

Advisory Opinion to Action: Advancing Human Rights and Climate Justice

February 10 to 11, 2026 | Bangkok, Thailand

Outcomes Document

Summary

The discussions in the Regional Symposium emphasized that the Advisory Opinion provides an important clarification of States' obligations under international law. Participants stressed that the Opinion creates a significant opportunity to translate international legal obligations and principles into concrete regional, national, and institutional reforms. This summary identifies a set of priority actions aimed at advancing the implementation of the AO across governance levels, from domestic legislation and regulatory frameworks to regional cooperation within ASEAN and broader international advocacy. This can provide a roadmap for targeted legal, health, policy, and capacity-building initiatives that can support the operationalization of the AO across the region.

Key Priority Actions for Implementation

I. Climate–Health Governance Integration

Climate change is increasingly recognized as a major determinant of human health, affecting food security, water systems, infectious diseases, health equity and health systems' functioning. The Symposium highlighted the need to embed climate considerations into public health law and governance frameworks. Priority actions include:

- Supporting the integration of climate obligations into public health legislation and planning frameworks.
- Establishing a regional climate, health and human rights observatory to monitor climate-related health harms and legal responses.
- Supporting policy engagement ahead of discussions within the World Health Assembly on a potential climate–health treaty framework.

II. Translating the ICJ AO in ASEAN Regional Governance

ASEAN provides a key platform for translating the Advisory Opinion into regional governance frameworks in Southeast Asia. Priority actions include:

- Supporting research on how ICJ AO standards can be applied within ASEAN policy frameworks, including the Regional Plan of Action of the ASEAN Declaration on the Right to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment and the Development of the Post-2025 ASEAN Strategic Plan on the Environment (ASPEN) 2026-2035.
- Promoting integration of stringent due diligence, transboundary harm prevention, and climate ambition within ASEAN frameworks and instruments.
- Supporting regional cooperation on environmental rights and protection of environmental human rights defenders.

III. Environmental Impact Assessment Reform

Participants emphasized that environmental decision-making processes must incorporate climate science and legal obligations clarified by the Advisory Opinion. Priority actions include:

- Advancing discussions on a regional ASEAN EIA framework incorporating ICJ AO standards into decision-making processes.
- Developing guidance on integrating climate risk, cumulative impacts, and due diligence standards within Environmental as well as Health Impact Assessments.
- Supporting reforms to ensure that project approvals align with 1.5°C pathways and best available science.

IV. Climate Law Capacity Building and Education

A major priority is building the legal and institutional capacity required to apply the Advisory Opinion across jurisdictions. Priority actions include:

- Developing online professional training modules on obligations arising from the ICJ Advisory Opinion and other climate advisory opinions.
- Producing policy briefs and practitioner guides for policymakers, regulators, and negotiators.
- Supporting the development of accessible materials for youth and community leaders.

V. Strategic Litigation and Corporate Accountability

The Advisory Opinion is expected to influence climate litigation actions towards corporate accountability.

Priority actions include:

- Supporting legal research and strategic litigation initiatives to challenge inadequate climate policies and actions causing environmental harm.
- Advancing legal frameworks addressing corporate climate responsibility and due diligence.
- Strengthening collaboration among regional litigators, academics, and civil society organizations.

The outcomes of the Symposium highlight strong regional momentum to translate the Advisory Opinion into practical legal and policy reforms. By advancing the initiatives and priorities identified, stakeholders across Southeast Asia can play a leading role in transforming the Advisory Opinion into action.

Symposium Outcomes

Participants at the Symposium examined the implications of the ICJ Advisory Opinion on Climate Change for law, governance, and public health in the region. The discussions highlighted the need to strengthen legal and institutional frameworks, advance climate justice, and enhance collaboration across legal, policy, and health communities. The following outcomes reflect key areas of consensus and proposed actions to support effective and equitable responses to the climate crisis.

A. Health Strategies

I. Climate–Health Treaty Mobilisation

- Identify and engage key Member States and health ministries ahead of upcoming World Health Assembly discussions concerning a potential climate–health treaty framework.
- Build a coalition of public health actors, youth movements, and legal experts to advocate for a strong climate–health treaty regime grounded in human rights and accountability.

II. Climate and Health Governance Reform

- Integrate climate change explicitly into national public health legislation, planning, research and budgeting, recognizing climate harm as a determinant of health and advancing collaboration between policy, health and scientific communities.
- Establish a Regional Climate, Health and Human Rights Observatory to monitor climate-related harms, attribution science developments, and legal responses.

III. Mandatory Impact Assessments

- Advocate for strengthened Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), Environmental and Social Health Impact Assessments (ESHIA), and human rights due diligence aligned with the ICJ AO’s stringent due diligence standard.
- Ensure that climate risk assessment and cumulative impacts are systematically integrated into project approvals.
- Promote the development of an ASEAN EIA framework that incorporates obligations for stringent due diligence for regulated entities.

IV. Children’s and Gender-Responsive Approaches

- Incorporate children’s environmental rights consistent with General Comment No. 26 of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- Mainstream gender-responsive climate-health policies addressing violence, displacement, reproductive health, and economic vulnerability.



B. Policy Strategies

I. ASEAN Regional Plan of Action

- Strengthen engagement with regional bodies, including ASEAN, to advance collective approaches to transboundary harm prevention, environmental rights, cooperation, and accountability in line with the ICJ
 - Advisory Opinion, including in the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the ASEAN Declaration on the Right to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment and the Post-2025 ASEAN Strategic Plan on the Environment (ASPEN) 2026-2035.
 - Advocate for integration of ICJ AO standards such as stringent due diligence, best available science, and 1.5°C alignment into the ASEAN Regional Action Plan under the Declaration on Environmental Rights.
- Strengthen protections for environmental human rights defenders within ASEAN frameworks.

II. Loss and Damage

- Ensure robust safeguards of green finance mechanisms to support climate-resilient health systems and low-carbon development pathways.
- Strengthen policy frameworks and regional cooperation on loss and damage, including the mobilization of finance, technical support, and legal mechanisms to address climate-related harms affecting vulnerable communities.

III. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

- Promote alignment of updated NDCs with the ICJ AO's clarification that States must act with the highest possible ambition consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C.
- Embed human rights, intergenerational equity, participation, and transparency within NDC formulation and review processes.
- Scrutinise regressive policies, fossil fuel subsidies, and fossil fuel expansion plans inconsistent with international obligations.

IV. Corporate Accountability

- Strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks to hold corporations accountable for climate-related harm, including through liability enforcement mechanisms.
- Mandate strengthened regulatory oversight of private actors, including fossil fuel, extractive, and financial institutions, to ensure alignment with climate and human rights obligations.
- Require corporate climate and human rights due diligence, including disclosure of climate-related risks consistent with international standards.

V. Domestic Legislative Reform

- Incorporate obligations standards of ICJAO in the codification of climate change Bill of Indonesia, CLIMA Bill of the Philippines and Clean Air Bill and Due Diligence legislation of Thailand
- Strengthen coordination across ministries to address fragmented governance.

VI. International Advocacy

- Advocate for States to support relevant UN General Assembly initiatives reinforcing implementation of the Advisory Opinion.
- Encourage States to sign the Belem Declaration and engage constructively in the Santa Marta Conference process on fossil fuel phase-out.
- Contribute expert input to shape the Santa Marta Conference agenda toward accountability and just transition frameworks.

VII. Capacity Building and Education

- Develop online training modules and professional education courses on obligations under the ICJ Advisory Opinion and related advisory opinions.
- Develop policy briefs and practitioner guidance on applying due diligence, human rights obligations, and climate standards in decision-making.
- Develop policy briefs and training modules for diplomats, negotiators, and civil servants, as well as accessible materials for youth and civil society
- Integrate the ICJ AO into university curricula, judicial training institutes, and professional associations.
- Produce accessible and child-friendly versions of the Advisory Opinion.

C. Legal Strategies

I. Strategic Litigation

- Use the ICJ AO to support challenges to inadequate climate policies, fossil fuel expansion, and weak regulatory frameworks.
- Advance claims for loss and damage, reparations, cessation, and guarantees of non-repetition.
- Encourage use of amicus briefs and cross-border litigation collaboration.

II. Corporate Liability and Transnational Litigation

- Explore parent-company liability and private international law mechanisms to improve access to justice.
- Apply due diligence standards to financial institutions and export credit agencies.
- Support shareholder and consumer protection actions addressing greenwashing and climate misrepresentation.

III. Protection of Environmental Human Rights Defenders

- Strengthen monitoring systems and legal safeguards for defenders, particularly women and Indigenous leaders.
- Advocate for anti-SLAPP protections and procedural reforms to reduce litigation risks against civil society actors.

D. Advocacy and Communication

I. Regional Coalition Building

- Strengthen a regional community of practice linking legal, health, policy, and youth actors to support the uptake and implementation of the ICJ Advisory Opinion across jurisdictions.
- Strengthen coordination in WYCJ National Fronts in Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and Indonesia.
- Facilitate structured knowledge-sharing among litigators, policy advocates, and health professionals.

II. Digital and Public Outreach

- Disseminate Symposium outcomes through institutional websites and professional platforms, including LinkedIn and other social media channels.
- Develop multilingual materials to enhance accessibility across the region.

III. Grassroots Engagement

- Translate the ICJ AO into practical advocacy toolkits for community leaders and local lawyers.
- Promote intergenerational solidarity and youth engagement in climate governance.