# GSDC 2026 Asia Pacific Business Summit Debrief Report

## 1. Executive Summary

The Asia-Pacific Sustainable Business Summit marked an important expansion of the Global Sustainable Development Congress: a dedicated business platform designed to connect the value chain for sustainable growth across the region. Hosted at the Indonesia Convention Exhibition centre, Jakarta, from 22-25 June 2026, the summit brought together leaders from business, finance, government, research and civil society to explore how sustainability can move from ambition into investable, operational and measurable action.

The central message was clear: sustainability is no longer a specialist agenda or a communications exercise. It is becoming a mainstream driver of competitiveness, resilience, risk management, innovation and long-term value. Across the programme, speakers and panels repeatedly returned to a shared question: how can organisations translate sustainability commitments into practical changes across infrastructure, finance, procurement, talent, technology, operations and partnerships?

The summit was particularly strong in positioning Asia-Pacific as a live testbed for sustainable growth. Indonesia's role as host gave the agenda added relevance, with sessions exploring digital infrastructure, critical minerals, agriculture, palm oil, urbanisation, energy systems, social inclusion and healthcare. The programme showed that the region is not facing one transition, but several overlapping transitions all at once: technological, energy, industrial, environmental, social and demographic.

The "so what" is that delegates left with a stronger mandate to act collaboratively, cross-sector. The summit made clear that no organisation can deliver sustainable transformation alone. Progress depends on stronger pre-competitive collaboration, credible data, better finance mechanisms, cross-sector partnerships, responsible supply chains and practical capability-building. Future editions should build on this by making the Business Summit more visible within the wider congress, strengthening facilitated networking between categories of participants (eg universities, businesses / entrepreneurs, and sustainability experts) and producing a post-event insights paper that converts session learning into a practical action resource for delegates and partners alike.

## 2. Key Themes and Insights

### 2.1 Sustainability is now a value creation agenda

Across finance, real estate, manufacturing, procurement and infrastructure, sustainability was framed as a way to strengthen asset performance, reduce risk, attract capital and build trust. This creates a clear opportunity for partners to help organisations translate sustainability commitments into commercial strategy, governance and measurable outcomes.

### 2.2 Digital growth needs a responsible operating model

The AI and digital infrastructure sessions were among the summit's most distinctive contributions. AI, data centres, cloud infrastructure and connectivity can support productivity and inclusion, but they

also increase pressure on energy, water and carbon systems. The insight is simple: digital strategy and sustainability strategy can no longer sit apart. Responsible AI requires clean energy, grid collaboration, efficient design, cybersecurity, inclusive access and AI-ready talent.

**2.3 Supply chains are where purpose becomes real**

The summit repeatedly returned to procurement, traceability, human rights, responsible sourcing, critical minerals, palm oil, agriculture, packaging, manufacturing and circular economy. The sentiment was practical rather than performative. Delegates recognised that supply chain transformation requires better data, stronger supplier relationships and pre-competitive collaboration where no single organisation can solve the problem alone.

**2.4 Nature, climate and circularity are moving into everyday operations**

Sessions on biodiversity, regenerative agriculture, resilient cities, water stewardship, land use, circular packaging and sustainable healthcare showed that nature-positive approaches are no longer abstract. They need to be designed into products, buildings, logistics, finance, procurement and community partnerships. This is where organisations need practical support: not more language, but clearer decisions.

**2.5 Social impact is essential to a credible transition**

The summit also showed that sustainable growth must deliver for people too: workers, communities, consumers, suppliers, patients and future talent. Skills, inclusion, decent work, healthcare access and community trust are not secondary to climate action; they are what make transition plans possible. This message strongly aligns with impact entrepreneurship and social business as a solution to climate challenges and the SDGs.

## 3. Next Steps for Attendees after GSDC Business Summit 2026

1. For delegates, the immediate priority could be to convert learning into tangible action plans. Each organisation could identify one strategic sustainability opportunity, one material risk and one partnership opportunity emerging from the summit. These could be translated into named owners, timelines and measurable outcomes for the benefit of each delegate's own work in this area, emphasising their agency in making these changes happen.
2. Businesses could review whether sustainability is embedded across finance, procurement, product development, infrastructure, operations, talent and governance. Where sustainability sits only in reporting or communications, it could be repositioned as a business performance agenda.
3. Universities, research institutions and knowledge partners could help close the gap between evidence and implementation. They can support sector roadmaps, skills development, impact measurement, innovation pilots and post-event knowledge products; examining too how they will engage with the Sustainability Impact Ratings in the round going into 2027.
4. All attendees could make a plan to attend next year's GSDC Asia Pacific Business Summit and provide feedback on what made this year's event a success, ready to share learnings and changes in their own practice and the work of their organisations, as we get ever closer to the crucial upcoming SDG deadline of 2030, in 2027.