IJGlobal Awards 2023 – Asia Pacific Deal Winners

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The Asia Pacific winners of the IJGlobal Awards 2023 in the deals category were unveiled last evening at Raffles Hotel, Singapore amidst a jubilant atmosphere of celebration and recognition.

Renowned as the gold standard in peer-reviewed awards for greenfield infrastructure and energy, the IJGlobal Awards are esteemed for their transparency and meticulous evaluation process.

While the editorial team oversees the transaction awards, the company awards are meticulously selected by an independent panel of seasoned infrastructure professionals. For your reference, you can find the shortlist of nominees for APAC here and the independent panel of judges here.

This year's winners exemplify excellence in the field, demonstrating exceptional market activity throughout the 2023 calendar year. Notably, we received an exceptionally high volume of submissions for deal awards in 2023, reflecting the vibrant market activity, resulting in more winners than usual.

We are delighted to announce 36 winners who achieved financial close during the judging period, representing the pinnacle of achievement in the industry. They are:

- Energy Transition Deal of the Year — solar — Zenith Energy
- Energy Transition Deal of the Year — manufacturing — Project Ceres
- Transport Deal of the Year — Airport — Project Bamboo Grove
- Transport Deal of the Year — Port — Geelong Port
- Telecoms Deal of the Year — Dito Telecommunity
- Digital Infrastructure Deal of the Year — Data Centre — Project Gotham
- Digital Infrastructure Deal of the Year — Bluecurrent
- Deal of the Year - Manufacturing — Jindal Steel Odisha
- Mining Deal of the Year — Gold Fields
- Renewable Energy Deal of the Year — Dragon Sea Project - Hai Long
- Renewable Energy Deal of the Year — Onshore Wind — Project Monsoon
- Renewable Energy Deal of the Year — RTC —ReNew RTC
- Renewable Energy Deal of the Year — Biomass — SAEL Biomass Energy Project
- Renewable Energy Deal of the Year — Waste-to-Energy — China Tianying - Vietnam
- Renewable Energy Deal of the Year — BESS — Hyogo Project
- Portfolio Financing Deal of the Year — Sherabad, Jizzakh, Samarkand Solar PV Portfolio
- Renewable Energy Deal of the Year — Offshore Wind — Jeonnam 1
- Power Deal of the Year — Gas-fired — Unique Meghnaghat

- Power Deal of the Year — Hybrid Project Helix
- PPP Deal of the Year — Power — Syrdarya II
- PPP Deal of the Year -— Social Infrastructure — NZ Schools II PPP
- Refinance Deal of the Year — Airport — Perth Airport
- Refinance Deal of the Year — Data Centre — Project Lightsaber
- Refinance Deal of the Year — Renewables Portfolio — TILT Renewables
- Refinancing Deal of the Year — Onshore Wind — Project Typhoon
- Wrap of the Year — InfraZamin Pakistan
- Innovation Deal of the Year— Bonds — Bayfront Infrastructure
- Innovation Deal of the Year — Partial Guarantee — Pran Agro
- Sustainability-linked Loan — Data Centres — SEL 2 Financing
- Oil & Gas Deal of the Year — Decarbonisation — RDMP Balikpapan
- Oil & Gas Deal of the Year — Downstream — HPCL Rajasthan Refinery
- Oil & Gas Deal of the Year — LNG Terminal — HK Offshore LNG Terminal Project
- Oil & Gas Deal of the Year — Petchem — LINE Project
- Green Bond — REC
- ESG Deal of the Year — Indonesia Samurai Blue Bonds
- Social Infrastructure Deal of the Year — Telangana Super-Specialty Hospitals

Energy Transition Deal of the Year – Solar

Zenith Energy

Decarbonizing the mining sector stands as a notable exemplar of energy transition. Leading this charge is Zenith Energy, an independent power producer based in Western Australia, which has spearheaded ESG transition efforts within the Australian mining sector. Offering solar, wind, and battery alternatives, Zenith replaces traditional diesel and gas power sources, thereby assisting mining companies in significantly reducing their scope 1 emissions.

In August 2023, Zenith successfully secured an additional debt facility of A$320 million ($200m) to bolster its growth pipeline. This investment encompassed the development of key projects such as the 96MW Kathleen Valley Hybrid Power Station for Liontown Resources, the 88MW Bellevue Gold Hybrid Power Station, and a 53MW renewable retrofit of Zenith's existing Jundee Power Station for Northern Star Resources.

The new tranche, structured as an accordion facility, attracted two new lenders—DBS Bank and Natixis—alongside increased commitments from existing lenders. This financing supplements Zenith's existing A$440 million 5-year facility from late 2022, which was provided by Aware Super, ANZ, BNP Paribas, NAB, SMBC, and Westpac.

Azure Capital and KPMG Corporate Finance served as financial advisers to Zenith, while Allens provided legal advisory services. King & Wood Mallesons acted as legal adviser to the lenders. Zenith enjoys the support of Pacific Equity Partners, Foresight Group, and OPTrust.

Energy Transition Deal of the Year – Manufacturing

Project Ceres

The greenfield $4.179 billion Karratha Urea Plant is poised to be Australia's first facility that will process natural gas into ammonia and produce nitrogen-based fertilizer urea.

Privately-owned chemical company Perdaman Industries, roped in Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP IV fund) with equity injection of $1.7 billion, attracting other key lenders to the project.

The borrower, Perdaman Chemicals & Fertilisers (Finance), achieved financial close in April 2023 for Project Ceres, which has been in development for over a decade. The project financing includes a senior term loan facility of $2.47 billion.

The 7-year mini-perm financing saw participation from 12 lenders including BNP Paribas, CBA, HSBC, ICBC, Intesa Sanpaolo, MUFG Bank, NAB, Santander, Societe Generale (SocGen), SMBC, Standard Chartered and Westpac.

Export Finance Australia and Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility also joined the financing with respective commitments of $179 million and $147 million.

The project will utilise low-carbon natural gas, sea-water cooled systems, and catalytic reforming, energy transition-enabling features. The project will also use technologies that deliver lower emissions than comparable peers, and is projected to deliver emission levels 80% below existing coal-fed counterparts. Perdaman is committed to making the urea plant net carbon zero by 2050.

Located in Western Australia, the project is slated for completion for 2027.

Urea from the plant will be purchased by Incitec Pivot under a 20-year take or pay offtake agreement. There is also a 20-year take or pay fixed price gas supply contract with Woodside Energy Group.

Project Ceres is the largest investment ever made in the Australian fertiliser industry and is set to substantially contribute to the food security of the country and the Asia Pacific region. The project found support from the central and state governments.

SocGen was debt financing adviser. White & Case represented the borrower while Allens was legal adviser to GIP. Ashurst was lender’s legal counsel.

Transport Deal of the Year – Airport

Project Bamboo Grove

The Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) is a frequent issuer in the market, but its $3 billion multi-tranche global offering in early 2023 surpassed expectations. The fundraising saw unexpected demand and also was the first US dollar offering globally by a corporate issuer that could price with an inverted credit yield curve.

The deal from the operator of the Hong Kong International Airport was announced days ahead of further relaxation of travel rules between Hong Kong and mainland China, piquing investor interest as they expected more travelers to land in the city.

The airport has been securing money for its HK$141.5 billion ($18bn) Three-Runway System (3RS) and this offering was another attempt to mop up more funds for the project capex and general corporate purposes. The 3RS project includes 7 core projects and facilities, including a new runway and expansion of Terminal 2.

Global investors poured over $25 billion in orders for the 4-tranche deal that was priced on 5 January 2023 morning New York hours. Travel restrictions to Hong Kong were lifted from 8 January (2023) in a first such opening of borders since the Covid-19 pandemic.

The thinly priced offering was split into a $500 million 3-year tranche paying 4.875% coupon, priced 70bp over US Treasuries. The $1 billion 5-year green tranche pays 4.75% coupon and was priced 90bp over UST. The $700 million 7-year bonds pay 4.875% coupon and were priced 115bp over UST, while the $800 million 10-year notes pay 4.875% coupon and were priced 125bp spread over Treasuries.

Joint global coordinators, joint lead managers and bookrunners on the deal were - BofA Securities, HSBC, JP Morgan, Standard Chartered and UBS. The deal also saw participation from 19 other banks as joint leads including Barclays, Bank of China, Citigroup, DBS, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley.

Transport Deal of the Year – Port

Geelong Port

Geelong Port, acquired by a consortium comprised of Stonepeak (70%) and Spirit Super (30%) on 26 April 2023, holds a pivotal position in Australia's economy. This marks Stonepeak's inaugural foray into the Australian market, with the transaction valued at $793.4 million.

As Victoria's primary bulk port and the state's second largest, Geelong Port plays a key role in servicing the agricultural and fuel industries in the region. Handling approximately 12 million tons of cargo and accommodating over 600 vessels annually, the port is a cornerstone of trade activity.

The acquisition facilitates the efficient management of port facilities and supports the A$7 billion ($4.6 billion) worth of trade that traverses through it. Aligning with Stonepeak's infrastructure strategy, the asset's local significance underscores the commitment to fostering long-term growth and creating opportunities for the community and industries in the region.

The acquisition was fully financed through an A$560 million ($370.2 million) facility, with MLAs MUFG, SMBC, and Westpac providing the loan. Gresham and Partners, King & Wood Mallesons, and Clayton Utz acted as advisers to the consortium.

The facility, oversubscribed by 1.4 times, was swiftly delivered within 2 – 3 weeks, utilizing a tailored underwrite and interest rate swap to accommodate the sponsor's accelerated timetable in Q4 2022. Notably, this arrangement was executed for an asset previously banked by MUFG.

Telecoms Deal of the Year

Dito Telecommunity

Dito Telecommunity secured a $3.9 billion-equivalent facility on 7 November 2023, to roll out 4G/5G telecommunication networks as part of a $5 billion-equivalent project to improve the telecom sector in the Philippines.

The facility is the largest project financed telecoms project to be developed in Asia in recent years and will boost Dito's presence in the Philippines market. Dito is the third and newest telecoms carrier in the Philippines, and the rollout of this project allows them to disrupt the longstanding duopoly of Globe Telecom and PLDT, making the sector more competitive and accessible.

The long-term 15-year financing is one of the most innovative telecoms project financings to come to market in Asia, with 10 lenders participating in the facility. Bank of China and ING led the syndication of the 2-tranche facility, which also saw the participation of Sinosure extending partial cover.

The long-term financing of Dito was a multi-jurisdictional transaction (China, Hong Kong, Philippines, and Singapore) based on a limited recourse project finance model that addressed project-specific issues like market risk, a large capex, operational rollout out, and currency mismatches.

Clifford Chance, Romulo Law Firm were international and local legal advisers to sponsors respectively, while Sherman & Sterling and Villaraza & Angangco advised the lenders. SMBC was the financial adviser to the lenders.

Digital Infrastructure Deal of the Year – Data Centre

Project Gotham

Project Gotham is the financing of an up to 120 MW hyperscale data centre in Jakarta, Indonesia, being developed by EQT-Infrastructure backed EdgeConnex (ECX).

A $403.8 million financing backed the transaction including a $313.8 million 7-year sustainability-linked loan (SLL), the first such transaction in Indonesia.

The loan provides for margin adjustments linked to 3 key performance indicators concerning the Power Usage Effectiveness of the data centres, the use of renewable electricity, and the achievement of safety goals. For instance, the SLL has lost time injury rate as one of the KPIs for the loan to ensure higher workplace safety standards.

The KPI and targets are aligned with EdgeConneX's commitment of being carbon, water, and waste neutral by 2030 and power data centers with full renewable energy.

The financing, that includes a $90 million equity bridge, saw participation from ING, Natixis, MUFG Bank and SMBC when the deal was originally signed on 26 July 2023. Later in the year, more banks joined the deal in the secondary market.

Competitively priced and yet sought-after deal has paved the way for ECX to aggressively fund its other expansions in the region.

Digital Infrastructure Deal of the Year

Bluecurrent

Vector and QIC Private Capital (QIC) closed in June 2023 the sale of a 50% interest in Vector's New Zealand and Australian metering business (Vector Metering) to investment vehicles managed and advised by QIC.

Vector is a smart metering business providing digital electricity metering and data solutions to households and businesses across Australia and New Zealand.

A roughly A$1.6 billion ($1.06bn)-equivalent dual-currency green loan backed the 5-year transaction, attracting 11 lenders. They are - Bank of China, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, CBA, China Construction Bank, ICBC, KEB Hana, MUFG (joint sustainability coordinator or JSC), NAB (JSC), Société Générale, SMBC and Westpac (JSC).

The loan has 6 tranches including term loans, capex expenditure facilities and revolving credit facilities. The loan offered margins of 195bp over BKBM for New Zealand Dollars and BBSY for Australian Dollars.

The deal was the first use of proceeds certification globally under the new Climate Bonds Standard Version 4.0. It was also one the largest Climate Bonds certified green bank loans aligned with Climate Bonds' Electric Grids and Storage eligibility criteria. DNV provided verification.

For Vector, Citi and Barrenjoey was the financial adviser while Chapman Tripp and Harmos Horton Lusk, King & Wood Mallesons acted on the legal side.

Deal of the Year – Manufacturing

Jindal Steel Odisha

Indian billionaire Naveen Jindal-controlled Jindal Steel & Power's subsidiary Jindal Steel Odisha is setting up a Rs224.68 billion ($2.7bn) 6MTPA greenfield plant in eastern India, to help the country to expand its hot rolled coil (HRC) capacities failing which India can become a net importer of the product in the next 4 years.

Considering the peculiarities of the steel sector and the cyclical nature of steel and raw material prices, it was essential to obtain a longer tenor of loan so that the amortization can be synchronized with the project cash flows.

The Rs157.27 billion, or $1.89 billion-equivalent, debt financing is backed by a 17-year loan closed in August 2023 among 11 banks. State Bank of India was the anchor investor and its investment arm, SBI Capital Markets acted as the financial adviser.

The amortizing loan has a repayment of 13 years, with construction period is 3 years and moratorium period of 1 year from COD which is aimed on 1st April 2025.

There is also a corporate guarantee of 2 years subject to achievement of stipulated financial covenants to de-risk the promoter's balance sheet.

The debt is tied-up as a rupee term loan facility (RTL) including one time capex letter of credit (local or offshore) of Rs100 billion as sublimit of RTL with option to avail buyers' credit/ standby letter of credit.

The transaction is one of the biggest greenfield plants from the sector post-Covid. The new plant is being built at Angul in Odisha, and by 2030 the project will double the capacity to become the world's largest integrated steel plant at a single location.

Mining Deal of the Year

Gold Fields

Gold Fields secured a A$500 million ($317m) sustainability-linked loan (SLL) with a A$100 million accordion, one of the first such facilities in the Australian mining industry and the first for a gold mining company in the country.

The 5-year facility followed the landmark $1.2 billion revolving credit facility announced by the seventh largest gold producer in the world in May 2023, which essentially refinanced a 2019 deal and was meant for projects outside APAC.

The SLL closed with a syndicate of 10 local and international lenders. CBA acted as the sole sustainability coordinator, mandated lead arranger, bookrunner and facility agent of the deal closed on 1 October 2023.

Under the facility agreement, Gold Fields will receive a margin adjustment based on its performance against sustainability-linked key performance indicators relating to increasing female representation in its global workforce, reducing carbon emissions and utilising more recycled water. The transaction sets a template for other borrowers to follow suit.

Clifford Chance advised CBA while Allens was the legal adviser to Gold Fields.

Renewable Energy Deal of the Year

Dragon Sea Project – Hai Long

The iconic 1.022GW offshore wind project in Taiwan created history by achieving financial close against headwinds, re-instilling confidence in the industry that was overshadowed by a massive restructuring of the 640MW Yunlin wind farm.

The FC followed a N$117 billion-equivalent ($3.67bn) multi-currency debt financing that saw the backing from 16 lenders and 7 export credit agencies (ECAs). The deal ended up being the first offshore transaction from Taiwan to achieve FC post-Covid, first to be financed on the basis of a corporate power purchase agreement (CPPA).

The transaction also saw the greatest number of ECAs and the highest cover of over 80% seen in any of the offshore wind deals from Taiwan till date.

Located some 45km to 70km off the west coast of Changhua County in the Taiwan Strait, the $6.67 billion project also offered longest-dated financing for the sector with its 22 years tenor.

Code named Dragon Sea Project, Hai Long has 3 offshore farms – Hai Long 2A of 294MW, Hai Long 2B of 224MW and Hai Long 3 of 504MW.

Canada-based Northland Power and Mitsui & Co back the project originally with the Japanese firm joining the deal in 2018. Subsequently, Gentari International Renewables, the subsidiary of Malaysia's state-owned oil major Petronas, has acquired 49% of Northland's 60% ownership in the project.

Clifford Chance was legal adviser to lenders and ECAs, while Linklaters advised the borrowers. MUFG was the financial adviser for finance and development, among other advisers and participated at different stages of the project.

Renewable Energy Deal of the Year – Onshore Wind

Project Monsoon

The 600MW project is the first wind power project in Lao PDR, also the largest such project in Southeast Asia, and the first cross-border power project in the entire Asia.

The pioneering and complex transaction, that achieved financial close in March 2023, demonstrated that intermittent wind can be exported.

The project will export electricity from Laos to Vietnam consists of 133 Envision wind turbines and will connect to the Vietnam Electric (EVN) grid via a 22 km 500kv transmission line to the border with Vietnam.

EVN is responsible for building the transmission line on the Vietnam side of the border where the project will connect to the 500kv backbone of the Vietnam grid at the Thanh My substation.

The complexity of the Monsoon Project is due to Laos country risk and Vietnam's curtailment risk in the PPA that was well handled by the ADB, the sole MLA and bookrunner that arranged, structured and syndicated the $692.55 million non-recourse financing backing the project.

The ADB deal team ensured that the Monsoon project's financing benefited from highly creative and tailored financial structuring, as well as a broad coalition of lenders.

Specifically, ADB mobilized a $60 million concessional finance package to reduce the risk of default if the project's cashflow is impacted by curtailment events. The loans and grant will provide a debt service buffer during the operational life of the project and an additional cash reserve account that can be drawn in the event of any extreme curtailment event.

The Impact Electron Siam-led consortium's project has shown that it is possible to structure a bankable cross-border wind financing of significant scale and complexity, creating a template to follow for future deals of its kind.

Monsoon is on a 1.1-1.5km elevated plateau in Sekong and Attapeu provinces, along the highway connecting Ubon Ratchatani, Thailand, to Danang, Vietnam.

Renewable Energy of the Year – RTC

ReNew RTC

The Renew RTC project is a groundbreaking initiative in the realm of renewable energy, integrating onshore wind, solar, and battery energy storage systems across three Indian states to achieve reliable energy generation. With a total installed capacity of 1.3GW, it stands as India's pioneering venture in this domain, featuring the largest Power Factor facility for a single energy project.

Backed by a leading global renewable energy firm, this project effectively addresses intermittency issues to ensure a continuous power supply. However, assembling the project posed considerable challenges, requiring meticulous navigation of regulatory requirements and optimal capacity mapping while maintaining competitive tariffs. Renew holds a majority stake of 51%, with Mitsui holding the remaining 40% shareholding.

The project encompasses 900MW of wind capacity and 400MW of solar capacity, complemented by 100MWph batteries distributed across Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. Its financing, totaling $985 million over a 5-year mini-perm arrangement from 12 international banks, enabled the $1.36 billion project to achieve financial close in February 2023.

Overcoming a myriad of challenges ranging from technical complexities to project configuration, securing timely land and transmission approvals, and navigating the EPC process to mitigate risks amidst a rising interest rate environment, underscores the project's resilience and ingenuity.

Renewable Energy Deal of the Year – Biomass

SAEL Biomass Energy Project

The project entails the construction of five 14.9MW biomass power plants, collectively generating 74.5MW, across five districts in Rajasthan, India. These plants utilize agricultural residue as feedstock, addressing the prevalent issue of air pollution stemming from the burning of agricultural residue in north India.

Given the dominance of agriculture in the Indian economy, a significant amount of agricultural residue is traditionally burned on-farm to prepare fields for the next crop, exacerbating air pollution levels. SAEL's initiative aims to alleviate this issue by harnessing agricultural residue, specifically mustard stalk, groundnut husk, and paddy straw sourced from local farmers, to generate electricity.

This project not only contributes to India's energy transition but also brings about societal benefits.

In March 2023, Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided a Rs7.54 billion ($91m) 12-year local currency financing covering entire debt funding needs for the 5 biomass power projects, and mobilized private sector insurance companies through risk participation since they cannot provide rupee loans even if they have risk appetite.

Through negotiations with SAEL to ensure the project's bankability, including its contractual structure, ADB has played a crucial role in making the transaction viable. With the backing of this multilateral institution, the project is expected to attract more investors to similar sustainable initiatives in the future.

Renewable Energy Deal of the Year – Waste-to-Energy

China Tianying – Vietnam

China Tianying's over $300 million waste-to-energy (WtE) plant in Vietnam stands as the country's largest facility of its kind, having recently secured new financing in early 2023.

The $200 million 3-year financing, led by Deutsche Bank and inclusive of a $60 million greenshoe, signifies a shift in commercial lenders' appetite for such assets, replacing an earlier ECA-backed financing.

Structured as a limited recourse transaction with credit enhancements, the syndicated loan saw participation from Ping

An Bank Co, HSBC, Bank SinoPac Co, Cathay United Bank, Shanghai Pudong Development Bank, and the Bank of East Asia, in addition to Deutsche Bank.

Backed by a direct guarantee from the Chinese parent, the PF loan provides limited recourse. The Vietnam subsidiary, Ha Noi Thien Y Environmental Energy Joint Stock Company, operates the 4,000-tonne Soc Son municipal solid waste (MSW) plant at Nam Son Waste Treatment Complex, located in the Soc Soc district of Hanoi City.

Construction commenced in August 2019 for this facility, now one of the largest WTE projects in the country, boasting a power generation capacity of 75MW. Serving up to 70% of Hanoi municipality's waste treatment needs, the project has garnered legal advisory support from Allen & Overy for the lenders and Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer for the sponsors, with AFRY providing technical expertise.

Renewable Energy Deal of the Year – BESS

Hyogo Project

The Hyogo BESS project is the first lithium battery project of Japan’s biggest petroleum producer Idemitsu Kosan, and the first BESS project to receive project financing in Japan.

With a capacity of 15MW/48MWh, it marks the latest step in the development of the BESS market in Japan. The project is being developed on land owned by Idemitsu Kosan, on the site of one of its former refineries, and will help the oil company as well as the country in achieving its energy transition goals.

It is the first battery project to receive non-recourse project financing in Japan and will play a key role in stabilizing Japan’s grid network in preparation for future renewables projects. The project will also allow for greater flexibility and efficiency in the existing network by reducing the risk posed by fluctuations/intermittency caused by operating renewable energy sources.

The project is being developed by a JV, Himeji Energy Storage Facility, which is jointly owned by Idemitsu Kosan, Renova, Nagase, and Sumitomo Mitsui Finance and Leasing Corp subsidiary SMFL Mirai Partners. SMFL Mirai Partners were the sole lenders and lead arrangers on the facility. Nishimura & Asahi advised the sponsors.

Portfolio Financing Deal of the Year

Sherabad, Jizzakh, Samarkand Solar PV Portfolio

Masdar’s this solar portfolio in Uzbekistan comprises 3 photovoltaic projects being developed at Samarkand (220MW), Jizzakh (220MW), and Sherabad (457MW). The Abu-Dhabi headquartered company closed these deals towards the end of 2023.

The transactions are structured as public-private partnerships and backed by several DFIs and multilateral lenders.

With a total cost of $839 million, the projects were structured with the assistance of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), resulting in some of the most competitive tariffs in the region. Masdar's solar portfolio is a critical component of Uzbekistan's energy transition strategy, aiming to deploy 30GW of renewable energy and connect it to the grid by 2030.

Awarded through a competitive international tender run by the government and structured by the IFC as part of their Scaling Solar 2 initiative, these projects will generate enough energy to power over 1 million households while offsetting more than 1 million tons of CO_2 emissions.

Further, under the 30-year power purchase agreement (PPA) with state-owned utility National Electric Grid of

Uzbekistan, these projects will enhance the country's energy security, affordability, and sustainability. Masdar has also committed to a gender action plan to facilitate job opportunities for women on the projects, thereby increasing their participation in Uzbekistan's renewable energy sector.

Financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and co-financed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), European Investment Bank (EIB), as well as FMO and ILX. The projects received advisory support from a consortium of firms including Clifford Chance, Mazars, Cranmore Partners, White and Case, Suntrace, Centil Law, Synergy Consulting, Norton Rose Fullbright, WSP, and BNY Mellon as the inter-creditor.

Renewable Energy Deal of the Year – Offshore Wind

Jeonnam 1

The Jeonnam I offshore wind farm marks a significant milestone as the first internationally non-recourse financed offshore wind project in Korea. Despite its modest 99MW capacity, the project required an investment of approximately $550 million-equivalent in Korean Won. Financial close on the $480 million-equivalent facility was achieved on 31 January 2023.

The project ownership falls under a 51:49 JV between Korea’s SK E&S and Denmark’s Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners. It is the first to be awarded a 20-year offtake agreement under the country’s fixed price auctions, introduced in 2022, and may become one of the first commercial-scale offshore wind farms commissioned in Korea.

The farm found funding under challenging conditions caused by the sudden shift from bi-lateral offtake negotiations to fixed-price auctions, necessitating the negotiation and signing of the facility with the lenders within 2-3 months following the award of the offtake agreement.

The offshore project also extends robust support to nearby residents through the allocation of funds from a designated tranche (referred to as the resident participation tranche), facilitating local ownership in the venture.

It also catalyzed the establishment of a sustainable local supply chain for offshore wind development, poised to benefit future projects spearheaded by international developers. Remarkably, this initiative marked the first instance of a multi-EPC contract structure in Korea.

Korean Development Bank and Credit Agricole acted on behalf of developers and served as principal lead arrangers for the four-tranche facility, attracting participation from a diverse range of international lenders and Korean asset managers. White & Case LLP and Kim & Chang advised the sponsors, while Linklaters LLP and Lee & Ko counselled the lenders in navigating the complexities of the project.

Power Deal of the Year – Gas-fired

Unique Meghnaghat

The Unique Meghnaghat combined cycle gas turbine stands out as one of Bangladesh's largest privately developed and operated gas-fired power projects, having garnered financing from a mix of international banks, development finance institutions, and local lenders. With a project cost totaling $620 million, it successfully reached financial closure in December 2023.

This project is spearheaded by Bangladeshi firms Unique Hotels & Resorts and Strategic Finance Limited, with the notable addition of Qatar-headquartered Nebras Power in 2021. It marks the Bangladeshi developers' maiden venture into the energy sector and serves as Nebras' inaugural entry into the country's market.

Despite facing numerous construction challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project overcame hurdles to secure financing, navigating through tough market conditions in Bangladesh, including foreign currency shortages in 2022.

Notably, a refinancing arrangement was successfully negotiated with initially hesitant local lenders to address short-term financing needs. The construction phase was underwritten by local banks through letters of credit, while international lenders facilitated appropriate Taka and dollar financing to ensure repayment as part of the initial disbursement.

The $483 million multi-sourced, four-tranche facility was financed by entities such as Standard Chartered Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Deutsche Investitions-und Entwicklungsgesellschaft, and the OPEC Fund for International Development.

Cover for the facility was provided by ECA Swiss Export Risk Insurance, with legal counsel provided by Clifford Chance and Ashurst for the lenders and borrowers, respectively.

Power Deal of the Year – Hybrid

Project Helix

Keppel's 600MW Sakra combined cycle power plant is the first hydrogen-ready power plant in Singapore. The S$750 million ($566m) project achieved financial close on 31 March 2023, representing a material transition to a more sustainable power generation solution for Singapore. The project will play a key role in bridging the energy needs and the energy transition ambitions of the nation.

The project is owned under a 70:30 joint venture by Keppel Asia Infrastructure Fund and Keppel Energy. It can operate on 30% hydrogen on commissioning in 2026 and will be capable of eventually running on 100% hydrogen. The Sakra Cogen Plant will be the most energy-efficient among Keppel's operating fleet in Singapore, featuring superior power generation capabilities, lower emission intensity, and higher operation flexibility.

Operating initially on natural gas as a primary fuel, the plant will be able to save up to 220,000 tons per year of CO2 as compared to Singapore's average operating efficiency for equivalent power generated. The steam generated by the plant will also be utilized by local off-takers on Jurong Island to power other energy and chemical plants.

A S$620 million, 10-year facility was financed by SMBC, DBS, and Credit Agricole Group.

PPP Deal of the Year – Power

Syrdarya II

The 1.58GW Syrdarya II combined cycle gas-fired power project in Uzbekistan is the first thermal power plant awarded as a PPP in Uzbekistan and underwent a competitive bidding process structured by the IFC. The greenfield project cost a little over $1 billion.

The project was awarded to an international consortium of Electricite de France International, Sojitz Corp, Nebras Power, and Kyuden International Corp. It will play a critical role in the expansion of Uzbekistan's power sector, which will improve energy efficiency and reduce the country's emissions/environmental impact. The project will contribute towards the modernization of Uzbekistan's CCGT plants, accounting for 82% of its energy generation capability, of which 40% are in dire need of retrofit and upgradation works.

The $805.7 million, 3-tranche, 23-year facility was the first in Asia wherein JBIC and the IFC both provided financing and featured the participation of commercial banks in Uzbekistan. It is also the first deal in Asia co-financed by both the IFC and NEXI. The challenge posed by Uzbekistan's lower credit score (BB- as per S&P) was addressed with NEXI's coverage of the commercial tranche.

SMBC, Societe Generale and Mizuho bank provided loans with NEXI coverage, with the IFC providing direct loans and Hedges. JBIC provide a fixed rate loan and another floating rate loan. Advisers to the lenders were Ashurst LLP, Lummus Consultants (technical), Marsh (insurance) and Mazars. Synergy Consulting, Norton Rose Fulbright, and AON advised the sponsors. The IFC and Hogen Lovells advised the sovereign.

PPP Deal of the Year – Social Infrastructure

NZ Schools II PPP

In March 2023, Morison secured a NZ$284 million ($175m) green loan facility to refinance debts associated with its 25-year New Zealand Schools II public-private partnership. Completed in 2018, the project currently serves over 5,000 students and encompasses the design, construction, financing, and maintenance of four schools located in Queenstown, Auckland, and Christchurch.

A notable aspect of this transaction is its emphasis on sustainability and adherence to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles. The loan was accredited based on various environmental factors, such as the construction of green buildings, emphasis on energy efficiency, waste and water management, and promotion of clean transportation through cycleways and pedestrian projects. Social factors, including access to essential services, were also considered.

The refinancing facility will address debts incurred in 2021, featuring a three-year term and backing from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and the China Construction Bank. Beyond refinancing previous debts, the facility will facilitate the expansion of two schools within the portfolio. Notably, the loan will finance the expansion of Rolleston College in Christchurch to accommodate an additional 700 students.

Refinance Deal of the Year – Airport

Perth Airport

Perth Airport operates under a 99-year lease from the Commonwealth Government and stands as the primary airport facility facilitating scheduled domestic and international air travel in and out of Perth. It proudly holds the distinction of being the fourth largest airport in Australia by passenger traffic.

In July 2023, Perth Airport successfully executed a comprehensive refinance of its bank debt, attracting the participation of 12 lenders. The facility was divided into A$400 million ($265m) 3-year, A$400 million 4.5-year, and A$300 million 6.5-year revolving credit facilities.

Among the prominent lenders were National Australia Bank, SMBC, and Westpac, underscoring the confidence in the airport's recovery as passenger traffic rebounded to pre-Covid levels.

With an ambitious capital expenditure program on the horizon, including the development of a new terminal and the potential construction of a Third Runway, Perth Airport anticipates the need for continued capital and support in the future. The revolving credit facilities serve as a robust platform for the airport to pursue its growth initiatives.

The sponsors of the airport include Utilities Trust of Australia, The Infrastructure Fund, Australia Retirement Trust, and other entities committed to the long-term success and development of the airport.

Refinance Deal of the Year – Data Centre

Project Lightsaber

AirTrunk, an Australia-based hyperscale-focused data centre operator, secured an approximately A$4.6 billion financing across Australian, Singaporean, and Hong Kong dollars. Dubbed Project Lightsaber, this multi-tranche facility closed in September 2023, aiming to refinance AirTrunk's A$2.6 billion debt due in 2025 while also allocating funds for new projects and meeting working capital requirements.

The transaction comprises a A$2.5 billion in loan with tenors of 4, 5, and 7 years, a A$1.5 billion delay draw term loan with tenors of 4 and 5 years, a A$230 million capex revolving credit facility (RCF) with a 5-year term, and a A$350 million RCF with a 5-year term.

Credit Agricole, alongside Deutsche Bank and HSBC, served as one of the seven mandated lead arrangers, bookrunners, and underwriters, with joint responsibility for sustainability structuring advisory. The financing attracted significant interest, with participation from 16 existing lenders and 23 new banks, resulting in over 2 times oversubscription.

This transaction stands out as the largest in Asia among data centre operators, featuring several noteworthy achievements. It marks the first globally to incorporate all three-grid metrics—carbon, water usage and power usage effectiveness —in a sustainability-linked loan (SLL), ensuring the highest level of environmental transparency and accountability for a data operator.

The deal also introduced five key performance indicators aligned with AirTrunk's broader sustainability strategy, focusing on energy, water, and carbon efficiency, gender pay equity, and gender diversity.

Since April 2020, Macquarie Asset Management and the Canadian pension fund PSP Investments collectively hold an 88% stake in AirTrunk, solidifying its ownership structure.

Refinance Deal of the Year – Renewables Portfolio

TILT Renewables

Tilt Renewables is one of the largest owners of wind and solar farms in Australia, with portfolio of 1.3GW of operating assets, 0.4GW under construction and another 3GW in the development pipeline.

In June 2023, the developer closed a 5-year refinancing of A$1.516 billion ($1bn) of portfolio assets including 1 solar farm of 157MW and 7 operating wind farms of 1.156MW capacity, spread across 4 Australian states.

The refinancing comprises of 2 revolving credit facilities and 2 working capital facilities and attracted 18 lenders including ANZ, BNP Paribas, Bank of China, Credit Agricole CIB, CBA, China Construction Bank, DBS, HSBC, MUFG, ING, Mizuho, SMBC and UOB. Proceeds were for refinancing and also funding further expansion of the developer’s portfolio.

Given the size and a portfolio spread across Australia, the transaction was not that easy sell but on the back of strong off-takers and sponsorship it attracted lenders to offer competitive terms. The company is a strategic partnership between AGL Energy, Future Fund and QIC.

Among advisers, Jacobs was on the technical side, DNV handled energy yield, EY tax, Baringa market and MLF while Aon was the insurance adviser.

Refinance Deal of the Year – Onshore Wind

Project Typhoon

Project Typhoon is a portfolio of 100 operational wind turbines totalling 230MW across west coast of Taiwan, making it one of the largest brownfield onshore wind portfolios in Taiwan.

A NT$5.272 billion ($163m) refinancing supported Macquarie Asset Management in its acquisition of a majority stake in these assets from InfraVest Asia, with German offshore wind developer [wpd maintaining a minority stake].

The acquisition encompassed 5 onshore wind farms – Luwei Wind Power (WP), Chungwei WP, Tongwei WP, Chinfeng WP and Anwei WP.

The transaction entails debt refinancing for 3 separate project finance facilities. The assets are backed by long-term corporate PPAs signed with TSMC, but they also benefit from the back-stop PPA regime with state-owned Taipower, a structure which we saw getting adopted in Hai Long's financial close too.

[For this acquisition], Macquarie used Macquarie GIG Renewable Energy Fund 2([MGREF 2]) its flagship unlisted global renewable 25 years closed-ended fund.

Credit Agricole CIB, CTBC Bank, SMBC and Taipei Fubon Commercial Bank were the 4 mandated lead arrangers to the refinancing.

Wrap of the Year

InfraZamin Pakistan

InfraZamin Pakistan, in partnership with Kashf Foundation, launched South Asia and Pakistan's inaugural $8.8 million-equivalent gender bond, aimed at fostering greater financial empowerment and economic opportunities for women. The bond received a long-term AAA rating from PACRA and garnered subscriptions from over 30 institutional investors.

Fully credit-wrapped by InfraZamin, safeguarding 100% of the principle, the bond attracted a diverse array of investors, including mutual funds, pension funds, and insurance entities.

The proceeds from the bond will bolster the balance sheet of the issuer, Kashf Foundation, facilitating commercial capital access for approximately 30,000 women from low-income and rural households nationwide. This will empower them to pursue entrepreneurial ventures, rehabilitate flood-affected homes, and expand small businesses and public infrastructure, including schools.

The funds will be directed towards women-led micro-infrastructure projects, with 40% allocated to school expansion in rural/semi-rural areas, another 40% for the renovation and development of climate-resilient low-income housing, and the remaining 20% for the growth of small businesses through working capital and business expansion lending under Kashf's Kamyab Karobar scheme.

InfraZamin spearheaded this transaction, serving as guarantor to enhance the credit ratings of Kashf Foundation. PACRA provided the rating, while Arif Habib Limited acted as the arranger and advisor. InfraZamin also received backing from its owners, the Private Infrastructure Development Group, for this initiative.

Innovation Deal of the Year – Bonds

Bayfront Infrastructure

Bayfront Infrastructure Management, a platform backed by Singapore's sovereign wealth fund Temasek, has been at the forefront of creating a market for securitization of project and infrastructure debt.

In September 2023, the platform sold about $410.3 million of asset-backed securities to global investors in its fourth such issuance since 2018 when Bayfront became the first issuer in the region to print a transaction through a collatorised loan obligation structure.

The transaction saw many firsts, attracting oversubscription from investors including Apollo FGlobal Management and the UK's Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). Overall, the transaction attracted about $700 million in orders, representing over 1.9 times oversubscription for $371.7 million of rated notes.

BIC Infrastructure Capital IV (BIC IV) is the issuer of the 5-tranche deal spread across 40 individual loans/bonds from 33 projects spread over 15 countries (including Africa and Middle East) and 10 industry sub-sectors.

Among the tranches, the $115m class A1-SU notes is the sustainability tranche. Apart from these assets backed-securities tranches, Bayfront, the sponsor, acquired 20.6 million preference shares (5% of the capital structure) prior to the issue date to hold them until maturity.

As part of its Mobilising Institutional Capital Through Listed Product Structures (MOBILIST) programme, the UK's FCDO also committed an anchor investment of up to $20.4 million in the pref shares, receiving a final allocation of $5 million or equivalent to 5 million shares.

The $13 million class D notes benefitted from a guarantee from GuarantCo for the principal and interest amounts. All the class D notes are purchased by funds managed by Apollo Global.

Citi was the left-lead on the deal that saw other joint lead managers and bookrunners including Standard Chartered Bank, ING, OCBC, Societe Generale and SMBC Nikko.

Innovation Deal of the Year – Partial Guarantee

Pran Agro

Pran Agro, a Bangladeshi agro-processing company, issued a T2.6 billion ($24m) bond, backed by a partial credit guarantee from GuarantCo.

Proceeds of the 8-year bonds will fuel Agro's infrastructure expansion plans, particularly aimed at augmenting its agro-processing capacity to meet escalating product demand and enhance export potential. The funds will be allocated towards expanding factories and procuring machinery to boost production.

This transaction holds significant societal benefits, envisaging around 240 new contract farmers with a steady income source and creating approximately 330 jobs, with 60% earmarked for women. It lays the groundwork for future partial guarantee initiatives, fostering increased female employment in the food production and agricultural sector, alongside elevated levels of training and education.

This deal also marks Guarantor's second collaboration with Pran Agro, showcasing its proactive approach in aligning stakeholders and achieving transaction objectives. The bond stands out as Bangladesh's maiden partially guaranteed issuance and marks the country's first 8-year fixed-price bond issuance.

The significance of this milestone amplifies given the nascent state of Bangladesh's bond market, characterized by regulatory complexities and limited long-term liquidity. Addressing these challenges, especially the scarcity of long-term financing options, presents a notable advancement, given most previous bonds were issued for 5-6 years.

MetLife Bangladesh emerged as the sole investor in the bond issuance, with Riverstone Capital serving as the issue manager and Green Delta Capital as the trustee. The transaction banks involved were Eastern Bank PLC and Pubali Bank.

Green loan – Data Centres

SEL 2 Financing

Stonepeak-backed Digital Edge made its debut in the South Korean data center market with its inaugural green loan, earmarked for financing phase 1 of up to 100MW project.

Situated in Seoul, the facility, known as SEL2, stands as the largest commercial colocation center in South Korea to date. A W440 billion ($335m) 5-year financing, comprising fixed and floating-rate tranches, was orchestrated by Credit Agricole and ING Bank, with participation from five additional lenders.

The company's new data center aims to achieve an annualized design Power Usage Effectiveness of 1.27, well below the global industry average of 1.55. Leveraging Bloom Energy fuel cell technology, the facility seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance electricity generation reliability, powering the general lighting and energy needs of the data center's shell and core.

Additionally, Digital Edge plans to employ efficient engineering design to minimize water and energy consumption, aligning with its carbon-neutral objective by 2030.

The first phase is due to start operations by end of 2024.

Oil & Gas Deal of the Year – Decarbonisation

RDMP Balikpapan

Indonesian oil and gas giant Pertamina secured a substantial $3.1 billion financing package to facilitate the expansion of its refinery situated on Borneo Island in East Kalimantan in September 2023.

This expansion forms a pivotal component of the government's broader $17 billion national strategic refinery development master plan (RDMP), aimed at modernizing five key refineries in alignment with Indonesia's energy transition roadmap towards achieving a net-zero target by 2060.

Under a joint study agreement, Pertamina is partnering with Air Liquide to implement cutting-edge carbon capture and utilization technologies within the $6 billion Balikpapan refinery. This refinery's expansion is scheduled to commence operations on October 1, 2025.

Upon completion, this state-backed refinery will witness a significant capacity increase from 260,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 360,000 bpd. Kilang Pertamina Internasional, Pertamina's refinery unit, serves as the borrower for this ambitious endeavor.

Given the project's magnitude and importance, the transaction, spanning a duration of 13.7 years, garnered participation from 22 lenders, including renowned institutions such as Credit Agricole CIB, Societe Generale, Banco Santander, Standard Chartered, Deutsche Bank, SMBC, HSBC, and Bank of China.

Mizuho Bank provided financial advisory services. The deal also attracted export credit agencies (ECAs) from Italy, South Korea, and the US, offering support through ECAs-backed and direct loans.

Oil & Gas Deal of the Year – Downstream

HPCL Rajasthan Refinery

HPCL Rajasthan Refinery (HRRL) – a 74/26 JV between state-owned refiner HPCL and the Rajasthan government – achieved financial close on its Rs729.37 billion ($8.8bn) greenfield refinery and petrochemical complex facility in northwestern India.

One of the largest such transactions in the country, the Rs486.25 billion-equivalent ($599m) debt facility backing the 9MMTPA refinery was signed on 4 July 2023 among 10 lenders including State Bank of India.

Situated at Barmer district of Rajasthan, about 100km from Jodhpur the refinery and petrochemical complex is situated over 4600 acres of land. Central government owned HPCL will be the sole offtaker and would be responsible for marketing both the petroleum and petchem products.

Considering the variable nature of the cash flows in the refining and petrochemical projects, it was essential to obtain a long-dated loan so that the amortization can be synchronized with the cash flows from the project.

The financial advisor, SBI Capital Markets, worked towards this goal to help the borrower obtain a 25-year rupee loan and a 15-year offshore facility.

The debt includes a $140 million commitment, or Rs10.03 billion equivalent, from IIFC (UK).

This US dollar portion matures on 30 September 2033 while the rest of Rs476.22 billion facility matures on 30 September 2043, one of the longest tenor commercial loan in India.

Construction of the complex started before 2019, with COD aimed at 1 July 2024.

Oil & Gas Deal of the Year – LNG Terminal

HK Offshore LNG Terminal Project

The Hong Kong offshore LNG terminal project marks a groundbreaking milestone as the first deployment of a floating storage regasification unit (FSRU) in Hong Kong. This $1 billion initiative, finalized on July 3, 2023, stands out not only for its substantial scale but also for the impressive LNG storage capacity of its FSRU, totaling 263,000 cubic meters.

Named Bauhinia Spirit, the offshore LNG terminal situated in the south-western waters of Hong Kong represents a pioneering endeavor in the territory. Upon commissioning, it claimed the title of the world's largest FSRU vessel.

This project holds strategic significance, as it grants power companies in Hong Kong direct access to international LNG markets, offering an alternative fuel source to meet escalating demand. It plays a vital role in Hong Kong's initiative to enhance the share of natural gas in the city's power generation, thereby reducing carbon emissions intensity.

Despite facing numerous challenges, including adverse weather conditions, pandemic-related restrictions, and design complexities, the construction of the FSRU was successfully executed. The project necessitated meticulous agreement drafting to align with downstream arrangements, given the vessel's substantial size.

Mayer Brown provided advisory services to the project company, Hong Kong LNG Terminal, whose shareholders include Castle Peak Power Company and The Hongkong Electric Company.

Shell's subsidiary, Shell Eastern Trading, plays a pivotal role by supplying LNG to the terminal from its global portfolio, ensuring the project's operational success and contributing to Hong Kong's energy sustainability goals.

Oil & Gas Deal of the Year – Petchem

LINE Project

In April 2023, Lotte Chemical Corp successfully closed a $2.4 billion equivalent financing for its Lotte Chemical Indonesia New Ethylene Project (LINE project) located in the Banten province. This project, jointly developed with Lotte subsidiary Lotte Chemical Titan Holding, in which the latter holds a 51% ownership stake, commenced construction in Q1 of 2022 and is slated for commercial production by 2025.

The LINE project carries significant implications for Indonesia's economic development, bolstering domestic naphtha production capabilities and improving the country's balance of trade. With Indonesia currently reliant on neighboring countries for 50% of its petrochemical imports due to insufficient domestic production, the project promises to enhance self-sufficiency and reduce dependency.

Comprising four key production units, including the naphtha cracking center, Butadiene plant, BTX (Benzene toluene and xylenes) plant, and Polypropylene plant, the project boasts impressive capacities tailored to meet market demands.

Noteworthy is the financing structure of the project, marked by a 12-year door-to-door facility—a rare instance of a corporate loan transaction backed by Korean ECAs, namely Korea Trade Insurance Corp and the Export-Import Bank of Korea, with comprehensive 100% coverage. Standard Chartered served as the structuring and ECA coordinating bank, alongside Mizuho as the other coordinating bank. Additionally, 10 commercial lenders participated in the transaction, extending credit across two of the three tranches of the facility.

Legal counsel for the project was provided by White and Case for the sponsors, with Witara Cakra Advocates serving as Indonesia's local counsel to the SPV, Lotte Chemical Indonesia. Linklaters represented both local and international lenders, ensuring regulatory compliance and legal clarity throughout the transaction process.

Green Bond of the Year

REC

Despite market volatility, REC Limited, formerly known as Rural Electrification Corp, demonstrated resilience by successfully launching a $750 million green bond offering with remarkable outcomes.

After conducting global roadshows in late February, the state-owned issuer seized the opportune market window and launched the offering in April 2023.

Although the roadshows initially garnered promising demand, the transaction was delayed for a few days due to choppy market conditions caused by the collapse of some lending institutions and the bailout of others. Eventually, the deal was launched with an initial price guidance of 250 basis points over 5-year US Treasuries. As orderbooks swelled, surpassing $3 billion during Asia market hours, the pricing tightened to 212.5 basis points over UST.

The overwhelming response not only resulted in a minimal 7.5 basis point new issue concession on the notes but also allowed REC to upsize the offering to $750 million. This offering marked the first non-bank trade from India since March 2022 and stood as the largest-ever senior dollar offering by an Indian non-banking finance company. Moreover, it represented the biggest senior green bond offering by a South Asian and Southeast Asian issuer.

Barclays, DBS Bank, MUFG, Standard Chartered, and State Bank of India's London branch jointly led the green offering, underscoring the collaborative efforts of key financial institutions in facilitating REC's successful foray into the green bond market.

ESG Deal of the Year

Indonesia Samurai Blue Bonds

Indonesia is actively pursuing its energy transition agenda to reduce coal dependence and achieve its net-zero objectives. As part of its strategy to align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the country has initiated the issuance of blue bonds.

In May 2023, Indonesia issued approximately $150 million-equivalent in JPY bonds across four tranches. Notably, two of these tranches included a 7-year 1.20% blue tranche totaling ¥14.7 billion and a 10-year 1.43% blue tranche totaling ¥6 billion.

Daiwa Securities, Mitsubishi UFJ Morgan Stanley Securities, Mizuho Securities, and SMBC Nikko Securities served as joint bookrunners for the transaction, with Allen & Overy providing advisory services.

This milestone marked the first-ever blue bond issuance by an Asian sovereign in the Japanese bonds market and one of the few blue bonds issued by a sovereign globally. The success of the issuance sets a precedent for other archipelagic and island nations to follow suit and issue their own blue bonds.

Indonesia's debut blue bond sale builds upon its earlier achievements, including the maiden sale of SDG Eurobonds in 2021 and Green Sukuk in 2022, showcasing the country's commitment to sustainable finance and environmental stewardship.

Social Infrastructure Deal of the Year

Telangana Super-Specialty Hospitals

The Government of Telangana (GoT) is taking significant steps to enhance healthcare infrastructure in the state by establishing super-specialty hospitals in Warangal and Hyderabad. In January 2022, GoT established the Telangana Super-Specialty Hospitals Corporation Limited (TSSHCL) to realize this vision.

Despite Hyderabad's large population and high per capita income, access to government super-specialty hospitals remains limited, leading to heavy reliance on private healthcare facilities. TSSHCL aims to address this gap by constructing a green-field super-specialty hospital in Warangal and three others in Hyderabad.

The financing for these projects represents a groundbreaking development in India's public healthcare sector. For the first time, bank funding is being utilized for state-developed super-specialty hospitals, with SBI Capital Markets leading the transaction as a financial advisor and arranger.

The $478 million-equivalent 15-year loans, finalized in March 2023, were structured to align with project timelines and anticipated cash flows. To mitigate risks, a Rs4 billion standby loan facility was secured to cover potential cost overruns, backed by project assets and land valued at approximately Rs 19.41 billion.

The tranches included a Rs23.85-billion-rupee term loan (RTL) and a Rs3 billion letter of credit (LoC) commitment (as a sublimit of RTL).

Upon completion, these hospitals will more than double the bed capacity of public super-specialty hospitals, with a capital outlay of Rs61.47 billion. State-owned REC provided the funding, diversifying away from its core financing to the power sector due to the project's societal importance.