

Chapter **1**

Introduction

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Worldwide, efforts are on the rise to tackle climate change and achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The climate summit in April 2021, organised by the President of the United States, Joe Biden, indicated that climate change will continue to be a major topic for discussion at the Group of Seven and Group of 20 summits in 2021. Further, the International Energy Agency in May 2021 released a report on the path to achieving 'Net Zero by 2050,' outlining a concrete roadmap for the global energy sector. Accordingly, all Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries have participated in the Paris Agreement and submitted their respective intended nationally determined contributions. Moreover, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam have submitted their updated nationally determined contributions.

Renewable energy (RE) and electric mobility play a central role in the climate change countermeasures of each country. Solar and wind power generation and batteries for electric mobility have achieved significant cost reductions over the past decade. They are even cheaper than fossil fuels in some countries, leading to rapid growth in their adoption. However, there has been insufficient adoption and cost reduction of these technologies in ASEAN countries. Thus, a certain level of policy support is necessary to further diffuse RE in the future. It is essential to examine the extent to which the citizens in ASEAN countries accept the cost burden and accelerate cost reduction through means such as innovation.

Hence, this study examines the willingness to pay (WTP) for RE in ASEAN countries. It reports the results of the second research phase. In 2020 (phase one), we conducted a household survey in Myanmar, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam, and Thailand; the WTP for RE was investigated based on the discrete choice experiment and contingent valuation method (Yoshikawa, 2020). This study targets Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Given the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on 2020's investigation, we renewed the survey in Thailand for this study.

In addition to REs, this study also surveyed electric mobility, especially electric motorbikes. It compared gasoline-powered and electric motorbikes in Viet Nam to ascertain how WTP depends on various attributes in the discrete choice experiment.

Unfortunately, like in 2020, the pandemic impacted the survey this year. Some refused to take the survey for fear of infection, and the WTP was undeniably affected by the short-term COVID-19 factor. Thus, the WTP amount revealed in this report is probably within a certain minimum value for future policy design implications regarding RE and electric mobility.

The report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 summarises the policy trends regarding RE. Chapter 3 presents the methodology and survey design. Chapter 4 summarises the sampling strategies adopted for each of the cities included in this research. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics of the responses. Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 analyse the results of the survey on the WTP for renewable energy in the five ASEAN cities, and the WTP for electric motorbikes in Ho Chi Minh City, respectively. Chapter 8 provides policy implications and conclude this report.