

Mapping of Just Transition supporting policies in Southeast Asia

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This study systematically maps and assesses how just transition (JT) principles are reflected in energy transition policies across four Southeast Asian countries: Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Malaysia. The research focuses on identifying how justice-related concepts—such as equity, inclusion, and environmental rehabilitation—are embedded in national policy frameworks, even when the term “just transition” is not explicitly used. The study covers a wide range of policy instruments, including more strategic plans/goals/guidelines, formal regulatory acts/laws and dedicated financing schemes, and evaluates their ambition and coherence.

As the concept of a just transition is interpreted differently across countries and policy communities, the research team adopted a six-principle (P) framework tailored to the Southeast Asian context for the purpose of this study. These principles served as the analytical lens for evaluating the presence and ambition of justice elements in government policies through the identification of related keywords and indicators:

P1: Transparent and inclusive transition governance mechanisms

ensuring coordination across sectors and levels of government, with clear institutional mandates and accountability.



P2: Meaningful and inclusive stakeholder engagement

involving all relevant actors, including civil society, local communities, and vulnerable groups, from planning to implementation.



P3: Consideration of vulnerable groups

addressing the specific needs of low-income households, women, youth, elderly, informal workers, and Indigenous Peoples.



P4: Equitable workforce transition

supporting reskilling, upskilling, and social protection for workers affected by the energy transition.



P5: Economic diversification

promoting sustainable, local economic development and enterprises, and reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

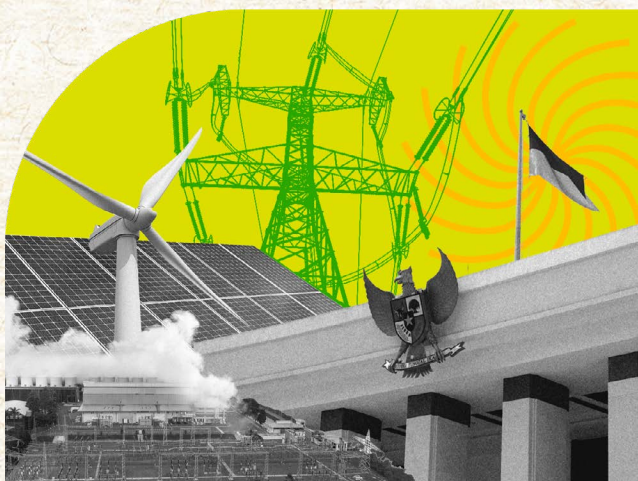


P6: Environmental rehabilitation and land repurposing

restoring ecosystems and repurposing land used for fossil fuel activities.

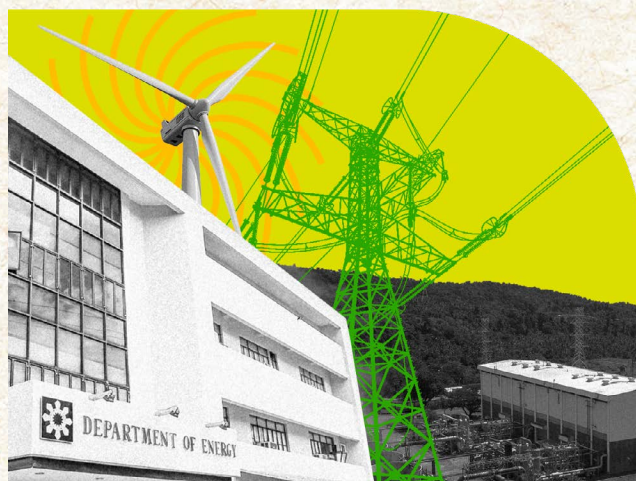


Key findings per country



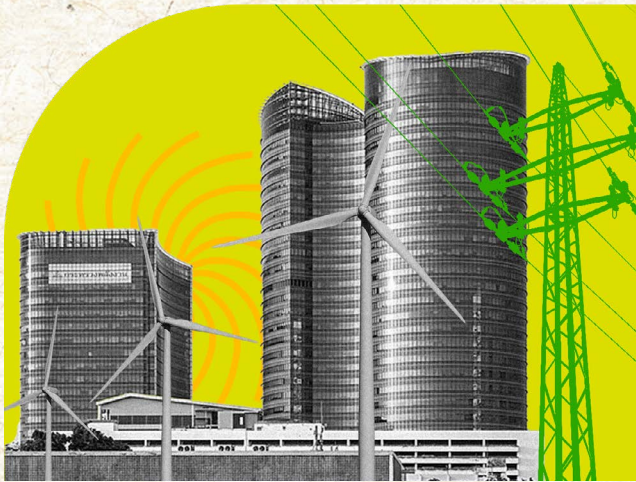
Indonesia has embedded justice-related principles in many policies, but weak coordination and conflicting signals undermine implementation.

Indonesia has made notable progress in embedding just transition principles into its policy landscape, particularly in stakeholder engagement (P2) and environmental rehabilitation (P6). The country's National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN 2025–2045) of 2024 and the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) are key vehicles for integrating justice into energy planning. However, implementation remains fragmented due to conflicting policy signals, such as continued support for coal and mining industries, and a lack of enforcement mechanisms. While over 5,000 keyword references were identified across 29 policies, the term “just transition” is rarely used explicitly. Governance mechanisms (P1) are often weak or absent, and support for vulnerable groups (P3) is inconsistent. Older policies tend to be more democratic and participatory, while newer ones show signs of reduced procedural justice. Stakeholder consultations are frequently symbolic, and environmental and social impact assessments are often manipulated or inaccessible to affected communities. Despite these challenges, there is momentum for reform. A National Just Energy Transition Action Plan is under development, and new initiatives are emerging to support workforce transition and economic diversification. However, without stronger coordination and clearer implementation frameworks, the risk remains that the energy transition will replicate or exacerbate existing social and environmental injustices.



The Philippines demonstrates growing ambition and institutional commitment, but subnational implementation and funding remain weak.

The Philippines has shown increasing ambition in integrating just transition principles, particularly in environmental rehabilitation (P6), workforce transition (P4), and support for vulnerable groups (P3). The country's Just Transition Framework, launched in 2024, and the Green Jobs Act of 2016 are key milestones. Strategic planning documents such as the Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028 (2023) and the National Adaptation Plan 2023–2050 (2024) demonstrate a whole-of-government approach and strong alignment with international climate goals. However, governance mechanisms (P1) and economic diversification (P5) remain underdeveloped. While stakeholder engagement is institutionalised at the national level, subnational mechanisms are often weak or underfunded. Many policies acknowledge the vulnerability of certain groups but lack targeted support or budgetary allocations. Implementation is further hindered by limited capacity, fragmented coordination, and recent leadership changes in key government agencies. Despite these limitations, the Philippines is on a positive trajectory. The integration of justice principles into newer policies is more comprehensive, and there is growing civil society engagement. The country's role as host of the Loss and Damage Fund Board and its leadership in regional climate initiatives suggest that just transition will continue to gain prominence in national policy discourse.



Thailand’s just transition efforts are fragmented, with limited institutional coordination and weak stakeholder engagement.

Thailand’s just transition efforts are still in their early stages. While the country has set ambitious climate targets, including carbon neutrality by 2050, there is no formal definition of just transition in national policy, nor a dedicated framework or coordinating body. The most frequently embedded principles are economic diversification (P5) and environmental rehabilitation (P6), particularly in the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan. However, governance mechanisms (P1), stakeholder engagement (P2), and support for vulnerable groups (P3) are weak. Consultations are often procedural and lack transparency, and ministries operate in silos without clear coordination. The Energy Industry Act (2007) and the draft Power Development Plan 2024–2037 show limited integration of justice principles, focusing instead on energy security and market-based mechanisms. There are opportunities for progress, including the Power Development Plan and the forthcoming Climate Change Act, which could provide a legal basis for integrating justice into climate governance. However, without a dedicated just transition strategy and stronger institutional coordination, Thailand risks missing the opportunity to ensure a fair and inclusive energy transition.



Malaysia’s policies reference workforce transition and economic diversification, but lack depth in governance, inclusion, and implementation tools.

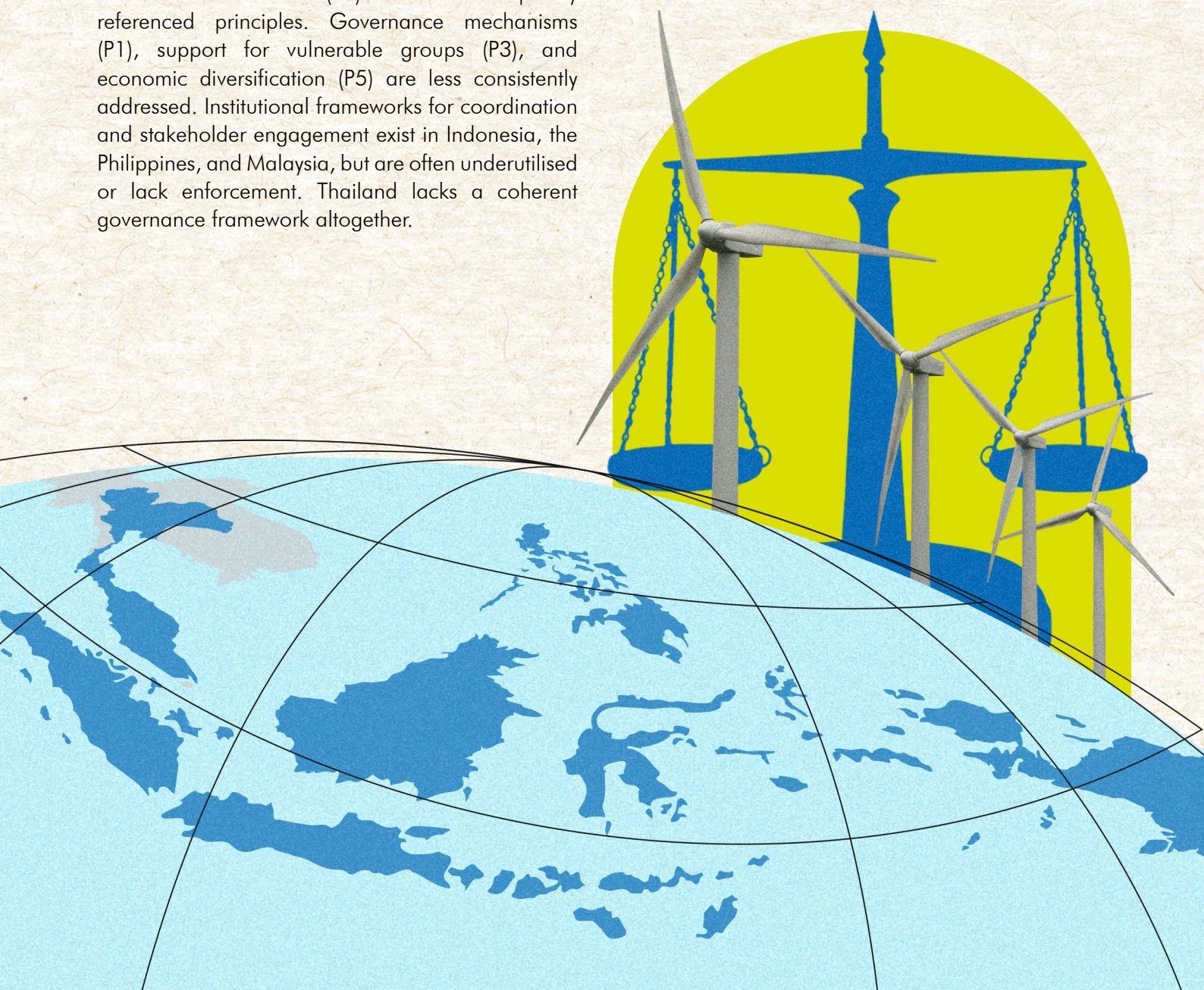
Malaysia has made moderate progress in integrating just transition principles, with a strong focus on workforce transition (P4) and economic diversification (P5). The National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) of 2023 and the National Energy Policy 2022–2040 (2022) are key policy instruments that reflect the government’s commitment to a fair and equitable transition. These documents emphasise inter-ministerial coordination, public-private partnerships, and investment in green technologies. However, governance mechanisms (P1), stakeholder engagement (P2), and support for vulnerable groups (P3) are less developed. While newer policies introduce coordination structures and consultation processes, their scope and effectiveness remain limited. Implementation is uneven across regions, with stronger governance in Peninsular Malaysia and weaker enforcement in Sabah and Sarawak. Indigenous communities are particularly vulnerable to large-scale renewable energy projects that lack adequate safeguards. Malaysia’s just transition agenda remains fragmented, with limited integration of justice principles across sectors and regions. The absence of a dedicated national framework and the lack of concrete measures for workforce reskilling, social protection, and land rehabilitation highlight the need for more comprehensive and inclusive policy approaches.

Across all four countries, justice principles are increasingly referenced, but implementation remains inconsistent and often symbolic.

Across Southeast Asia, the term “just transition” is inconsistently used, but justice-related principles are increasingly mainstreamed into national policy frameworks. Indonesia and the Philippines recorded the highest number of keyword references, followed by Malaysia and Thailand. However, high keyword frequency does not always equate to high ambition or effective implementation. Stakeholder engagement (P2), environmental rehabilitation (P6), and workforce transition (P4) are the most frequently referenced principles. Governance mechanisms (P1), support for vulnerable groups (P3), and economic diversification (P5) are less consistently addressed. Institutional frameworks for coordination and stakeholder engagement exist in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia, but are often underutilised or lack enforcement. Thailand lacks a coherent governance framework altogether.

Implementation challenges are common across all countries.

These include overlapping mandates, limited subnational capacity, weak monitoring systems, and symbolic stakeholder consultations. Without stronger coordination, clearer mandates, and practical tools for implementation, the gap between policy ambition and real-world outcomes will persist.



In conclusion, Southeast Asia's energy transition is gaining momentum, but justice must be embedded more deeply and implemented more effectively.

While progress has been made in embedding justice principles into policy, significant gaps remain in ambition, coordination, and implementation. Governance inconsistencies, limited subnational capacity, and symbolic stakeholder engagement persist. A more coordinated, inclusive, and regionally tailored approach is essential to ensure that the energy transition is not only green but also fair and equitable. Civil society and policymakers must work together to close the gap between policy and practice and are recommended to take forward the following actions:

1. Strengthen governance and coordination mechanisms:



Empower principal JT institutions and clarify roles across government levels in all countries and establish a dedicated governance mechanism in Thailand.

2. Institutionalise credible stakeholder engagement:



Develop transparent, inclusive, and authoritative engagement processes and ensure participation of civil society, Indigenous Peoples, and vulnerable groups.

3. Mainstream just transition into sectoral policies:



Develop national JT strategies or action plans to consolidate fragmented efforts and integrate justice principles into energy, land-use, and industrial policies.

4. Design evidence-based workforce transition measures:



Conduct labour force assessments and develop job transition roadmaps and, based on that, implement reskilling and vocational guidance programmes in fossil fuel-dependent regions.

5. Develop tailored subnational economic diversification strategies:



Support SMEs, green entrepreneurship, and local innovation in affected regions.

6. Address implementation gaps through capacity building:



Empower subnational governments to design and implement targeted JT measures.

7. Improve monitoring, evaluation, and justice metrics:



Establish indicators and systems to track JT progress and adjust policies accordingly.

8. Ensure justice in both phase-out and phase-in energy policies:



Apply JT principles to both fossil fuel retirement and renewable energy expansion.

