity include the level of market engagement, integration of social and life-cycle considerations, alignment with national development plans, and the role of sub-national governments in driving sustainable procurement. Based on these characteristics, ASEAN countries can be grouped into five thematic areas that reflect their progress and challenges in advancing GPP. These thematic areas offer insights into how different policy, institutional, and market dynamics shape GPP implementation and what steps can be taken to scale it up across the region.

### ***a. Market Readiness and Supplier Engagement – A key differentiator in GPP adoption***

In countries like Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, industry associations and ecolabeling bodies play a crucial role in market development and help bridge the gap between government procurement needs and market supply. Public-private partnerships and platforms such as the Thai Eco-Products Directory and MyHIJAU Mark support businesses in aligning with procurement requirements, enhancing market transformation, and promoting the adoption of sustainable practices. Other countries like Cambodia, Lao PDR, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam lack such mechanism to engage with suppliers for accelerating their GPP program.

### ***b. Sectoral Focus and Coverage of GPP Criteria -***

The most commonly adopted product and service categories in the region are paper, air conditioners, furniture, cement, paints, LED lighting, textiles, cleaning services, vehicles, and ICT equipment. However, they still need to expand their GPP frameworks to cover these high-emission sectors such as construction, energy, transport, and agriculture, ensuring that procurement decisions drive meaningful environmental and economic transformation.

### ***c. Sub-National Implementation and Decentralization – amplify its impact, fostering sustainability practices***

GPP implementation in most countries remains largely centralized, limiting broader adoption at the sub-national level. Only few ASEAN countries, such as the Philippines (Quezon City ) and Malaysia, are beginning to expand GPP to sub-national and municipal levels, recognizing the potential for local governments to drive sustainability initiatives.

### ***d. Development of Tools for GPP Implementation – key for accelerating GPP implementation***

Nations like Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines have flourishing national Ecolabels and introduced comprehensive GPP guidelines to provide step-by-step instructions for integrating sustainability criteria into procurement decisions. Newer countries like Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam lack such tool for guiding procurers in integrating sustainability in procurement decisions.

### ***e. Targets and Monitoring of GPP Programme – Knowing health of GPP implementation***

Countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand have set targets for GPP implementation and monitor progress of its implementation. Countries like Lao PDR, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, and Myanmar are in the process of developing their monitoring and evaluation platforms for GPP, which is a positive step given their current stage of GPP development.

Two significant gaps across the ASEAN region are the lack of reporting on the social aspects of GPP and the continued reliance on manual data collection methods, hindering the completeness, efficiency, and transparency of GPP reporting.

The varying levels of GPP implementation across ASEAN highlight the progress made in raising market ambition and aligning procurement processes with national sustainability goals. Countries with strong institutional frameworks, market engagement mechanisms, and well-defined ecolabeling programs are leading the way, while others need further capacity-building and policy support to scale up their efforts. Expanding GPP into high-impact sectors, strengthening sub-national implementation, and integrating sustainability considerations into e-GP systems will be critical to achieving long-term sustainability goals. By leveraging best practices and fostering regional cooperation, ASEAN countries can accelerate GPP adoption, drive market transformation, and contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive economy.

## **3.4 Accountability, Integrity and Transparency of the Public Procurement System**

Transparency, accountability, and integrity are fundamental to an effective GPP system, ensuring that procurement processes are equitable, efficient, and aligned with long-term sustainability objectives. In the ASEAN region, these principles are being increasingly embedded within GPP frameworks through structured policy development and multi-stakeholder engagement. Notably, countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand have actively involved industries, including SMEs and industry associations, in the development of GPP criteria. This inclusive approach has helped ensure that GPP policies are practical, market-responsive, and conducive to fostering greener alternatives. By engaging stakeholders throughout

the policy formulation process, these countries are enhancing market readiness, encouraging innovation, and building trust in procurement practices.

### 3.5 In-depth Analysis of Opportunities and Gaps in ASEAN Countries

The status of GPP in ASEAN countries reflects a dynamic yet uneven landscape, shaped by varying levels of legal maturity, institutional readiness, and market engagement. While significant strides have been made, the region presents both challenges and untapped opportunities for accelerating GPP implementation. However, the differing levels of GPP maturity, the inconsistent integration of sustainability criteria, and the fragmented implementation approaches across AMSs highlight critical areas for improvement.

A key strength in ASEAN's GPP journey is the adoption of national strategies and action plans that promote Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). Countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam have incorporated GPP within their SCP Roadmaps and Action Plans, emphasizing resource efficiency, low-carbon development, and inclusive growth. Early adopters like the Philippines (2004) and Thailand (2005) set important precedents, while recent legislative advancements in Viet Nam, Timor-Leste and Cambodia demonstrate a growing commitment to embedding all three dimensions of sustainability into procurement practices. However, the pace and trajectory of GPP adoption vary significantly, with Brunei and Myanmar lagging due to a lack of comprehensive policies and dedicated legal frameworks.

Despite progress, many AMSs still face gaps in developing robust regulatory structures, particularly in the comprehensiveness and enforcement of legal frameworks. While countries like the Philippines and Thailand have reinforced their GPP policies through dedicated legislation, others, such as Viet Nam and Cambodia, are still in the process of establishing secondary regulations to operationalize their recently enacted procurement laws. Singapore, despite its advanced economy, lacks an explicit GPP policy, leaving green procurement decisions to the discretion of individual agencies. This disparity underscores the need for a consistent approach to GPP policy development that combines flexibility with accountability and ensures comprehensive legal backing. This also presents an opportunity for newer adopters to learn from the experiences of their regional peers. Additionally, ASEAN-wide cooperation and agreement on minimum common GPP principle and criteria can reduce fragmentation and promote regional trade in sustainable goods and services.

Institutional frameworks also exhibit significant variation. In the early stages of GPP adoption, Ministries of Environment played a central role in policy development, inspired by Japan's model. However, as the concept of strategic procurement expanded to include social and economic dimensions, the involvement of finance ministries became crucial. In countries like the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia, finance ministries now play a pivotal role in GPP implementation. In contrast, newer adopters such as Cambodia, Lao PDR, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam lack robust inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, which hampers the effective rollout and scaling of GPP. Malaysia's GPP Steering Committee, jointly chaired by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology, and Water, serves as a best practice for fostering inter-agency collaboration and strategic oversight.

Capacity-building and market engagement represent another critical gap. While countries like Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia have developed GPP guidelines and ecolabeling schemes to support procurement officials, the absence of comprehensive capacity-building programs in newer GPP adopters poses a challenge. Additionally, it is observed that GPP implementation in ASEAN remains largely confined to federal levels, limiting its overall impact. Although Quezon City in the Philippines has enacted a Green Public Procurement Ordinance and Malaysia is considering extending GPP to local governments, broader participation at the municipal level is essential for scaling GPP across the region.

Monitoring and evaluation of GPP programs in ASEAN remain inconsistent and underdeveloped. While Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines have set targets and collect data on GPP implementation, the lack of standardized indicators and automated reporting systems undermines the effectiveness of these efforts. Moreover, social aspects of GPP, such as labour rights, SMEs, employment generation and social inclusion, are rarely monitored, and manual data collection methods further hinder transparency and efficiency. This gap presents a significant opportunity for ASEAN countries to adopt harmonized monitoring

frameworks and digital reporting systems. Investing in e-procurement platforms that automate data collection and reporting can enhance transparency, efficiency, and comparability. By strengthening monitoring and evaluation, AMSs can build public trust, attract international support, and demonstrate their commitment to sustainable development.

The alignment of GPP criteria with national ecolabels has facilitated procurement processes in several AMSs, including Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. However, these ecolabels primarily focus on environmental aspects, leaving social sustainability considerations largely unaddressed. The absence of a life-cycle approach to procurement in many AMS also limits the effectiveness of GPP in achieving long-term sustainability goals. To address these challenges, ASEAN countries must integrate social and economic criteria into ecolabeling schemes and procurement processes, ensuring a holistic approach to sustainability.

In conclusion, while ASEAN countries have made notable strides in developing GPP policies, frameworks, and practices, significant gaps remain in regulatory consistency, institutional coordination, capacity-building, monitoring, and the integration of social criteria. Except Thailand, most countries are still focusing on low value low impact items. AMSs need to revisit their policy and align their GPP initiatives with the strategic priorities identified in the **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025**, the **ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework**, and the **Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community**. To accelerate GPP implementation, AMSs must prioritize the development of National Action Plans, establish robust inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms, establish linkage with PFM system, invest in digital platform, and expand capacity-building initiatives. By addressing these gaps, ASEAN can harness the full potential of GPP as a strategic tool for achieving a resource-efficient, low-carbon, and inclusive economy, positioning the region as a leader in sustainable development on the global stage.

# 4. Global Trends in Green Public Procurement Implementation

The 2020 SDG Indicator 12.7.1 data collection exercise<sup>13</sup> by UNEP revealed that out of 53 participating countries, only nine achieved a high maturity level in GPP implementation. Notably, eight of these countries are European Union (EU) members, while the United States, a leading Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) member, was the only non-EU country to reach this level. Given ASEAN's objective of establishing a single market and production base, it is both strategic and prudent to deepen engagement with GPP best practices in the EU and APEC, specially the United States. Understanding how these trading blocs have successfully integrated sustainability into procurement frameworks can provide valuable insights for ASEAN and AMSs. Adapting these learnings into AMS's legal and regulatory structures will help enhance regional market competitiveness, align procurement with climate objectives, and position GPP as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth and trade integration across ASEAN.

## 4.1 GPP Experiences in European Union

European countries have been global pioneers in the adoption and advancement of Green Public Procurement (GPP) policies and practices, with nations such as Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK (the Green-7) achieving high levels of GPP maturity. These countries have influenced multilateral organizations like UNEP and set benchmarks for sustainable procurement practices worldwide. The European Union's (EU) commitment to GPP dates back to the 2004 procurement directives, which initially focused on environmental considerations. In 2008, the European Commission (EC) expanded this commitment through the Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) and Sustainable Industrial Policy, and introduced initiatives like the Procurement for a Better Environment report. This laid the foundation for using GPP to drive innovation in environmental technologies, products, and services. Strategic policies such as the Resource Efficient Europe, EU 2020 Strategy, Circular Economy Action Plan, and the Green Deal have continually reinforced GPP as a key tool for achieving sustainability goals across EU Member States.

The EU's GPP framework, though voluntary, is supported by mandatory directives in specific sectoral legislations like Energy Efficient Directive, Clean vehicles Directives, Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulations and Energy Performance of Building Directive.<sup>14</sup> To facilitate implementation, the EC developed common GPP criteria for various product and service categories, providing guidelines on technical specifications, award criteria, and contract performance clauses.<sup>15</sup> These criteria, which can be applied at either a Core or Comprehensive level, give flexibility to contracting authorities based on their sustainability ambitions. Member States have customized these guidelines to their national contexts, with countries like France, the Netherlands, and Poland expanding the scope of GPP criteria to additional product categories. Furthermore, many European countries have prioritized environmental considerations over social equity in procurement practices but increasingly the move it to incorporate social considerations, such as decent work, social inclusion, and equal opportunities, demonstrating the EU's commitment to holistic sustainability. The EU's progressive approach to GPP serves as a robust model for other regions, illustrating how strategic procurement can drive market transformation and sustainable development.

With most EU countries adopting GPP frameworks early based on EU procurement directives, there is considerable variation in how countries have implemented GPP to reflect their local and national contexts. While some nations have only recently begun strategic GPP planning, others, such as Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Belgium, have fully integrated GPP and are now advancing specialized goals like climate action and the circular economy. This diversity underscores the importance of flexibility and political commitment in procurement regulations. Notably countries with mandatory provisions appear to have done

13 Available at <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/37967/SDG.pdf> Accessed on 30.01.2025

14 Available at [https://green-business.ec.europa.eu/green-public-procurement/gpp-criteria-and-requirements\\_en](https://green-business.ec.europa.eu/green-public-procurement/gpp-criteria-and-requirements_en) Accessed on 07.12.2024

15 Available at [https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/44278090-3fae-4515-bcc2-44fd57c1d0d1/library/f69e60f9-9dc6-4345-aa18-b9a4b6dfdbf0?p=1&n=10&sort=name\\_ASC](https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/44278090-3fae-4515-bcc2-44fd57c1d0d1/library/f69e60f9-9dc6-4345-aa18-b9a4b6dfdbf0?p=1&n=10&sort=name_ASC), Accessed on 07.12.2024

better in GPP implementation and reaching its sustainability benefits and increasingly trend is towards mandatory application of GPP criteria. For example, the horizontal sustainable public procurement policy of the Dutch central government applies to all tenders and has led to a large increase of GPP uptake.<sup>16</sup> In the Czech Republic the use of GPP has become compulsory since 2021; contracting authorities can only apply 'non-green' procurement only if they have a sufficient justification.

Europe's leadership in GPP is driven by the strategic use of National Action Plans (NAPs), which provide tailored frameworks for integrating sustainability into public procurement. While EU countries operate within a common framework, NAPs allow each country to outline clear goals, priorities, and timelines suited to their developmental needs. Nations such as **Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Belgium** have leveraged their NAPs to develop tools, resources, and capacity-building initiatives that empower contracting authorities to implement GPP effectively. These plans ensure a systematic approach that combines political commitment, regulatory flexibility, and stakeholder engagement, key factors for achieving high level of GPP maturity. NAPs also facilitate coordination between national and sub-national governments, aligning procurement strategies with broader sustainability objectives like climate action, circular economy, and social equity. By incorporating both mandatory and voluntary GPP criteria, NAPs provide adaptability while maintaining ambition, helping countries address challenges such as capacity gaps and market readiness. Moreover, they enable harmonization with regional and international standards, ensuring consistency and accountability. Ultimately, National Action Plans serve as vital instruments for sustaining momentum, driving market transformation, and achieving the concurrent goals of environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic development. Through well-designed NAPs, countries can leverage their purchasing power to achieve long-term success and resilience in an evolving global economy.

The European Commission defines "professionalization" in public procurement as equipping contracting authorities with the appropriate tools, knowledge, and information to manage procurement processes effectively and achieve sustainability objectives. Professionalization ensures that procurement practices align with broader policy goals, such as environmental protection, social equity, and economic efficiency. Countries like **the UK and the Netherlands**, which have invested in professionalizing their public procurement workforce by developing knowledge exchange networks and providing practical tools, have demonstrated greater success in implementing Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP). For example, the Public Procurement Expertise Centre (PIANOO) in the Netherlands functions as a tool for community of practice for public procurement practitioners.<sup>17</sup> These nations have shown that a well-trained procurement workforce can seamlessly integrate sustainability criteria into tendering processes, driving meaningful progress toward sustainability goals.

In contrast, countries such as **Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Latvia, and Estonia**—where professionalization efforts have been limited or absent—have struggled to achieve similar outcomes. The lack of systematic training, resources, and support structures in these countries has hindered their ability to adopt and scale SPP effectively. Notably, procurers who are equipped with the right skills and knowledge understand that incorporating sustainability into purchasing decisions does not necessarily increase costs. Instead, they recognize that sustainable procurement can generate long-term economic savings while delivering environmental and social benefits. This underscores the importance of professionalization in empowering procurers to make informed decisions that align with sustainability objectives and public procurement policy, ensuring that procurement serves as a strategic tool for achieving national and regional development goals.

Recognizing the critical role of knowledge and skills in SPP, particularly in GPP, the EU and its Member States have launched several initiatives to professionalize procurement functions at both supranational, national and subnational levels. The European Commission provides financial support for pan-EU activities, projects, and campaigns designed to facilitate the adoption of SPP practices. For example, the Commission funds the **Procurement Forum**<sup>18</sup>, which enables communication and collaboration among procurement experts and practitioners on SPP-related issues. Additionally, networking events supported by the Commission foster the exchange of ideas and best practices. At the Member State level, national governments have

16 Ruben Nicolas, Vítězslav Titl, Fredo Schotanus, European funds and green public procurement, *Ecological Economics*, Volume 227, 2025, 108400, ISSN 0921-8009, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2024.108400>.

17 OECD (2023) Professionalising the Public Procurement Workforce: A review of current initiatives and challenges, OECD, Paris, France.

18 Available at <https://iclei-europe.org/projects/?c=search&uid=wRUJoloP>

established competence centers that offer tools and resources to simplify the integration of sustainability into procurement processes. These coordinated efforts aim to build procurement capacities that are well-equipped to meet sustainability objectives effectively.

The foremost learning from GPP experiences in Europe is perhaps the unrelenting support of political leaders and decisive investment in creating institutions and tools to capitalize on green procurement as an enabler of circular economy and green growth.

#### 4.1.1 Recent Developments in GPP in the European Union Countries

The European Union (EU) continues to lead in GPP through comprehensive policies and innovative initiatives aimed at achieving climate neutrality and a circular economy by 2050. Central to this vision is the **European Green Deal**, which emphasizes the role of public authorities in setting a precedent for sustainable procurement while addressing the risks of greenwashing. To enhance transparency, the EU has proposed an **Digital Product Passport**<sup>19</sup>, providing detailed information on a product's origin, composition, repairability, and end-of-life management. Additionally, the Green Deal advocates for integrating climate-friendly procurement practices into trade agreements, reinforcing the link between GPP and global sustainability goals. These measures are designed to stimulate markets for sustainable goods and services, ensuring that procurement decisions support environmental and ethical standards.

The EU is also addressing key barriers to GPP adoption, such as perceived higher upfront costs, through targeted funding mechanisms. The **European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)**<sup>20</sup> co-finance public projects in economically less developed countries, enabling contracting authorities to prioritize sustainable procurement without financial constraints. Initiatives supporting research like **Horizon Europe**<sup>21</sup> support pre-commercial procurement and innovation procurement, driving research and development in areas where private-sector investment is limited. These funding programs encourage public authorities to pursue greener projects and innovative solutions, boosting competitiveness and sustainability. The **European Innovation Procurement Awards**<sup>22</sup> further recognize exemplary efforts in advancing innovation procurement and fostering buyer-supplier collaboration to bring sustainable solutions to market. Together, these initiatives create a robust ecosystem for GPP, combining policy frameworks, financial incentives, and recognition programs to accelerate the EU's transition to a sustainable, resilient, and competitive economy.

In recent years, many countries have increasingly leveraged e-GP systems to simplify and accelerate the integration of sustainability criteria into procurement processes. These systems streamline the adoption of GPP/SPP by embedding sustainability requirements directly into tendering procedures, making responsible procurement more seamless and reducing the burden on procurement officials. Countries, already equipped with e-GP platforms, have upgraded their systems to align with evolving GPP frameworks. This approach minimizes additional administrative effort while enabling benchmarking and monitoring of GPP progress. For instance, Sweden supports its e-procurement platform with environmental and social criteria, complemented by training programs to enhance effective implementation. Germany employs eco-labels and life-cycle costing (LCC) within its system to provide clear sustainability guidance and detailed reporting.

Innovative features, such as those in Estonia's e-GP system, allow procurement officials to automatically apply pre-defined environmental criteria or create custom green requirements with minimal effort. These practices emphasize the importance of user-friendly e-GP systems that make integrating sustainability into procurement decisions straightforward and efficient. By reducing complexity and automating key processes, e-procurement systems ensure that sustainability becomes an inherent part of public procurement, driving transparency, accountability, and the widespread adoption of green practices without placing **unnecessary administrative strain** on procurement professionals.

19 Available at <https://data.europa.eu/en/news-events/news/eus-digital-product-passport-advancing-transparency-and-sustainability>

20 Available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip\\_23\\_389](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_389)

21 Available at [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en)

22 Available at [https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-prizes/european-innovation-procurement-awards\\_en](https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-prizes/european-innovation-procurement-awards_en)

### 4.1.2 Key Trends and Learning from EU's GPP Experiences

European countries have demonstrated global leadership in advancing GPP, showcasing how strategic procurement can drive environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic resilience. Through robust legislative frameworks, the development of National Action Plans (NAPs), and investments in professionalizing procurement workforces, Europe has successfully integrated GPP into public procurement practices. The European Union's commitment to sustainability is reflected in initiatives like the European Green Deal, which promotes climate-friendly procurement, transparency through tools like the Electronic Product Passport, and financial support mechanisms such as the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and Horizon Europe. The adoption of user-friendly electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) systems has further simplified the integration of sustainability criteria into procurement processes, ensuring efficiency and minimizing administrative burdens. These collective efforts provide valuable insights for regions worldwide, demonstrating that GPP, supported by political commitment, professionalization, and innovative tools, can be a powerful catalyst for market transformation and sustainable development.

Five Key Takeaways from GPP Experiences in the EU are

- i. Political Commitment and Strategic Policy Frameworks:** Strong political leadership and comprehensive policy instruments, such as the European Green Deal and National Action Plans, are crucial for driving GPP adoption. These frameworks ensure sustainability is integrated into procurement decisions at all levels of government.
- ii. Mandatory and Flexible GPP Criteria:** Countries with mandatory GPP criteria, such as the Netherlands and the Czech Republic, have shown higher success rates. The EU's dual approach—offering both Core and Comprehensive criteria—provides flexibility while maintaining ambitious sustainability goals.
- iii. Professionalization of Procurement Officials:** Equipping procurement officials with the necessary skills, tools, and knowledge enhances their ability to implement GPP effectively. Countries like the UK and Sweden have benefited from capacity-building initiatives and knowledge-sharing networks.
- iv. Integration of e-GP Systems:** Leveraging e-procurement platforms to embed sustainability criteria into tendering processes streamlines GPP implementation. Automated systems, like those in Estonia and Germany, reduce complexity, enhance transparency, and ensure sustainability is seamlessly incorporated.
- v. Financial Incentives and Innovation Support:** Addressing cost concerns through funding mechanisms such as ESIF and Horizon Europe enables contracting authorities to prioritize green procurement. Awards and recognition programs further incentivize innovation, fostering collaboration between public buyers and suppliers to advance sustainable solutions.

## 4.2 GPP in APEC: Challenges, Progress, and the Need for Cooperation

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional bloc comprising 21 member economies, including AMS such as Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Together, APEC economies account for 2.95 billion people, representing nearly two-thirds of global GDP and 50% of global trade. APEC's primary goal is to enhance regional economic integration by reducing trade barriers and harmonizing regulations to facilitate smoother and more efficient trade.

In a 2013 study<sup>23</sup>, it was revealed that 18 out of 21 APEC economies have implemented GPP frameworks, with 15 economies establishing environmental standards for specific product categories. However, the study also highlighted significant challenges due to the divergence in GPP policy, tools, and ecolabeling criteria across these economies. Differences in how each country defines and evaluates "green" products complicate the formation of strategic partnerships and the development of consistent trade policies for environmentally friendly goods. This lack of uniformity leads to misunderstandings, inefficiencies, and trade barriers, hindering the promotion of green products on an international scale.

The study underscored the importance of regional cooperation and information exchange to overcome these challenges and achieve shared sustainable development goals. While there is limited publicly

23 APEC Secretariat (2013), GPP in the Asia Pacific Region: Challenges and Opportunities for Green Growth and Trade.

available information on coordinated GPP initiatives led by the APEC Secretariat, significant progress has been observed in individual member economies like Australia, Canada, China, and the USA. To provide more focused insights within the scope of this brief, a detailed examination of recent GPP developments in the USA has been conducted, reflecting the potential for broader application and cooperation within the APEC context. By fostering collaboration, harmonized standards, and mutual recognition of environmental criteria, ASEAN economies can enhance their collective efforts to promote sustainable procurement and green growth across the region.

#### **4.2.1 Recent Developments in the USA: Advancing Sustainability in Federal Procurement**

The United States has undertaken significant measures to strengthen its existing programme to integrate sustainability into federal procurement, showcasing a comprehensive approach to innovation, environmental stewardship, and economic growth. As the world's largest public buyer, with an annual expenditure exceeding \$700 billion on products and services, the U.S. Federal Government recognizes the transformative power of sustainable purchasing. Currently, over a third of federal contracts include requirements for sustainable products and services, demonstrating a decisive shift toward reducing emissions within the federal supply chain. This effort aligns with the government's goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and is guided by key executive orders, notably Executive Order 14030<sup>24</sup> (May 2021) and Executive Order 14057<sup>25</sup> (December 2021). These directives emphasize promoting U.S. manufacturing, fostering job creation, and advancing climate resilience through procurement strategies.

To achieve these objectives, the U.S. has established ambitious targets for Federal agencies. These include achieving 100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2030, 100% zero-emission vehicle acquisitions by 2035, and a net-zero emissions building portfolio by 2045. Additionally, the government aims to reduce Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 65% by 2030 compared to 2008 levels, and to implement a Buy Clean policy to promote the use of construction materials with lower embodied emissions. These targets are supported by a whole-of-government approach that prioritizes regulatory consistency, institutional coordination, and comprehensive capacity-building initiatives. Agencies are also required to integrate climate-related financial risk into their procurement processes, giving preference to suppliers who disclose greenhouse gas emissions and set science-based reduction targets.

A noteworthy advancement is the recognition of 60 private sector sustainability standards and ecolabels across more than 40 purchasing categories. This shift from relying solely on government-managed/owned standards/ecolabels to embracing third-party, life-cycle-based certifications reflects a commitment to robust, verifiable sustainability criteria. By prioritizing products that can be reused, refurbished, or recycled, and maximizing environmental benefits through lifecycle cost analyses, the Federal Government is ensuring that procurement decisions promote efficiency, resilience, and equity. These strategies also emphasize supporting underserved communities, creating well-paying union jobs, and advancing environmental justice.

Another crucial development has been setting a goal to make Federal government acquisition net-zero by 2050 by focusing on the entire supply chain. The General Services Administration (GSA) plays a critical role in tracking major suppliers' disclosures on greenhouse gas emissions, climate risk, and sustainability targets. Each agency is required to set and monitor annual GHG emissions reduction targets across Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions. Since the objective is to reduce emissions emanating from whole supply chain, the top 100 Federal suppliers are required to publicly disclose their Scope 1,2 & 3 GHG emissions and climate-related financial risk and to set science-based reduction targets in alignment with Federal government goal. This rigorous framework ensures accountability and transparency in meeting the federal government's sustainability goals.

The U.S. whole-of-government approach demonstrates how procurement can serve as a powerful lever for market transformation and sustainable development. By aligning procurement policies with long-term climate goals, the U.S. is driving innovation, private sector investment, creating and sustaining well-paying jobs and infrastructure improvements while protecting the environment.

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<sup>24</sup> Available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/05/20/executive-order-on-climate-related-financial-risk/>

<sup>25</sup> Available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/12/08/executive-order-on-catalyzing-clean-energy-industries-and-jobs-through-federal-sustainability/>

## Three Key Learnings from Recent Developments in U.S. Federal Procurement

### a. Whole-of-Government Approach for Effective Implementation

The U.S. demonstrates the value of a **whole-of-government approach** in embedding sustainability within procurement processes. Through directives like Executive Orders 14057 and 14030, federal agencies are aligned under unified sustainability goals, ensuring regulatory consistency, institutional coordination, and accountability. This model highlights the importance of cross-agency collaboration to achieve comprehensive GPP outcomes.

### b. Adoption of Lifecycle-Based Private Standards and Ecolabels

The recognition of 60 private sector standards and ecolabels across more than 40 procurement categories for use by Federal procurers illustrates the importance of using lifecycle-based criteria and third-party verification to define sustainable products and services and easing embedding sustainability in purchasing decisions. By moving beyond solely government-managed standards/ecolabels, the U.S. ensures that GPP implementation is not hampered by the limitation of government owned/managed standards and ecolabels. Simultaneously, the government ensures that procurement decisions are credible, transparent, and measurable, while also fostering market-driven innovation and sustainability.

### c. Setting Ambitious Targets across Federal Supply Chain

The U.S. sets clear, measurable targets to make its Federal acquisition net-zero emissions by 2050, including milestones such as 100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2030 and 100% zero-emission vehicle acquisitions by 2035. These objectives are supported by clear GHG emission targets for top 100 Federal suppliers and robust monitoring and reporting systems that track emissions reductions across Scope 1, 2, and 3 categories. This approach underscores the importance of establishing concrete targets, integrating them into performance management systems, and maintaining transparency through regular progress evaluations.

These key learnings offer valuable insights demonstrating how strategic policy direction and setting ambitious targets for market operators can support market transformation across the whole value chain.

## 4.3 The Emergence of Regional Networks to Advance Strategic Procurement

In recent past, establishment of several regional public procurement networks such as the **African Public Procurement Network (APPN)**<sup>26</sup>, the **Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (INGP)**<sup>27</sup>, and **Procura+**<sup>28</sup> in Europe has served as a catalyst for accelerating strategic approach to procurement for achieving horizontal objectives of the government, including the adoption of GPP. These networks have demonstrated the power of regional cooperation, knowledge sharing, and capacity building in promoting sustainable and innovative procurement.

The African Public Procurement Network (APPN) has successfully connected procurement authorities across Africa, facilitating the exchange of best practices, development of harmonized tools, and addressing common challenges. This collaborative approach has led to increased transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in procurement processes, aligning policies with broader goals such as climate resilience and social inclusion. Similarly, the Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (INGP) has united procurement bodies across the Americas, driving modernization with a focus on transparency, efficiency, and sustainability. By adopting innovative procurement strategies, INGP members are aligning their procurement practices with global sustainability priorities and enhancing public sector efficiency.

In Europe, Procura+ has established itself as a leading network for advancing sustainable and innovative procurement. Through collaboration, knowledge exchange, and joint initiatives, Procura+ has enabled its members to implement pioneering procurement practices that prioritize environmental sustainability and foster innovation. The network's success highlights the importance of connecting practitioners to develop

26 Available at <https://appn-racop.org/en/>

27 Available at <http://portal.oas.org/Portal/Sector/SAP/DptodeModernizaci3nDelEstadoyGobernabilidad/NPA/RedInteramericanadeComprasGubernamentales/tabid/1788/language/en-US/default.aspx>

28 Available at <https://procuraplus.org>

actionable solutions, creating a ripple effect that advances sustainable procurement on a regional and global scale.

The development of similar regional procurement networks globally would offer essential platforms for sharing best practices, aligning sustainability criteria, and addressing regional challenges in procurement. Such networks can support the creation of harmonized procurement guidelines and mutual recognition of ecolabels, facilitating smoother international trade in sustainable goods and services. Additionally, regional networks can host capacity-building programs and training events to enhance the skills of procurement professionals, ensuring they are well-equipped to integrate sustainability into their procurement processes.

In Asia, International Green Purchasing Network (IGPN)<sup>29</sup>, based in China, aims to promote the spread of environmentally friendly product and service through Green Purchasing activities and share best practices examples. Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production (APRSCP)<sup>30</sup> is another network that promotes broader sustainable consumption and production in the region. However, their activities remain limited to organising webinars on GPP and fall short of providing networking opportunities as noted in the case of Africa, Europe and North America. But these organisations hold potential for future strengthening and emerge as a credible networking platform.

By leveraging collective public procurement spending, regional networks can also influence markets and stimulate demand for sustainable and innovative products. This coordinated approach can drive innovation in green technologies and services, contributing to a global transition towards a low-carbon, circular economy. Furthermore, these networks can provide a unified regional voice in global forums on sustainable procurement, advocating for shared interests and contributing to international policy discussions on sustainability and green trade. This collaborative model offers a clear pathway for regions worldwide to modernize procurement practices, enhance economic efficiency, and promote global sustainability objectives.

## 4.4 Trade Agreements and GPP

Increasingly countries are trying to understand the interface between trade policy and GPP policy, identify gaps and challenges and prepare an action plan to facilitate trade of greener substitutes with the aim to support climate actions and achieve climate related goals. In this context, two trade agreements namely the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA)<sup>31</sup> and the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (EUSFTA)<sup>32</sup> stand out from the region as both enables procuring entities to pursue environmental objectives while maintaining the agreement's core principles of open and fair competition.

Both **EVFTA** and **EUSFTA** incorporate environmental considerations within their public procurement frameworks under **Chapter 9**. These agreements establish legal pathways for integrating sustainability into procurement while ensuring that such measures do not create disguised trade barriers.

In **EVFTA**, three key provisions define the role of environmental considerations:

- **Article 9.3(2)(b)** establishes that Parties can adopt environmental protection measures, provided they do not constitute disguised restrictions on trade. This provision legitimizes the inclusion of sustainability in procurement but requires a balance between environmental objectives and trade facilitation.
- **Article 9.9(6)** explicitly allows procuring entities to incorporate environmental considerations into technical specifications, enabling them to promote resource conservation and environmental protection. This provision marks a shift from merely permitting protective measures to actively encouraging sustainable procurement.
- **Article 9.11** allows «environmental characteristics» to be used as evaluation criteria in procurement decisions, placing sustainability alongside price, quality, and technical merit. This provision ensures that environmental factors are integrated into the entire procurement process, from specifications to contract awards.

29 Available at <http://www.igpn.org>

30 Available at <https://www.aprscp.net>

31 Available at [https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/vietnam/eu-vietnam-agreement/texts-agreements\\_en](https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/vietnam/eu-vietnam-agreement/texts-agreements_en)

32 Available at [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22019A1114\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22019A1114(01)&from=EN)

Similarly, **EUSFTA** follows a comparable structure but offers a more detailed approach to integrating sustainability:

- **Article 9.9(6)** provides procuring entities with the authority to incorporate environmental specifications in procurement.
- **Article 9.9(7)** strengthens this by requiring environmental criteria to be performance-based, scientifically justified, and transparent, ensuring that sustainability objectives are implemented effectively and fairly.
- **Article 9.9(10)** extends environmental considerations beyond technical specifications, allowing sustainability requirements to be embedded in the execution of contracts. This provision ensures that environmental performance obligations continue throughout the contract lifecycle.
- **Article 9.11** formally includes environmental factors in procurement evaluation, reinforcing their role in decision-making.
- **Article 12.10(d)** uniquely connects public procurement to broader sustainability goals, explicitly recognizing it as a tool for promoting sustainable development.

Both agreements carefully balance sustainability and trade facilitation through Article 9.3(2), ensuring that while environmental measures are encouraged, they do not create unfair trade restrictions. EUSFTA takes a more holistic approach by positioning procurement as an instrument for advancing sustainability objectives beyond just environmental protection, making it a useful model for ASEAN in developing Green Public Procurement (GPP) strategies that align with both trade policies and climate goals.

The EVFTA and EUSFTA procurement frameworks offer valuable insights for AMSs in advancing GPP while maintaining open and competitive markets. These agreements demonstrate how sustainability can be systematically embedded into procurement policies without restricting trade. ASEAN can adopt similar provisions by allowing environmental criteria in technical specifications, evaluation processes, and contract performance requirements, ensuring that sustainability is a core principle rather than an optional add-on. The structured approach in these agreements also highlights the importance of regulatory clarity, ensuring that environmental requirements are transparent, science-based, and performance-driven to foster fair competition. Furthermore, the inclusion of sustainability objectives within broader trade agreements, as seen in EUSFTA's Article 12.10(d), reinforces the role of public procurement as a strategic tool for climate action, circular economy, and sustainable economic development. For ASEAN, harmonizing procurement policies across member states through regional agreements could facilitate cross-border trade in sustainable products and services, encourage market transformation, and position ASEAN as a leader in sustainable procurement within global trade frameworks.

# 5. Development of Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming GPP in ASEAN Countries

## 5.1 Key Considerations for a Framework to Mainstream GPP in ASEAN

The Section 2.3 deliberated on the three strategic frameworks that set the visions and outlook for future direction of the ASEAN region. Upon closer examination, the three frameworks share five key themes that are essential for advancing ASEAN's vision of a successful and prosperous region. These interconnected themes provide a cohesive roadmap for sustainable development, economic integration, and resilience in the face of global challenges.

- a. *Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship* - highlights the need for resource efficiency, environmental protection, and low-carbon growth as essential components for long-term prosperity.
- b. *Harmonisation of Standards and Trade Facilitation* - calls for aligning regulatory standards, ecolabeling criteria, and technical requirements across AMSs to promote seamless trade and economic integration.
- c. *Support for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)* - stress the importance of empowering MSMEs through capacity-building initiatives, access to green financing, and participation in sustainable and circular supply chains.
- d. *Innovation, Digitisation, and Technology Adoption* - highlights the role of innovation, digital technology, and green technologies in driving sustainable growth and economic transformation.
- e. *Collaboration, Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing* – espouses the importance of regional collaboration, capacity building, and knowledge exchange for overcoming shared challenges and advancing GPP, SCP, and circular economy goals.

To effectively operationalize GPP within ASEAN countries, any strategic framework must address the core themes identified in the three strategic frameworks discussed above. These thematic priorities - sustainability, harmonization of standards, MSME empowerment, innovation, and regional collaboration - are not only essential for ASEAN's success but are also applicable to global markets seeking opportunities to expand their business in ASEAN. Interestingly, these themes also serve as fundamental pillars for accelerating GPP in any country, including those within the ASEAN region.

It has already been articulated how GPP plays a pivotal role in promoting circular economy practices by encouraging the procurement of products designed for durability, reuse, recycling, and minimal waste generation. This approach aligns procurement policies with circular economy goals, ensuring that public investments contribute to a closed-loop economic system where resources are maximized, and environmental impacts are minimized. Globally, this trend reflects how governments are increasingly leveraging procurement to support sustainable production and consumption patterns, driving a shift toward resource-efficient economies.

GPP also supports interconnected objectives like trade facilitation, MSME development, digital transformation, and environmental sustainability. By promoting harmonized standards and mutual recognition agreements for ecolabels, GPP reduces trade barriers, enabling businesses, especially micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to enter new markets. These practices enhance regional economic integration and help MSMEs adopt sustainable practices, improving their competitiveness in the global market. Additionally, switching to e-GP platform for integrating sustainability requirements streamlines operations, boosts transparency, and enables real-time tracking of sustainability outcomes. Together, these efforts ensure procurement practices are efficient, accountable, and aligned with strategic goals such as trade facilitation, MSME empowerment, and digital innovation while fostering economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and inclusive growth on a regional level. Therefore, the central message is that GPP not only catalyzes progress across five interconnected thematic areas but also stands to gain from advancement made within them,

## 5.2 Priority Sectors and Themes for Accelerating GPP

As per Global Resources Outlook 2024, resource use is projected to increase by 60% by 2060 globally, posing a profound challenge to achieving climate, biodiversity, and pollution targets, as well as sustaining economic prosperity and human well-being. To mitigate these pressures, it is imperative to reduce the resource intensity of critical sectors such as **food, mobility, housing, and energy systems**. While supply-side measures, such as cleaner production, have received significant attention, there is an urgent need to integrate demand-side strategies that address consumption patterns, equity, and responsibility. An integrated approach, combining resource efficiency, energy efficiency, climate mitigation, food, and land actions, can yield transformative benefits than any one of these policy areas for action would in isolation. By 2060, such synergies could increase global GDP by 3% and improve the Human Development Index by 7%, compared to scenarios based on historical trends.<sup>33</sup>

To fully harness the potential of GPP, ASEAN must focus on priority sectors and themes that address the region's most pressing sustainability challenges. The ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025 has identified high-impact sectors such as **construction, energy, transport, and agriculture**, to maximize environmental and social benefits in the region. These sectors have also been identified as priority sectors for reducing resource intensity and to achieving climate, biodiversity, and pollution targets. Therefore, these sectors represent critical areas where targeted interventions can achieve the most significant impact. Priority themes include promoting energy efficiency, advancing circular economy practices, fostering sustainable infrastructure development, and ensuring greater participation of SMEs in economic activities. While ASEAN has made progress in reducing material intensity relative to GDP, its resource efficiency intensity remains higher than the broader Asia-Pacific region and the global average.<sup>34</sup>

## 5.3 ASEAN GPP Strategic Framework

At this stage, a key question is: if a country aims to strengthen its GPP program through a Scale, Scope, and Impact strategy, what critical drivers or key areas must be addressed to ensure effective implementation and measurable results? Various studies and frameworks provide insights into this. The UNEP SPP Guidelines 2021 highlight the importance of Organizational structure, Legal framework, Tools like guidelines, ecolabels, Capacity building, Communication strategies, and a robust Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. The World Bank emphasizes Organizational structures, Regulations, Incentives, M&E systems, Capacity building, and Technical support for GPP implementation. Similarly, the U.K.'s Flexible Framework identifies People, Policy, Strategy and Communication, Procurement Process, Engaging Suppliers, and Measurement and Results as key elements. Across all these frameworks, five core components remain consistent: Policy, Institutional Structures, Capacity Building, Market Readiness, and Measurement and Evaluation. These elements form the foundation for scaling, diversifying, and maximizing the impact of GPP programs, ensuring they are comprehensive, effective, and aligned with sustainability goals.

For ASEAN countries, two additional pillars are proposed to further enhance and elevate their GPP programmes: Harmonization of Standards and Ecolabels and the Integration of GPP with Public Financial Management (PFM) systems. The harmonization of standards and ecolabels has been included because it is a core theme embedded in the three strategic frameworks discussed above. These strategic documents emphasize the importance of developing consistent standards and mutually recognized ecolabels to facilitate seamless cross-border trade, reduce compliance costs, and promote regional economic integration.

The integration of GPP with Public Financial Management (PFM) systems is another critical pillar, emerging as a key area of reform for successful GPP implementation. Aligning GPP with national budgeting, expenditure planning, and financial reporting processes ensures that sustainability objectives are embedded into the core financial decision-making of governments. It emerges from the whole of the government approach for GPP implementation. This integration helps secure necessary funding for GPP initiatives, promotes transparency and accountability in public spending, and ensures sustainability goals are consistently prioritized. By linking

33 UNEP (2024) Global Resources Outlook 2024: Bend the Trend – Pathways to a liveable planet as resource use spikes. International Resource Panel. Nairobi.

34 Schandl Heinz, Soonsawad Nattani & Marcos Ray (2022), State of natural resource use and resource efficiency in the ASEAN community, CSIRO Available at <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/CSIRO%20presentaton-%20State%20of%20natural%20resource%20use%20and%20resource%20efficiency%20ASEAN.pdf>

procurement with PFM systems, countries can better track the financial and sustainability impacts of their procurement activities, making GPP a more effective tool for achieving long-term environmental, social, and economic outcomes. Together, these two pillars provide ASEAN countries with a comprehensive, regionally cohesive, and financially sustainable approach to advancing GPP, strengthening their ability to achieve sustainability goals and drive market transformation. These seven pillars for accelerating GPP in the ASEAN countries are discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

***i. Policy Integration & Legislative Framework***

Policy Integration and Legislative Support are fundamental for the successful implementation of GPP as they provide a clear, enforceable framework for embedding sustainability into procurement decisions. A well-crafted and comprehensive policy that mandates the integration of sustainability criteria ensures that GPP is not merely an option but a legal obligation for procurement officials. Making sustainability a legal requirement strengthens accountability and ensures consistent application across all levels of government. Moreover, aligning procurement policies with broader thematic policies, such as those related to climate action, circular economy, or social equity, helps avoid conflicting objectives and duplication of efforts. This integration fosters a unified approach where procurement decisions actively support national sustainability goals, driving efficiency, coherence, and long-term impact.



**Fig 4: ASEAN GPP Strategic Framework**

***ii. Institutional Framework***

An effective institutional framework is essential for the successful implementation of GPP due to the interconnected and cross-cutting nature of public procurement. Since procurement impacts multiple sectors, including infrastructure, energy, transportation, and healthcare, it requires coordinated efforts across various government agencies. GPP is inherently a multi-disciplinary initiative that addresses environmental, social, and economic goals over a long-term horizon, making a structured and collaborative approach vital. A well-defined institutional framework signals the government’s commitment to sustainability, providing a clear and consistent directive that encourages markets and suppliers to respond by offering sustainable products and services. When all relevant institutions work together under a unified framework, GPP becomes a powerful tool for driving sustainability, innovation, and market transformation.

***iii. Harmonisation of Standards and Ecolabels***

Harmonization of standards and eco-labels is critical for the successful implementation of GPP as it ensures consistency, facilitates cross-border trade, and enhances market efficiency. Eco-labels serve as key

indicators of products and services that meet specific sustainability criteria, but the existence of independent eco-labeling schemes in different countries can fragment market and limit scope for growth. For example, in regions like ASEAN, countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand have their own national eco-labels, each with distinct certification processes. This lack of uniformity increases costs and administrative burdens for businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs), when trying to sell products across multiple markets. Harmonization, supported by Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs), reduces these challenges by fostering trust in environmental claims and eliminating the need for duplicate certifications. It streamlines GPP processes, allowing procurement officials to confidently select products that meet standardized sustainability criteria, improving efficiency and credibility. Additionally, harmonized eco-labels promote innovation and market transformation by encouraging manufacturers to align with regional standards, thus driving green industry growth, creating jobs, and boosting economic competitiveness.

#### ***iv. Professionalisation of Procurement***

The professionalization of procurement is essential for accelerating GPP because it goes beyond basic capacity-building and focuses on creating a highly skilled, motivated, and strategically empowered workforce. While capacity-building provides foundational knowledge, professionalization equips procurement officials with advanced skills, tools, and methodologies to achieve strategic procurement objectives like GPP. It emphasizes continuous learning, career planning, and the development of incentive schemes that recognize and reward excellence in sustainable procurement practices. By enhancing the professional knowledge, skills, and competencies of procurement officials, professionalization fosters a culture where officials are not just following compliance requirements but are actively innovating and driving sustainability outcomes. This approach empowers procurement professionals to move beyond the “compliance trap”, enabling them to make informed, strategic decisions that align with broader environmental, social, and economic goals. Ultimately, a professionalized procurement workforce becomes a key driver for the successful and transformative implementation of GPP, ensuring consistency, efficiency, and long-term impact.

#### ***v. Market Readiness & Engagement***

Market readiness and engagement, particularly the preparedness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), are critical for the successful implementation of GPP in developing countries. One of the key challenges in adopting GPP is the availability of sufficient sustainable products in the market. Procurement cannot occur effectively if there are not enough credible vendors capable of meeting sustainability requirements. A lack of market readiness, especially among SMEs, leads to limited competition, higher procurement costs, and potential accusations of favouritism, which can undermine the legitimacy of these initiatives. To address this, it is essential to assess the market’s capacity before rolling out sustainability criteria and provide adequate lead time for suppliers to adapt. This can be achieved through early notifications, phased implementation timelines, and strategic dialogue with domestic suppliers. Supporting SMEs with capacity-building programs, technical assistance, and green financing ensures they can meet sustainability standards and certification requirements. Engaging suppliers through workshops, consultations, and procurement opportunities helps them align their business practices with green procurement standards, reducing barriers to entry and fostering innovation. Such engagement promotes inclusive economic growth, supports local industries, and helps achieve broader sustainability goals. By ensuring that SMEs are prepared and actively involved in the process, governments can create a more inclusive, competitive, and effective market for sustainable products, driving the long-term success of SPP and GPP initiatives and promoting sustainable economic development.

#### ***vi. GPP Linkage with PFM System***

Developing a strong linkage between GPP and the Public Financial Management (PFM) system is critical for accelerating the adoption and effectiveness of GPP in a country. By integrating sustainability into financial processes, governments can introduce incentives and awards for meeting sustainability targets, encouraging procurement officials to prioritize environmentally and socially responsible practices. Tying the allocation of funds to specific sustainability objectives ensures that financial resources are strategically directed toward green initiatives. Implementing life-cycle costing (LCC) in budget estimation and expenditure cycles allows for the evaluation of long-term economic, environmental, and social impacts, promoting more sustainable and cost-effective procurement decisions. Incorporating sustainability criteria into budget preparation

guidelines and templates helps institutionalize green practices at the planning stage, fostering alignment between budgeting and procurement activities. Establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track expenditures on sustainable procurement enhances transparency and accountability, ensuring that investments contribute to GPP goals. By considering the long-term impacts of procurement decisions in financial planning, governments can drive systemic change, promoting environmental stewardship, economic resilience, and social equity through procurement practices.

### **vii. Monitoring & Evaluation Mechanism**

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of GPP by ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. An effective M&E framework allows governments to track progress, measure the environmental, social, and economic impacts of GPP, and verify that procurement practices align with sustainability objectives. By establishing clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and systematically collecting data, policymakers can identify successes, address challenges, and refine strategies to enhance GPP outcomes. M&E supports evidence-based decision-making and ensures that GPP initiatives contribute to achieving national and international commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and climate action targets. Furthermore, regular reporting on GPP performance builds stakeholder trust by demonstrating a commitment to sustainability and responsible public spending. A well-structured M&E system fosters accountability among procurement officials and suppliers, driving continuous progress and embedding sustainability into procurement processes. Ultimately, robust M&E practices ensure that GPP delivers meaningful, long-term benefits and remains adaptable to evolving global sustainability challenges.

To summarise, enhancing GPP through a Scale, Scope, and Impact strategy requires decisive actions on all seven pillars. These pillars provide a comprehensive foundation for effective GPP implementation by ensuring that policies are clear and legally enforceable, institutions are well-coordinated, and procurement professionals are empowered through continuous professionalization. Additionally, for ASEAN countries, the integration of Harmonization of Standards and Ecolabels and linking GPP with Public Financial Management (PFM) systems further strengthens the approach. Market readiness is also crucial, particularly the preparedness of SMEs, as it ensures that suppliers can meet sustainability criteria and participate effectively in GPP initiatives. Lastly, a robust M&E mechanism is necessary to track progress, measure outcomes, and ensure continuous improvement. Collectively, these seven pillars create a cohesive strategy for advancing GPP, driving market transformation, fostering innovation, and achieving sustainable economic growth and environmental resilience.

## **5.4 ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool**

The Section 3 of this brief briefly discussed legal, regulatory and institutional policy framework for GPP implementation in the ASEAN countries. It also discussed gaps and opportunities for GPP playing an active role as a driver of economic resilience, environmental sustainability, and social values. But this brief does not extend to conducting a formal assessment of GPP maturity in ASEAN countries against established global frameworks, such as the SDG 12.7.1 indicator or the MAPS Supplementary Module on Sustainable Public Procurement or ISO 20400 on Sustainable Procurement. However, irrespective of their current maturity levels, AMSs must adopt a clear, progressive pathway to enhance their GPP practices within a defined timeframe. Such a structured approach is essential for aligning national efforts with regional sustainability objectives and fostering long-term environmental, social, and economic benefits.

To facilitate this, a tailored framework inspired by the UK Flexible Framework has been developed to support ASEAN countries for self-assessing their GPP maturity level and setting actionable, measurable targets for gradually moving to the highest maturity level. The Flexible Framework, created by the Sustainable Procurement Task Force, is a globally recognized self-assessment mechanism that allows organizations to measure and monitor their progress in sustainable procurement implementation over time. Designed for universal applicability, the framework is suitable for organizations/countries ranging from those with substantial procurement expertise to those with limited resources. It emphasizes a systematic, step-by-step approach, encouraging users to progress through five levels across key dimensions: Foundation, Embedment, Integration, Optimization, and Leadership.

The adapted ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool (Appendix 1) provides AMSs with a structured approach to self-evaluate its current GPP maturity level and advance the impact of GPP programs. It focuses on seven critical pillars discussed above namely, **Policy Development, Institutional Mechanisms, Professionalization, Harmonization of Standards and Ecolabels, Linkage with Public Financial Management (PFM), Market Readiness (including SMEs), and Performance Monitoring & Evaluation**. Each of the pillars in the framework is both individually and collectively essential for strengthening a GPP program. Individually, each pillar addresses a specific element critical to the successful implementation of GPP and collectively, these pillars create a holistic and interconnected system that ensures GPP is comprehensive, effective, and sustainable. The synergy between these elements allows GPP to drive market transformation, foster innovation, and achieve long-term environmental, economic, and social benefits, ensuring that procurement practices contribute meaningfully to national and regional sustainability goals.

Each pillar in the **ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool** is structured across five levels of maturity: **Foundation, Integration, Implementation, Elevate, and Champion** –with **Champion** representing the highest level. This phased approach allows countries to systematically develop and strengthen their GPP programs, ensuring continuous progress toward comprehensive, sustainable procurement practices aligned with global standards.

- **Foundation Level:** This initial stage focuses on establishing the basic building blocks of GPP. Countries at this level develop initial policies, raise awareness among stakeholders, and identify core requirements for sustainable procurement. The emphasis is on creating essential legal and regulatory frameworks, defining institutional responsibilities, and initiating preliminary capacity-building activities to support future development.
- **Integration Level:** At this stage, sustainability considerations begin to be formally incorporated into procurement policies and processes. Guidelines, tools, and standards for GPP are developed and disseminated. Institutional roles are clarified, and initial mechanisms for incorporating environmental and social criteria into procurement practices are put in place. Collaboration with key stakeholders, including suppliers and procurement officials, is initiated to foster early engagement and understanding of GPP objectives.
- **Implementation Level:** This phase marks the active application of GPP practices. Procurement officials are trained to consistently apply sustainability criteria in tendering processes. Pilot projects or initial procurement initiatives are launched to demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of GPP. Monitoring and evaluation systems are introduced to track performance and outcomes, ensuring that GPP practices are effectively implemented and refined based on feedback.
- **Elevate Level:** At this advanced stage, countries expand GPP adoption across multiple sectors and government levels. Policies are enhanced based on lessons learned from earlier implementation phases. Best practices are identified and shared to encourage widespread adoption. Tools such as life-cycle costing (LCC) and digital procurement systems are integrated to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Market engagement efforts are strengthened, particularly focusing on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to ensure a robust supply of sustainable products and services.
- **Champion Level:** This represents the highest level of GPP maturity. At this stage, GPP is fully embedded in all procurement policies and practices. Countries demonstrate leadership by setting ambitious sustainability targets, adopting innovative procurement solutions, and influencing regional and international sustainability agendas. Comprehensive monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems are in place to measure impacts, ensure transparency, and drive accountability. Countries at this level are recognized for their commitment to sustainability, resilience, and continuous innovation in public procurement.

By systematically working through each of these pillars, AMSs can effectively assess their current GPP maturity levels, identify existing strengths, address specific gaps, and develop tailored strategies to embed sustainability into their procurement processes. This comprehensive approach ensures that each pillar is addressed holistically, recognizing that success in GPP requires balanced progress across all areas. Furthermore, the tool's incremental structure allows countries with varying procurement capacities to participate meaningfully and advance toward GPP maturity at their own pace. This method promotes

a sustainable, inclusive, and practical transition, enabling AMSs to meet the goals outlined in regional strategic documents and strengthen their collective commitment to sustainability, market transformation, and economic resilience.

The tool also enables Member States to align their national strategies with the five thematic areas identified in the three strategic documents, namely, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025, the ASEAN Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Framework, and the Framework for Circular Economy for the ASEAN Economic Community driving collective regional progress. Moreover, the flexibility of the tool ensures its applicability across diverse socio-economic and regulatory contexts within the ASEAN region.



**Fig 5: GPP Framework for Operationalization of Strategic Goals**

GPP can achieve its full potential only when a country addresses issues concerning all seven pillars simultaneously and in harmony. This underscores the importance of a balanced and coordinated approach where each pillar is given adequate attention and resources to function effectively. Countries cannot rely solely on policy development or professionalization/capacity building while neglecting market readiness or performance monitoring. Each component must be developed and maintained in sync to create a procurement system that drives economic resilience, environmental sustainability, and inclusive growth.

This integrated approach ensures that GPP is not implemented in a fragmented manner, but rather as a cohesive strategy that addresses the multifaceted challenges of sustainable procurement. By adopting the ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool, ASEAN countries gain a structured, pragmatic tool to drive the transformation of their procurement systems. This approach supports not only national sustainability ambitions but also the region's aspiration to lead globally in sustainable procurement practices. Through this model, ASEAN can chart a clear, inclusive, and scalable path toward achieving GPP maturity while ensuring alignment with global sustainability targets and regional economic priorities.

# 6. Recommendations for Operationalization of GPP Under Regional Strategic Frameworks

## 6.1 Scale, Scope & Impact Strategy for a Deeper Market Transformation

The leading ASEAN Member States like Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand have primarily adopted a traditional approach to GPP implementation, drawing from the European Union and Japan's experiences. This method places significant emphasis on a set of product categories linked to national ecolabels such as Ramah Lingkungan Label (Indonesia), MyHIJAU Mark (Malaysia), Green Choice Philippines (Philippines), and Thailand Green label (Thailand). A key feature of this approach is the reliance on the availability of ecolabel products and services, with contracting authorities typically advised to use ecolabel criteria as technical specifications. This has resulted in a narrow focus on GPP, with targets set as a percentage of procurement for only those products and services that have established ecolabels. For example, Malaysia set the target of 20% of government procurement to be green procurement by the year 2020 for selected groups of products and services for which MyHIJAU Mark existed. The approach was primarily focused on increasing demand for products and services that complied with ecolabel criteria, with procurement seen merely as a tool to promote environmentally friendly goods and services with ecolabel.

The success of the GPP program became heavily dependent on the progress of the national ecolabel system. As a result, its effectiveness was tied to the availability and adoption of ecolabel-certified products and services for which contracting authority has no control. Without a robust and widely recognized ecolabel framework, the program struggled to expand its reach, limiting its ability to drive sustainable procurement across high impact sectors such as construction, mobility, energy and food system. Any delays or gaps in ecolabel development directly impacted the scope and effectiveness of GPP, failing in its role to drive broader market transformation. It's important to clarify that this is not a critique of the efficacy of ecolabels as a tool for promoting sustainable consumption and production, but rather a reflection on the design of the current GPP approach in the ASEAN countries.

By focusing solely on ecolabel compliance, the program failed to encourage industries to innovate or improve beyond the baseline, limiting advancements in environmental and social responsibility. Instead of challenging industries to exceed current practices, the focus was confined to meeting existing ecolabel criteria. This narrow perspective missed the opportunity to leverage the public sector's purchasing power as a force for market transformation, limiting the transformative potential of GPP.

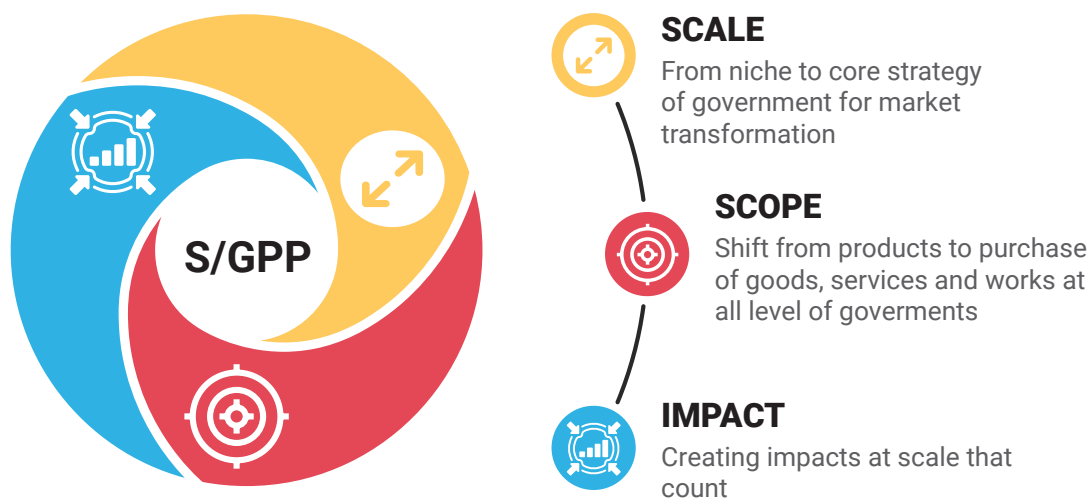
Consequently, GPP progress in AMSs has remained tied to the development of national ecolabels, even though procurement regulations do not limit the inclusion of broader sustainability criteria. This ecolabel-centric focus confined GPP efforts to a narrow subset of products and services, leaving high-impact sectors like construction and transport largely untouched. Despite some AMSs having established GPP frameworks, they have yet to create the large-scale sustainability impact needed to attract political attention and elevate the visibility of their GPP programs.

While this approach may have been a pragmatic starting point, acknowledging that public procurers initially lacked the knowledge and skills to fully integrate sustainability across all stages of procurement, it is now outdated. The global focus has shifted towards targeting high-impact categories like construction and infrastructure to harness the full potential of public procurement for sustainability. Recent experiences in developed countries demonstrate that, by equipping public procurers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools, it is possible to apply GPP across the entire spectrum of procurement spend, maximizing sustainability outcomes across products, works, and services.

Therefore, AMSs must take a decisive step forward by broadening the **Scale, Scope, and Impact** of their GPP programs. This is critical for contributing meaningfully to the strategic goals set in the various ASEAN frameworks and driving significant sustainability outcomes across the region. Expanding GPP in this way will enable a more comprehensive and strategic approach to market transformation in the ASEAN region.

Broadening the Scale of the GPP programme means shifting from treating GPP as a niche, supplementary policy to establishing it as a core government strategy for driving investment toward sectors and industries that foster sustainable and inclusive growth. By embedding GPP into the heart of government policy, procurement systems can incentivize and reward market players who prioritize sustainability while gradually phasing out those who fail to address environmental and social concerns in their production and supply chains. This transition would position GPP as an integral part of a country’s broader development strategy, linking it closely with climate change commitments, SDG targets, and national growth agendas.

Expanding the Scope involves moving beyond a narrow focus on a few product and service categories to targeting procurement categories that carry the highest sustainability risks and expenditure. This shift naturally means placing greater emphasis on works procurement, in addition to products and services, ensuring that GPP encompasses sectors with the most significant potential for sustainable impact. Furthermore, expanding the scope means extending GPP efforts beyond national-level procurement to include procurement activities at provincial and municipal levels, ensuring that sustainable practices permeate all layers of government spending.



**Fig 6: Scale, Scope & Impact Strategy for a Deeper Market Transformation**

Enhancing the Impact of the GPP programme requires linking it with various sectoral policies, such as innovation, climate change, and social inclusion, to make a meaningful contribution toward national development goals. GPP must be recognized as a fundamental government strategy, regularly reviewed by political leaders to set future priorities, with results and progress widely communicated through public channels to build awareness and support. The adoption of this Scale, Scope, and Impact (SSI) approach by AMSs is pivotal for accelerating GPP programs, driving market transformation, and transitioning towards a greener, circular, and low-carbon economy in the ASEAN region.

## 6.2 ASEAN-wide initiatives and cooperation on GPP

By systematically working through each pillars in the ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool, member states can enhance the Scale, Scope, and Impact of GPP programs at the national level to maximize sustainability benefits. However, recognizing the varying levels of GPP maturity among countries, these actions need to be complemented by offering strategic guidance, leveraging of strengths within the region, and reducing implementation costs through collaborative efforts by ASEAN at the supranational level. The proposed set of actions are informed by insights gathered from the responses against questionnaire, refined through discussions with high-ranking delegates from ASEAN countries, and validated during the ASEAN+3 SCP Leadership Programme held in Vientiane on November 4-6, 2024 and Manila on March 9-11, 2026.

These recommendations outline a whole of the region approach to mainstreaming GPP, effectively addressing both shared challenges and emerging opportunities. This coordinated strategy ensures that countries can collectively advance GPP practices, enhance market readiness, and position themselves as leaders in sustainable procurement.

### **i. Establish ASEAN GPP Working Group**

ASEAN GPP Working Group would serve as a centralized entity to lead and coordinate the integration of GPP across ASEAN Member States. Its primary mandate would be to align GPP with regional priorities such as the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025, ASEAN SCP Framework, ASEAN CE Framework, climate action, and inclusive growth, positioning sustainable procurement as a pivotal element of ASEAN's development agenda. The Working Group would provide strategic guidance, develop standardized tools, and foster collaboration among member states to complement GPP efforts by AMSs. This approach would ensure that GPP becomes an integral component of economic planning, enabling consistent progress across the region. By addressing common challenges, such as capacity gaps and market readiness, the Working Group would empower AMSs to effectively embed GPP within their national frameworks, fostering cohesion and synergy in the region's pursuit of sustainability.

### **ii. Develop a Regional Corpus Green Procurement Fund**

ASEAN, in collaboration with development partners, can develop a regional corpus of fund similar to ASEAN Catalytic Green Finance Facility (ACGF)<sup>35</sup> for undertaking GPP projects. This corpus of fund, inspired by European structural and investment funds (ESIF), would address the upfront financial barriers that hinder GPP implementation, particularly in less economically developed ASEAN Member States. This fund would provide grants or low-interest loans to support critical projects, such as upgrading procurement systems, developing green markets, training procurement professionals and bridging the initial cost difference between sustainable and non-sustainable solutions. By offering targeted financial support, the fund would enable member states to overcome capex constraints and scale their GPP initiatives.

This fund can also be potentially used for joint market development of innovative greener solutions by AMSs through framework contracts, achieving greater coherence between spending across different countries, exploiting monopsony power, producing economies of scale, reducing downward competition between public authorities, and improving the single market within ASEAN. These contracts allow for joint setting of the main elements of the contract (the frame) under which many different purchase contracts can be agreed over time, saving time and costs for development of market for greener products and services.

### **iii. Establish a Regional Green SMEs Finance Platform**

A Regional Green SMEs Finance Platform would serve as a transformative initiative to empower SMEs in ASEAN to access diverse existing/potential funding opportunities from regional and global sources, such as the Green Climate Fund and international financial institutions. By addressing the financial barriers that often prevent SMEs from investing in sustainable manufacturing practices, the platform would provide tailored financial solutions, including concessional loans, grants, and green bonds to meet their investment needs. These resources would enable SMEs to invest in technology upgrades, improve operational efficiency, and adopt sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, circular economy principles, and low-carbon technologies. In addition to financing, the platform would offer comprehensive training programs to help SMEs navigate nuances of green procurement, prepare technical bids, and utilize its size and agility to offer a competitive solution, enabling them to participate and win public contracts. Specialized capacity-building initiatives would further support SMEs in upgrading their manufacturing processes to meet GPP requirements, ensuring their integration into sustainable supply chains.

Beyond supporting participation in GPP, the platform would play a critical role in enhancing SMEs' competitiveness in the global market. By aligning their production practices with internationally recognized sustainability standards, SMEs would meet the growing demand for eco-friendly and socially responsible products in global markets, particularly in regions with strict environmental and social compliance requirements. This alignment would provide ASEAN SMEs with a competitive edge, opening doors to international trade opportunities and global value chains. Over time, the platform would not only strengthen regional markets by fostering innovation and creating demand for green solutions but also position ASEAN as a hub for sustainable economic growth. By addressing both financial and technical barriers, the platform would empower SMEs to become key players in the global green economy, contributing to ASEAN's overarching goals of inclusive growth, market transformation, and sustainable development.

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35 Available at <https://www.adb.org/what-we-do/funds/asean-catalytic-green-finance-facility/overview> Accessed on 29.01.2025

#### iv. Harmonize Standards and Ecolabels

The harmonization of **standards** is critical for advancing GPP and regional market integration within ASEAN. Standards define technical specifications, performance benchmarks, safety requirements, and sustainability criteria that underpin procurement processes. When standards differ significantly across ASEAN Member States, it becomes challenging for suppliers, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to comply with varying requirements in each market. This fragmentation increases transaction costs, slows trade, and hampers the scalability of sustainable solutions across borders. Harmonizing standards not only promotes interoperability and reduces duplication but also supports the development of unified supply chains and strengthens quality assurance mechanisms across the region.

ASEAN has already recognized the importance of this issue and developed guidelines to support the harmonization of standards<sup>36</sup>. The Guidelines has been developed in response to Article 19 of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint calling member to harmonize standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures through their alignment with international practices. It provides detailed information on the process for harmonisation of standards, including the role of responsible parties for different activities.

In contrast to quality and performance standards, eco-labels are essential tools for identifying products and services that meet specific environmental or sustainability criteria. Contracting authorities can use ecolabel for designing tender specification and verifying compliance of products and services against the tendered specification. Globally, they have been the backbone of GPP programme and are widely used as an effective tool for GPP implementation. However, challenges arise when countries operate with independent eco-labelling schemes, complicating cross-border procurement. The non-uniformity in criteria, verification process and certification process poses significant challenges for businesses, particularly SMEs, which face increased costs and administrative burdens when attempting to sell eco-labelled products in multiple markets. The Global Ecolabelling Network (GEN) advocates for Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) to address these issues, fostering trust in environmental claims and reducing the need for duplicate certifications. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025 has also flagged harmonisation of standards and ecolabels and Mutual Recognition Agreement among them as priority for reducing trade barriers and creating single competitive market.

Harmonizing eco-labels can facilitate cross-border trade by lowering compliance costs and simplifying procurement for SMEs, enabling them to participate more easily in public tenders across different countries. Additionally, it supports regional economic integration by fostering unified supply chains for sustainable products and enhancing economic competitiveness. This approach encourages resource-sharing initiatives, such as centralized databases of eco-labelled products and collaborative capacity-building programs, improving efficiency and effectiveness.

Moreover, harmonized eco-label criteria can promote innovation and market transformation by encouraging manufacturers to develop sustainable products that meet regional standards. This drives the growth of local industries, creates green jobs, and supports sustainable economic development.

#### v. Establish ASEAN GPP Learning Platform

The purpose of the Platform is to establish a regional capacity-building programme, communities of practice, and exchanges that build on existing ASEAN mechanisms, including activities already foreseen under the ASEAN SCP Framework. An existing academic/professional institution with appropriate infrastructure in any ASEAN countries can be nominated to host the Platform. This platform would serve as a comprehensive hub for GPP resources, offering case studies, toolkits, training materials, and best practices to ASEAN Member States. By facilitating knowledge exchange and fostering innovation, the Platform would help countries learn from one another while reducing duplication of efforts. This initiative would really help those countries, which are facing resistance in shifting GPP from a niche policy to a core government strategy, learn from their peer having strong GPP framework on how to achieve this shift at both political and administrative levels. Collaborating with national institutions, the Platform would develop competency models and certification frameworks to enable procurement professionals to identify and address skills and knowledge gaps in

36 Available at <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/ASEAN-Guidelines-for-Harmonisation-of-Standards-2022-Version.pdf>

integrating sustainability into procurement processes. Additionally, it would provide seamless access to world-class technical resources, ensuring consistent and high-quality capacity-building opportunities for procurement officials and stakeholders across the region.

The Platform can additionally act as a nodal agency for creating practical tools and support mechanisms, such as guidelines, manuals, standardized templates, and help desks, alongside advisory services tailored to contracting agencies. Practical training initiatives, including on-the-job programs and expert mentoring, would further enhance procurement officials' capabilities. To advance professionalism in public procurement, the academy could implement non-financial incentives, such as certification systems, performance management frameworks, professional recognition awards, and networking opportunities, establishing a culture of excellence and innovation in sustainable procurement practices. By promoting collaboration and harmonizing capacity-building efforts, the academy would accelerate the adoption of GPP across ASEAN, driving impactful and coordinated progress toward sustainability.

Expanding its role, the Platform could mainstream procurement education into the tertiary system by collaborating with universities to develop bachelor's and master's degree programs focused on sustainable procurement. These curricula, designed in partnership with national public procurement training institutions, could be delivered through a regional network of academic institutions, preparing future procurement leaders with specialized expertise. Furthermore, the Platform could support AMSs in professionalizing procurement as a strategic career by advising on the creation of service schemes for procurement officers, establishing clear career pathways, and elevating the role of procurement in advancing national and regional sustainability objectives. Member States may choose to optimize training delivery costs either by utilizing the ASEAN GPP Learning Platform exclusively or by leveraging a hybrid approach that combines the Platform with existing national training institutions. Through these initiatives, the Platform would not only transform GPP practices but also position ASEAN as a global leader in sustainable procurement.

#### vi. Promote Regional Collaboration on Priority Sectors

Targeting high-impact sectors such as construction, energy, transport, and food systems provides a strategic pathway for ASEAN to maximize the environmental and social benefits of GPP. By focusing on these areas, GPP can address key sustainability risks while driving economic innovation and fostering regional resilience.

Regional collaboration offers a unique opportunity to amplify the impact of GPP in these sectors. For instance, ASEAN could develop harmonised standards and label (like EU Flower) for construction materials like low-carbon cement and recycled steel, facilitating their adoption across member states. Joint procurement initiatives for renewable energy technologies, such as solar panels and energy-efficient systems, could lower costs and accelerate the region's transition to clean energy. In transport, coordinated efforts to promote electric vehicles (EVs) and sustainable public transit systems would mitigate urbanization challenges and reduce emissions. Similarly, in food systems, regional policies to procure organic or low-impact agricultural products would support sustainable farming practices, enhance food security, and strengthen local economies.

By prioritizing these high-impact sectors and fostering collaboration, ASEAN can address shared challenges collectively, achieving significant sustainability outcomes while stimulating innovation and sustainable growth. This approach would position ASEAN as a global leader in green economic development, demonstrating the region's commitment to a low-carbon, circular, and inclusive future.

#### vii. ASEAN Network of Public Procurement (ANPP)

Establishing a regional public procurement network within ASEAN, modeled on successful initiatives like the **African Public Procurement Network (APPN)**, the **Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (INGP)**, and **Procura+**, could significantly accelerate the mainstreaming of GPP across the region. Such networks have demonstrated the transformative potential of regional cooperation, knowledge sharing, and capacity building in advancing sustainable/green procurement practices, and an ASEAN-focused initiative could serve as a critical catalyst for achieving the region's sustainability goals.

Drawing inspiration from APPN, INGP, and Procura+, an ASEAN Public Procurement Network would provide the institutional framework needed to mainstream GPP across the region. By promoting collaboration, harmonization, and capacity building, the network would enable ASEAN to harness the transformative power of public procurement to achieve sustainable economic growth, resource efficiency, and long-term environmental resilience. Such an initiative would not only strengthen regional cooperation but also position ASEAN as a leader in sustainable procurement on the global stage.

ANPP can also consider introducing a Green Procurement Award that would recognize and reward countries, contracting authorities and individual procurement professionals for demonstrating significant progress in GPP implementation. Coupled with financial incentives, such as access to additional development grants, the awards would encourage member states to scale and enhance their GPP programs. By highlighting achievements and celebrating innovation, this initiative would foster a culture of excellence in sustainable procurement. It would also motivate countries to adopt ambitious GPP targets and implement best practices, accelerating regional progress toward sustainability goals.

#### **viii. Standardize GPP Evaluation Metrics & Monitoring**

A harmonized framework for evaluating GPP impacts, embedded within the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint, would institutionalize sustainability as a core element of ASEAN's economic and development strategy. This unified framework would standardize indicators and methodologies, enabling member states to consistently measure GPP's environmental, social, and economic contributions. Metrics such as carbon emission reductions, resource efficiency, local economy development and improved labor practices would provide clear and actionable insights into the tangible benefits of sustainable procurement initiatives.

Integrating these standardized GPP indicators into the AEC Blueprint would formalize GPP's role as a critical driver of regional sustainability, aligning it with broader ASEAN priorities such as inclusive growth, circular economy, and climate action. Regular reporting under this system would foster transparency, accountability, and comparability, allowing member states to benchmark progress, share best practices, and identify areas for improvement. This alignment would simplify data collection and support evidence-based policymaking, strengthening the collective impact of GPP initiatives across the region.

Such a coordinated approach would enhance ASEAN's global leadership in sustainable procurement, attracting international partnerships, green investments, and technical support. By embedding GPP into its economic planning framework, ASEAN can demonstrate its commitment to transitioning toward a low-carbon, circular economy while ensuring inclusive development for all member states. This initiative would not only advance regional sustainability goals but also position ASEAN as a benchmark for integrating sustainability into public procurement at a global scale.

#### **ix. Launch a Regional GPP Index for Progress Benchmarking**

A Regional GPP Index would serve as a robust benchmarking tool to measure and compare the progress of GPP implementation across AMSs. By fostering transparency and accountability, the index would provide a clear picture of regional advancements in key areas such as policy development, market readiness, sustainability impacts, and the professionalization of procurement functions to achieve strategic objectives. Utilizing standardized indicators, the index would enable AMSs to systematically track their efforts, identify gaps, and prioritize actions for improvement.

The index would also promote healthy competition among member states by showcasing best practices and success stories, fostering a culture of excellence while encouraging knowledge exchange. Its visibility would motivate AMSs to intensify their GPP initiatives and align national efforts with broader regional goals. For policymakers and stakeholders, the index would offer valuable, data-driven insights to inform decision-making and drive targeted interventions.

Moreover, the Regional GPP Index would support AMSs in laying the groundwork for and reporting on the SDG 12.7.1 indicator, demonstrating their progress toward sustainable procurement commitments. By providing a unified framework for assessing GPP, the index would help harmonize efforts across the region, ensuring ASEAN's collective progress toward a low-carbon, circular economy and strengthening its role as a global leader in sustainable public procurement.

## x. Establish an ASEAN Market Engagement Platform for GPP

To elevate GPP in Asian countries, ASEAN should lead the creation of a Regional Market Engagement Platform. This platform would serve as a bridge between public procurement authorities, existing business platforms, and the private sector, fostering dialogue, collaboration, and innovation to meet the growing demand for sustainable goods and services. The platform could include mechanisms such as supplier development programs, innovation partnerships, and sustainability workshops to enhance the capacity of businesses, especially SMEs to meet GPP criteria.

The platform would enable governments to share procurement forecasts and sustainability requirements with suppliers, ensuring greater market readiness and alignment with GPP priorities. It could also facilitate regional ecolabel recognition, harmonizing sustainability standards across member states to simplify compliance for businesses operating in multiple ASEAN markets. By enhancing transparency and fostering trust between buyers and suppliers, this initiative would stimulate innovation, drive market transformation, and position ASEAN as a leader in sustainable procurement. Through targeted market engagement, ASEAN can accelerate the adoption of GPP, support SMEs, and ensure the availability of sustainable products and services at scale across the region.

### 6.3 ASEAN GPP Rollout Roadmap

Though the above recommendations have been developed following a multistakeholder consultation process, it would be good for ASEAN to have structured consultations with countries to ensure that proposed actions align with national priorities, institutional capacities and market conditions. These consultations will build consensus, secure political commitment, and strengthen regional cooperation, ensuring that the operationalization of GPP is inclusive, responsive, and tailored to the strategic priorities of the region.

The following **short (0-2 Years), medium (3-5 Years), and long-term (>5 Years) Roadmap** outlines strategic steps for the operationalization of GPP recommendations in ASEAN. This structured approach aims to ensure a comprehensive and phased implementation that addresses immediate needs, builds capacity, and establishes a sustainable foundation for long-term success.

Actions/Activities	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	>5 Years
<b>1. Establish ASEAN GPP Working Group</b>			
Develop the Working Group Structure and Governance Framework	■		
Conduct a Baseline Assessment of GPP in AMSs	■		
Facilitate Regional Capacity-Building Initiatives		■	
Develop and Implement Harmonised GPP Guidelines		■	
Promote Strategic Partnerships and Global Collaboration			■
Make GPP as a key strategic instrument for long term progress			■
<b>2. Develop a Regional Corpus Green Procurement (RGP) Fund</b>			
Establish a charter for creation, operation and governance of RGP Fund	■		
Conduct a Feasibility Study and Needs Assessment	■		
Launch Pilot Funding Programmes for GPP Initiatives		■	
Firm up modalities for supporting MSMEs, Start-ups & Social Entrepreneurs		■	
Scale Up the Fund and Expand Coverage			■

Actions/Activities	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	>5 Years
Establish a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting System			
<b>3. Establish a Regional Green SMEs Finance Platform</b>			
Develop a Centralised Green Finance Portal			
Create Green Financing Guidelines			
Launch Green Innovation Grants			
Facilitate Peer-Learning Networks			
Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)			
Integrate Green Finance into Policy Frameworks			
<b>4. Harmonisation of Standards and Ecolabels</b>			
Conduct a Comparative Analysis of Existing Standards and Ecolabels			
Establish a Regional Working Group on Ecolabel Harmonisation			
Develop Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) for Ecolabels			
Create Regional Guidelines for Harmonised Ecolabel Criteria			
Establish a Centralised ASEAN Ecolabelling Database			
Align ASEAN Ecolabels with International Standards			
<b>5. Establish ASEAN GPP Learning Platform</b>			
Develop the Platform's Framework and curriculum			
Launch Introductory GPP Training Programmes			
Develop Certificate and Advanced Training Programmes			
Create an E-Learning Platform and Digital Resources			
Establish Regional Centres of Excellence			
Develop Partnerships with Global Institutions			
<b>6. Promote Regional Collaboration on Priority Sectors</b>			
Identify and Prioritise Key Sectors for Collaboration			
Organise Regional Workshops and Forums			
Develop Sector-Specific GPP Guidelines			
Launch Cross-Border Pilot Projects			
Establish Sectoral Centres of Excellence			
Create a Regional Policy Platform for Sectoral Collaboration			

Actions/Activities	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	>5 Years
<b>7. ASEAN Network of Public Procurement (ANPP)</b>			
Establish the Network Framework and Governance Structure	■		
Launch Initial Knowledge-Sharing Platforms	■		
Conduct Regional Training and Capacity-Building Programmes		■	
Develop Standardised GPP Implementation Guidelines		■	
Organise Annual ASEAN Public Procurement Conferences			■
Institute a Regional GPP Awards			■
<b>8. Standardise GPP Evaluation Metrics &amp; Monitoring</b>			
Develop a Unified Set of GPP Evaluation Metrics	■		
Conduct Baseline Assessments Across Member States	■		
Implement a Centralised Digital Monitoring Platform		■	
Establish Regular Reporting and Review Cycles		■	
Develop a Regional Benchmarking and Certification System			■
Conduct Impact Assessments and Policy Reviews			■
<b>9. Launch a Regional GPP Index for Progress Benchmarking</b>			
Design the Framework for the Regional GPP Index	■		
Engage Stakeholders for Consensus and Feedback	■		
Pilot the GPP Index in Selected Countries		■	
Develop a Centralised Digital Platform for Data Collection and Reporting		■	
Expand the GPP Index to all AMSs			■
Publish Annual Regional GPP Benchmarking Reports			■
<b>10. Establish an ASEAN Market Engagement Platform for GPP</b>			
Develop the Platform Structure and Operational Framework	■		
Launch Initial Market Engagement Events	■		
Create a Digital ASEAN Market Engagement Portal		■	
Facilitate Sector-Specific Engagement Programmes		■	
Establish an ASEAN Supplier Development Programme			■
Host Annual ASEAN GPP Trade Fairs and Innovation Expos			■

It is very likely that some of the proposed activities for strengthening GPP already exist in some form within ASEAN Member States (AMSs) or are in various stages such as ideation, pilot implementation, or discussion. In these cases, the most effective course of action would be to avoid unnecessary duplication and instead focus on strengthening, scaling up, and building synergies with these ongoing initiatives.

By leveraging existing programs, resources, and networks, ASEAN can maximize efficiency, reduce costs, and ensure that efforts remain coordinated and aligned with regional goals. Collaboration between AMSs and relevant stakeholders, including international organizations, private sector actors, and academic institutions, can help align these initiatives more closely with broader strategic goals. By taking this integrated approach, ASEAN can ensure that GPP activities are comprehensive, non-redundant, and strategically focused on achieving long-term sustainability, innovation, and economic resilience in the region.

## **6.4 Roadmap for Elevating GPP in the ASEAN Member States**

Section 6.2 discussed a comprehensive, whole-of-region approach for ASEAN to mainstream GPP, aiming to address both regional challenges and opportunities. This approach emphasizes the need for collaborative efforts among AMSs to drive sustainability, innovation, and equitable development through GPP. Such a cohesive strategy ensures that each member country benefits from shared knowledge, resources, and best practices, leading to a more efficient and impactful GPP implementation process. Building on this framework, Section 6.3 identified 60 activities under 10 strategic initiatives designed to support AMSs in mainstreaming GPP. These activities aim to provide the necessary tools, resources, and guidance to strengthen GPP programmes, address existing gaps, and overcome implementation challenges. This coordinated effort positions GPP as a driver for long-term environmental and social benefits, aligning ASEAN's procurement practices with global sustainability objectives and international best practices.

The ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool, discussed in Section 5.3, offers a practical tool for AMSs to enhance the Scale, Scope, and Impact of their GPP programs to maximize sustainability benefits. AMSs can leverage this tool to conduct a systematic self-assessment of their GPP maturity levels across key pillars essential for expanding the reach and effectiveness of their GPP initiatives. This evaluation helps AMSs identify strengths, pinpoint gaps, and implement targeted actions to advance GPP maturity. By addressing these gaps, AMSs can strategically enhance their capacity and capability, ensuring they are well-positioned to lead in GPP implementation and achieve meaningful sustainability outcomes. The tool empowers member states to adopt a structured and progressive approach to GPP, thereby expanding the Scale (increasing adoption across high-impact sectors), the Scope (including all levels of government), and the Impact (delivering measurable environmental, economic, and social benefits). This comprehensive approach supports AMSs in delivering economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and inclusive growth, aligning procurement strategies with the broader sustainability goals outlined in ASEAN's strategic frameworks.

Given the varying levels of GPP maturity across AMSs, this paper does not propose a standardized roadmap for GPP operationalization at the country level. Instead, AMSs are encouraged to develop tailored national roadmaps and action plans that reflect their unique contexts, capabilities, and policy environments. These national plans should incorporate relevant activities outlined in the ASEAN GPP Rollout Roadmap (Section 6.3). This ensures alignment with regional strategies and fosters a coordinated and cohesive approach to advancing GPP.

By customizing their roadmaps, AMSs can address country-specific challenges and opportunities within their procurement systems while leveraging regional support structures and initiatives. This approach allows member countries to benefit from shared resources, harmonized standards, and best practices facilitated by ASEAN, while simultaneously achieving their national sustainability goals. Ensuring synergy between national and regional measures promotes greater policy coherence, efficiency, and mutual reinforcement of GPP initiatives. This coordinated effort accelerates the adoption of sustainable procurement practices, strengthens regional economic integration, and drives collective progress toward ASEAN's broader sustainability and development objectives.

# Appendix A. ASEAN GPP Maturity Self-Assessment Tool

Level 1: Foundation	Level 2: Integration	Level 3: Implementation	Level 4: Elevate	Level 5: Champion
<b>Policy Integration and Legislative Framework</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop initial GPP policy</li> <li>• Identify legal gaps in procurement law</li> <li>• Raise awareness among stakeholders,</li> <li>• GPP policy communicated to key procurement staff.</li> <li>• Set preliminary objectives of GPP policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and amend procurement legislation</li> <li>• Sustainability recognized as a core procurement principle.</li> <li>• Align policy with national and regional goals</li> <li>• Align procurement policies with national development priorities and objectives.</li> <li>• Develop secondary regulations mandating the procurement of sustainable alternatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand GPP policy into a strategic tool for addressing sustainability risks in key sectors</li> <li>• Focus on high spend and high impact sectors like construction, transportation &amp; industry, etc.</li> <li>• Develop template and tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend GPP implementation to all levels of government</li> <li>• Integrate LCC methodology</li> <li>• Review mechanism for SPP progress</li> <li>• GPP policy updated for climate, circular economy, and biodiversity.</li> <li>• Focus on simplification of regulations for facilitating sustainability integration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enact comprehensive GPP legislation</li> <li>• Regular review of GPP progress by political leaders.</li> <li>• Set ambitious targets</li> <li>• Integration of GPP into NDCs to achieve climate targets.</li> <li>• Periodic comprehensive reviews to set future priorities.</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional Framework for SPP</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate a Lead agency</li> <li>• Form a Working Group on GPP</li> <li>• Conduct initial capacity assessment</li> <li>• Develop a basis GPP implementation plan with role and responsibility</li> <li>• Prioritize products and services based on average spend analysis data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an Inter-ministerial GPP Coordination Committee</li> <li>• Develop Institutional Policies and Guidelines</li> <li>• Allocate dedicated GPP Resources</li> <li>• Develop Guidelines and Standards</li> <li>• Conduct detailed spend analysis to identify key sustainability impacts</li> <li>• Contract is awarded on the basis of value for money, not the lowest price</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operationalize Interministerial committee</li> <li>• Create toolkits, templates, and digital resources for integrating sustainability</li> <li>• All procurement above certain threshold is assessed for sustainability risks</li> <li>• All stages of procurement cycle are used for managing sustainability risks</li> <li>• e-GP system is upgraded to facilitate streamlined implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance e-GP platform to report progress of GPP against indicators</li> <li>• National standards identified and reviewed from sustainability point of view</li> <li>• A life cycle approach is applied for high risks infrastructure projects</li> <li>• Align Institutional Policies with National Goals</li> <li>• GPP Help Desk is established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandate GPP Across All Institutions</li> <li>• Implement Robust Accountability Systems</li> <li>• Sustainability KPI is agreed with suppliers</li> <li>• Evaluate and Continuously Improve</li> </ul>

Level 1: Foundation	Level 2: Integration	Level 3: Implementation	Level 4: Elevate	Level 5: Champion
<b>Professionalisation</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct Baseline Skill Assessments on GPP</li> <li>• Identify Key Competencies</li> <li>• Basic Training on GPP Principles to key procurement staff</li> <li>• Establish a Procurement Professional Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Training on GPP Principles to all procurement staff and stakeholders</li> <li>• Introduce certification program on GPP</li> <li>• Ensure GPP principles are incorporated into standard procurement guidelines and manuals</li> <li>• Establish a Procurement Professional Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement mandatory and ongoing GPP training</li> <li>• Develop Practical Tools and Templates</li> <li>• Introduce Mentorship Programs</li> <li>• Host GPP Workshops and Conferences</li> <li>• Practical tools delivered to public procurers</li> <li>• Incorporate GPP in Performance Evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Advanced GPP Certification programme</li> <li>• Develop Continuous Learning Initiatives</li> <li>• Implement rewards and recognition programs</li> <li>• GPP included in competency and selection criteria</li> <li>• Strong incentive in place for innovative works</li> <li>• Opportunity for networking with professionals provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalize Procurement Professional Bodies</li> <li>• Mandate Advanced Training for Senior Officials</li> <li>• Publish achievement to attract talents</li> <li>• Benchmark people performance</li> <li>• Promote international exchange programs</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of global procurement standards</li> </ul>
<b>Harmonisation of Standards and Ecolabels</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct Baseline Assessment</li> <li>• Identify Key Product Categories for achieving Climate &amp; Sustainability Goals</li> <li>• Designate a nodal agency for coordination</li> <li>• Develop a Preliminary Ecolabel Database</li> <li>• Raise awareness on voluntary standards and ecolabels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align Ecolabel Criteria</li> <li>• Develop Guidelines for the use of Ecolabel by procurers</li> <li>• Participate in regional dialogue to discuss harmonisation strategy</li> <li>• Pilot Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)</li> <li>• Nationals Standards for critical products are upgraded for top 50 products</li> <li>• Review ecolabels to be aligned with regional harmonisation goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a centralized, digital registry of approved ecolabels and standards for procurers</li> <li>• Implement Mutual Recognition Agreements</li> <li>• Develop consistent verification and auditing procedures</li> <li>• Adopt Harmonised Ecolabels in Procurement</li> <li>• Nationals Standards for critical products are upgraded for all identified products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Ecolabel Coverage</li> <li>• Develop Sector-Specific Standards</li> <li>• MRA for ecolabel signed with neighbouring countries</li> <li>• Facilitate cross-border procurement using harmonised ecolabels</li> <li>• Guidelines for use of private voluntary sustainability standards and ecolabel is issued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonization of ecolabel criteria is agreed and completed</li> <li>• Develop and promote a unified ASEAN ecolabel</li> <li>• Make the use of harmonised ecolabels mandatory</li> <li>• Publicly share case studies and success stories of harmonised GPP practices</li> </ul>

Level 1: Foundation	Level 2: Integration	Level 3: Implementation	Level 4: Elevate	Level 5: Champion
<b>GPP Linkage with PFM</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build awareness for finance manager &amp; stakeholders</li> <li>• Undertake initial assessment of PFM system</li> <li>• Initiate dialogue with key ministries</li> <li>• Integrate GPP principles into public procurement laws, regulations and public finance policies</li> <li>• Align GPP with fiscal and sustainability goals within PFM systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update budget preparation guidelines to include sustainability criteria</li> <li>• Equip key personnel with skills to integrate GPP into PFM focussing on sustainability risks and LCC</li> <li>• Introduce Sustainability Criteria in Fund Allocation</li> <li>• Create templates for tracking expenditures on sustainable procurement</li> <li>• Establish cross -departmental committee to oversee GPP integration with PFM process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandate Sustainability Targets to budgetary allocation</li> <li>• Implement LCC methodologies in both budget estimation and expenditure cycles</li> <li>• Establish Monitoring Mechanisms</li> <li>• Integrate GPP into Financial Audits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalize Sustainability in Budget Cycles</li> <li>• Introduce financial incentives and awards for exceeding sustainability targets in procurement.</li> <li>• Integrate GPP tracking into digital PFM systems</li> <li>• Use digital platform to publish GPP expenditure and sustainability impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandate Comprehensive GPP-PFM Integration at all levels of governance</li> <li>• Set Ambitious Sustainability Targets</li> <li>• Develop indicators to evaluate GPP integration into PFM and measure sustainability outcomes</li> <li>• Use performance audit to assess GPP's impact on fiscal sustainability and environmental outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Market Readiness and Engagement</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct baseline Market Assessments</li> <li>• Engage with stakeholders</li> <li>• Identify Key Product Categories</li> <li>• Develop a preliminary database of responsible suppliers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create guidelines and toolkits to help suppliers understand sustainability criteria</li> <li>• Offer basic training to help SMEs improve their sustainability performance and meet GPP requirements</li> <li>• Establish a knowledge-sharing and capacity-building platform</li> <li>• General programme for engagement with suppliers initiated</li> <li>• Provide Clear Communication Channels on upcoming GPP opportunities and requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide hands-on support and technical assistance to SMEs adopt sustainable production methods</li> <li>• Organize Market Engagement Events</li> <li>• Facilitate access to green financing and incentives for green transformation</li> <li>• Map supply chain for key spend areas and identify sustainability risks</li> <li>• Ask top 100 suppliers to report sustainability performance on a voluntary basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer advanced training and capacity-building programs on innovation, CE practices and LCC</li> <li>• Promote Regional Supplier Networks</li> <li>• Support VSS &amp; Ecolabel Certification</li> <li>• Create Digital Marketplaces</li> <li>• Ask top 100 suppliers to report mandatorily on sustainability progress on supplier disclosure programme such as CDP, SBT initiative, etc.</li> <li>• Top 500 suppliers asked to report sustainability progress on a voluntary basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalize Green Supply Chains</li> <li>• Suppliers recognized as key to delivery of organizational procurement strategy</li> <li>• Benchmarking of suppliers on sustainability performance</li> <li>• Support suppliers in accessing international markets for sustainable products</li> <li>• Publicly recognize and promote successful case studies of supplier engagement and market readiness in GPP</li> </ul>

Level 1: Foundation	Level 2: Integration	Level 3: Implementation	Level 4: Elevate	Level 5: Champion
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness</li> <li>• Develop preliminary Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for tracking basic GPP outcomes</li> <li>• Conduct an initial assessment of GPP and identify data collection gaps.</li> <li>• Designate an agency to oversee M&amp;E activities</li> <li>• Ask Contracting authorities to report on voluntary basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a comprehensive M&amp;E framework</li> <li>• Align M&amp;E with National sustainability goals and international commitments</li> <li>• Pilot standardized tools and templates for collecting GPP data</li> <li>• Provide training for procurement officials on tools and templates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement consistent data collection and reporting by all contracting authorities</li> <li>• Develop digital performance dashboards</li> <li>• Establish feedback loops for continuous improvement</li> <li>• Release public reports detailing GPP achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement</li> <li>• KPIs refined for individual purchasers to measure how their efforts to buy sustainably contributes to organization's sustainability objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking with peer organization</li> <li>• Compare GPP performance against international benchmarks</li> <li>• Broaden M&amp;E activities to cover additional dimensions</li> <li>• Develop reward and recognition programs for agencies and suppliers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make M&amp;E a mandatory and integral part of all procurement processes</li> <li>• Produce detailed reports on the regional and global impacts of GPP initiatives</li> <li>• Independent audit of benefits of GPP is regularly undertaken and published</li> <li>• Use M&amp;E findings to drive innovation in GPP practices</li> <li>• Share GPP M&amp;E best practices and insights in ASEAN and global forums</li> </ul>



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