



APN

Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research

What is APN?

GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH

There are a number of long-term environmental changes taking place on earth. Many of these changes are influenced by human activities, and in response they affect the quality of human life. Examples include climate change and changes in the way land is used, such as deforestation or urbanisation. The attempt to understand the cause, extent and effect of these worldwide environmental changes is called global change research.

Global environmental change cuts across national boundaries. Therefore the cooperation and collaboration of all countries is important to conduct the research necessary to understand its causes and impacts.



WHY WAS THE APN ESTABLISHED?



The APN was established as a regional research network that would focus on broadening global change research, providing support for multi-disciplinary research and education and encouraging the development of sound science that underpins national and international policy-making needs in the Asia-Pacific region.

The countries in the Asia-Pacific region are carrying out extensive research activities in the field of global change, but much closer transnational collaboration, coordination and information exchange is needed.

WHY DOES THE APN FOCUS ON THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION?



The Asia-Pacific is an important region for the understanding of global environmental problems. Important atmospheric and oceanic phenomena occur here, such as the Asian Monsoon and the El Niño phenomena, which affect the world climate, and the region also has tropical forests, deserts, and mountains. At the same time, the Asia-Pacific region contains nearly three-fifths of the world's total human population. In addition, its economic growth rate is the highest of any region in the world. Because of its population growth rate and its economic activities, this region contributes to global climate change in a major way. Degradation of the environment, such as deforestation and desertification, is becoming a matter of great concern, as are natural disasters which occur as a result of this degradation, such as floods and droughts.



Thus, observation, monitoring, and research on global change in the Asia-Pacific region are indispensable to understanding environmental changes taking place on a global scale. In addition, stronger links are needed between the science community and policy-makers. The APN was created to answer these needs.

APN Timeline

1990 White House Conference on Science and Economics Research Related to Global Change	1992-95 Planning Workshops	1996 Official Launch
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APN OBJECTIVES

In particular, APN promotes the following objectives:

- Supporting regional cooperation in global change research on issues that are particularly relevant to the region
- Standardisation, collection, and exchange of scientific data relating to global change research
- Improvement of scientific and technical capabilities and research infrastructure of nations in the region
- Cooperation with research networks in other regions
- Providing scientific knowledge to the public, and input to policy decision-making
- Development of appropriate mechanisms for transfer of know-how and technology



Activities

In order to achieve its objectives the APN conducts a number of different activities including:

- Supporting collaborative research and training activities
- Organising planning and scoping workshops to develop new research projects
- Disseminating global change information to scientists and policy-makers
- Providing opportunities for governments and scientists to discuss regional research priorities and other global change issues

APN Timeline		
1997 First Call for Proposals	1999 Adoption of the 'APN Strategic Plan 1999-2004'	1999 Dedicated Secretariat Established in Kobe, Japan

The organisational structure of the APN is based around a joint annual meeting of policy-makers (IGM) and scientists (SPG).

The Inter-Governmental Meeting (IGM) is the main decision-making body of the APN, where the final decisions are made on the allocation of funding for proposals, organisational procedures, and work to be carried out over the coming year.

The Scientific Planning Group (SPG) is responsible for the scientific aspects of the APN's work including the scientific agenda and recommendations on which projects to fund each year. The recommendations are made to the IGM for approval.

During the year the Secretariat receives guidance from the Steering Committee made up of members from both the IGM and SPG.

The Secretariat provides support to these bodies and the other APN committees and implements the decisions taken. On the other hand the committees also provide support to the Secretariat on specific issues such as proposal reviews.

The APN employs Liaison Officers in Bangkok, Beijing, New Delhi and Suva to act as regional representatives and to coordinate the flow of global change information.



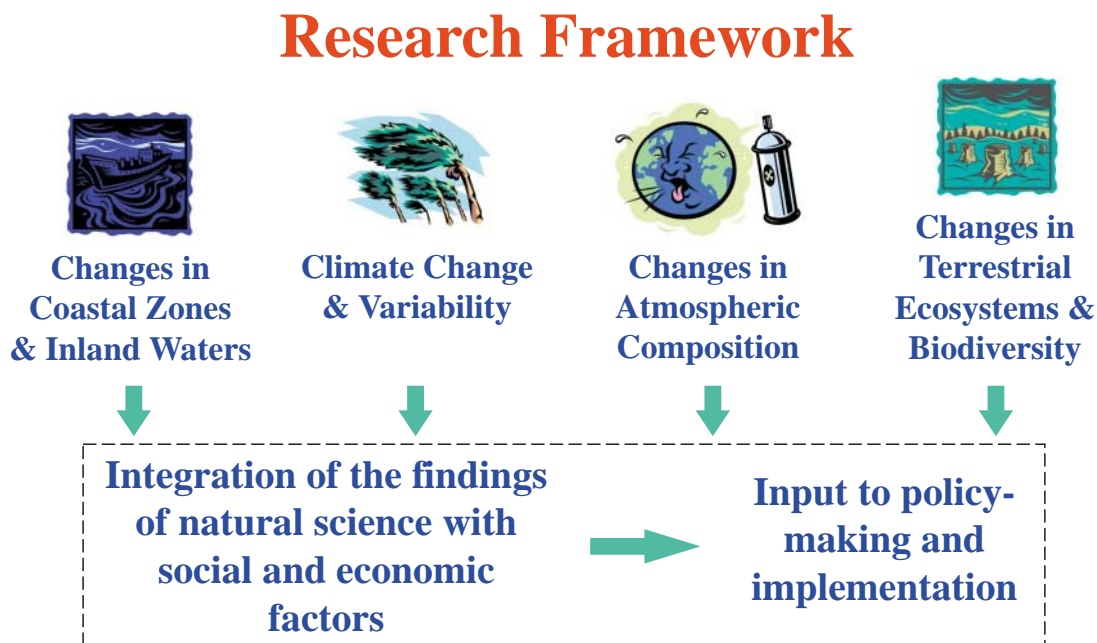
APN Timeline		
<p>2000 Initiation of Networking and Capacity Building Programme</p>	<p>2001 Adoption of the 'Framework of the APN'</p>	<p>2003 Launch of the CAPaBLE Programme</p>

ANNUAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS

APN funding is used to support regional global change research and training activities, the majority of which are selected through a competitive annual Call for Proposals. This call is launched in April throughout the APN network. Proposals must relate to APN research topics and involve at least 3 countries, at least 2 of which must be developing countries. This call is launched in April on the APN website and disseminated throughout the APN network.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The APN's main areas of scientific interest are set out below. The primary concern of the APN is to provide an input to policy-making through the integration of the natural and social sciences. Accordingly, understanding the human dimensions of global change is at the heart of the APN's concerns.



APN Timeline		
2004/2005 Preparation of Evaluation of APN and Second Strategic Plan	2005 APN's Tenth Anniversary	



As the aforementioned activities indicate, a high priority goal of APN is to improve the scientific capabilities of nations in the region and, with this in mind, APN launched a five-year programme on “Scientific Capacity Building/Enhancement for Sustainable Development in Developing Countries” (CAPaBLE) under the APN framework. (CAPaBLE was a Type II partnership initiative registered by Japan at the WSSD.) The objective of this Programme is to develop and enhance scientific capacity in developing countries to improve their decision-making in target areas related to climate change and water and food security that are directly linked to their sustainable development. This is expected to be achieved through a two-track approach:

1. Capacity enhancement for experienced leading scientists; and
2. Capacity building for young and aspiring scientists.

Expected Results:

1. Capacity enhancement of leading researchers in developing countries to produce comprehensive scientific information on climate change impacts, vulnerabilities, adaptation and mitigation opportunities which are made available for policy-makers in developing countries and contribute to international scientific exercises such as the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC due in 2007.
2. Capacity building of young and aspiring scientists through enhanced sharing of knowledge, experience and scientific information on quality data collection and analysis, impacts, vulnerability, adaptation and mitigation to climate change within the Asia-Pacific region and between regions in the world.
3. Improvement of informed decision-making in developing countries by disseminating the outcomes of the research activities to policy-makers, and by enhancing collaboration between scientists and policy-makers.



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CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS

Examples of current projects with a strong capacity building element (workshops of data recovery, standardising metadata, trend interpretation, development and distribution of new data and data products, GIS techniques, training resource planners and managers, etc.) include:

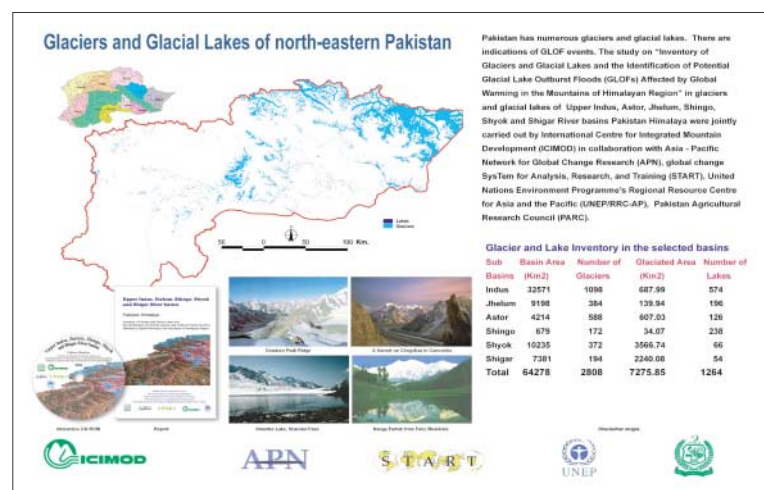
- Climate trends and variability in Oceania
- Spatial data and information for land use and forest assessment and management
- Inventory of glaciers and glacial lakes and the identification of potential glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) affected by global warming in the mountains of the Himalayan region
- Training institute on climate and extreme events in the Pacific



The APN believes that working in partnership with other organisations involved in global change research is essential to maximise the resources available and to deliver the best possible results. In particular, the APN cooperates closely with the International Biodiversity Programme (DIVERSITAS); the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI); the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP); the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP); the global change System for Analysis, Research, and Training (START); and the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP).

Examples of collaboration include:

- Australian Greenhouse Office Symposium on Global Change Research
- Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Seas (EMECS) Asian Forum (EMECS 2001) Asia-Pacific Forum (EMECS 2003)
- IGBP Congress
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) International Workshop on Global Change, Sustainable Development and Environmental Management in Central Asia
- United Nations University (UNU) Roundtable Session: Post WSSD



“Many APN projects involve collaboration with other institutes and organisations that provide co-sponsorship and in-kind contributions.”

The **Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN)** is an inter-governmental network for the promotion of global change research and links between science and policy-making in the Asia-Pacific Region.



CURRENT MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE APN

Australia • Bangladesh • Cambodia • China • Fiji • India • Indonesia • Japan • Lao People's Democratic Republic • Malaysia • Mongolia • Nepal • New Zealand • Pakistan • Philippines • Republic of Korea • Russian Federation • Sri Lanka • Thailand • United States of America and Viet Nam

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Ministry for the Environment
Manatū Mo Te Taiao
New Zealand

Anyone interested in establishing closer contact with the APN or who would like further information on APN funding and other activities should contact the Secretariat.



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