

Arup's decarbonisation journey in East Asia

Introduction

As a global sustainable development consultant, Arup is driven by a common purpose to shape a better world through our technical expertise and a commitment to environmental, social and governance priorities.

Arup has committed to achieving net zero emissions across our entire operations by 2030, covering everything from the energy used in offices to goods and services purchased. To achieve this our firm has set a target to reduce its scope 1, 2 and 3 global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 30 per cent by 2025 from a 2018 baseline.

Walking the talk

To meet our reduction target we have set up a comprehensive strategy, to engage all relevant stakeholders and develop meaningful initiatives to decarbonise. As a leading consultant in the built environment, we exert our influence through our project work to create positive impact and add value to clients through services which integrate sustainability into their business.

To meet our ambitious target no stone is left unturned, resulting in a wide and growing range of actions. Included are the investment in state-of-the-art digital infrastructure and systems to reduce the need to fly, changing our company fleet to electric and hybrid vehicles, ensuring that snacks and drinks served in the office come from local sources, use high efficiency printers, provision of adequate waste separation facilities and for example the plan to set carbon budgets for the different business units to further curb flight emissions. In addition, we are applying a carbon levy on all our flights, setting up the Arup Carbon Fund to offset our travel at market rates and investing in other efforts to decarbonise.

Influencing the sustainability agenda

Partnerships are incredibly important to the way we work and the influence we can have. We have been working with global organisations including the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development to innovate and accelerate new approaches and business models to help the world decarbonise.

An example is the 'Race to Zero – Uniting Asia to combat climate change' webinar series we hosted building up to COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021. Following Arup's commission as the sustainability consultant for the global summit, we organised this open-to-the-public series that enabled us to advocate sustainable development and climate action across Asia, demonstrate thought leadership, expertise and experience and bring together like-minded organisations.

Besides our strategic partners – British Consulate-General Hong Kong, Civic Exchange, ICE Hong Kong, WorldGBC and WWF, over 30 regional organisations, including BEC, contributed through co-hosting sessions, delivering speeches and enabling the reach to a wider audience. Our common agenda, shared passion and commitment for climate action made the event a great success, with 12 webinars held across five cities, including Hong Kong, with well over 2,000 webinar views.

Based on the wealth of knowledge, we continued with our key partners to produce a publicly available policy position paper titled *Combating climate change in Hong Kong and beyond*. This document offers stakeholders of the built environment insights on how to contribute to the outcomes of COP26, especially from an Asian perspective and seek for wider outcomes that benefit both the environment and society.

Centre of excellence for climate modelling

Mid 2022 we established a centre of excellence for climate modelling as part of our commitment to help corporates across Asia build climate resilience and answer the call from investors and policymakers. By bringing together veteran climate scientists and experts, this regional hub of expertise brings a new level of scientific understanding of climate change and thus increased confidence in resilience actions.

Helping businesses build resilience against climate change

Arup is also serving as the climate technical advisor to Asia's first climate-resilient business community – the Asian Corporate Coalition for Climate Change Resilience (A4CR), initiated by the World Green Organisation to bring together a line-up of global and regional experts, industry thought leaders as well as academia and professional institutions. By offering unparalleled scientific understanding and knowledge, ample connecting opportunities and a comprehensive benchmarking scheme, it will help businesses mainstream climate actions into corporate governance, strategies, operations and financing.

Engaging our staff

Our members are also a key stakeholder to drive transformational changes. We have been engaging our colleagues through internal activities to raise awareness, trigger behaviour changes and call for action. Recently we hosted the East Asia Carbon Action Campaign – a 3-week long event with various activities for all members in the region. We witnessed a tremendous effort from about 600 colleagues across our 15 offices completing over 1,500 actions, such as participating in workshops, changing behaviour through daily action cards, watching meaningful documentaries and deepening knowledge through various learning resources. Through interesting games we shared some valuable lessons and introduced simple steps to make a positive impact, both in their daily lives and many projects that we run.

Conclusion

While these are small steps in the grand scheme of climate change, it is highly encouraging to see how a large variety of stakeholders is willing to come together and share their insights and play their part.



Post COP26
 Combatting climate change in Hong Kong and beyond

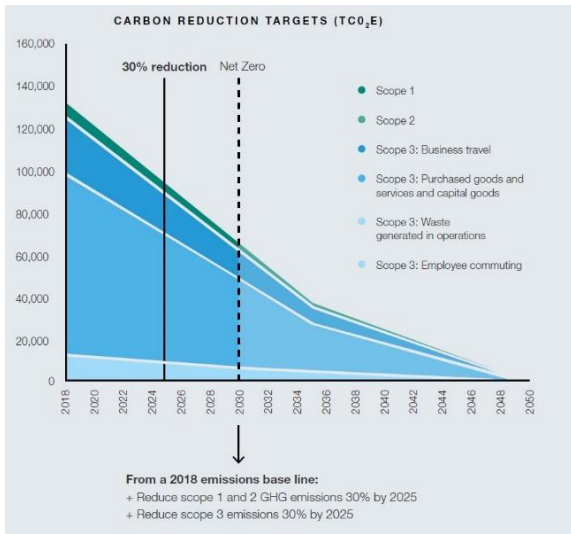


Figure 1 Arup's carbon reduction targets



Figure 2 Combatting Climate Change in Hong Kong and Beyond

CARBON ACTION CAMPAIGN ARUP		Carbon Footprint Workshop +500 raffles	Daily Carbon Action Cards +100 raffles
Commuting and Comfort Survey +300 raffles	Moodle Course +300 raffles	Reading Material +200 raffles	EA SDG Cinema +200 raffles
			LinkedIn like +100 raffles

Figure 3 Arup's carbon action campaign