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# Asia's lamentable green Covid-19 response

The Covid-19 pandemic has offered governments around the world an opportunity for a total rethink on how their economies will operate in the decades to come. Few governments in the Asia-Pacific region appear to have grasped this chance. Our major report looks at what we re calling a lamentable response

Rarely spotted dugongs swimming in clearer waters off the coast of Thailand

## Executive summary

With most of our economies likely to look very different when we finally emerge from social distancing, this is being seen by some countries and regions as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to lock in these environmental gains. The fiscal rule books have been ripped up, and cost can no longer be cited as an excuse for inaction. This isn't quite a clean slate for a total rethink of our economies, but it is probably the closest thing to that we will ever get.

Regions such as the European Union, are using the pandemic as an opportunity to press the restart button on their economies and to focus hard on the environment. The UK too seems to be reinventing some green credentials and is also increasing its stimulus to measures concerned with energy efficiency. But is the same true for the Asia Pacific region? Is Asia reaching for the environment reset button too? The short answer to that question appears, disappointingly, to be a resounding “no”. And this is particularly disappointing when you consider the big role Asia-Pacific plays in greenhouse gas emissions and global warming.

In this major report, we look closely at the Asia-Pacific region's environmental response to the Covid-19 crisis. What are the climate targets reached and missed? We examine individual countries' fiscal response and how much of that will feed back into the real economy. Crucially, we try to answer the question as to why so many countries in Asia have not acted in a more 'green' way.

From China to Japan, India, Thailand, Australia, Malaysia and beyond, we look at where we stand, what 'green' measures have been taken and what more perhaps could have been considered as the world adapts to the new Covid-19 realities.

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