

Fourth APN Scientific Planning Group Meeting

2-4 February 1999, Jakarta, Indonesia

Summary Report from Co-Chairpersons Prof. Aprilani Soegiarto, Prof. Keiji Higuchi

The Meeting was attended by representatives from Australia, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, START Oceania, SARCS, SASCOM, TEACOM, and the International START Secretariat and by observers from Indonesia and the WCRP. A list of participants is given in [Attachment I](#).

[Attachment II : Meeting AGENDA](#)

[Attachment III: Procedures and Criteria for Selection of Funded Activities](#)

1. Opening

Welcoming remarks were given by Dr. Ir. Agus Nuryanto, Chairman of the Local Organising Committee. Mr. Hideyuki Mori made a greeting as Director of the APN Secretariat. Prof. Dr. Harsono Wiryosumarto, Chairman of National Institute of Aeronautics and Space (LAPAN) officially opened the meeting.

2. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as proposed and is attached as Attachment II.

3. Secretariat Review - Funded Activities for 1998/99

The APN Secretariat gave a review of the 13 projects funded during the current fiscal year (12 from the APN project fund, and one from the contingency fund). A publication written by project leaders, "Reports of 1998 - 1999 Projects", was also distributed. The meeting expressed the need for a review system for APN funded projects including an evaluation of results and use of money spent.

4. Project Presentations

The project leaders of three of the activities funded by the APN during the current fiscal

year made presentations of the highlights and outcomes of their work. Prof. Congbin Fu reported on the "Continuation of Regional Climate Modeling (RCM) Development and Applications for Asia". Dr. Kanayathu Koshy reported on the "Planning Workshop - Marine and Coastal Zone Studies in the Asia-Pacific Region". Dr. Michael Manton reported on the "Asia-Pacific Workshop on Indicators and Indices for Monitoring Trends in Climate Extremes". The meeting was grateful for the reports given and some discussion of the projects followed, during which it was mentioned that APN funded projects should generally be encouraged to produce a publication on their findings.

5. Project Proposal Criteria and Evaluation Process

The Secretariat presented the findings from an informal survey of SPG members and led a discussion of recommendations to improve the proposal review process. The results of the discussion are summarized in Attachment III. If adopted at the APN Inter-Governmental Meeting (IGM) the 'Procedures and Criteria for Selection of Funded Activities' will be revised accordingly.

The SPG expressed a strong desire for the APN Secretariat to find ways to streamline the selection process and to explore other ways to respond more quickly, when necessary, to urgent global change issues.

6. Review of Secretariat Activities

The Secretariat reported its work during the past year and the major issues that had arisen. Particular attention was given to the administration of APN funded activities, the project proposals process and the Inter-Governmental and Scientific Planning Group meetings. The failure to appoint SPG members in some APN member countries was highlighted, and the Secretariat indicated that they will try to ensure that all member countries appoint a representative in the near future. Written reports from Liaison Officers from TEACOM and SASCOM were introduced, including a description of key global change research activities of the past year in their regions. It was reported that the APN is seeking Liaison Officers from START Oceania and SARCS. The APN newsletter and Internet Homepage have been the subject of much attention and will continue to be improved. Recently the Secretariat advertised to APN contacts the opportunity to pursue global change research in Japan as part of the Eco Frontier Fellowship scheme. The Secretariat announced some success in attracting additional private funds last year from Japanese foundations, and indicated the pursuit of other sources of funding will continue to be a high priority in the future. The convenience of electronic mail as a means of communication with SPG members was stressed, and the Secretariat suggested that it may be able to provide assistance if an SPG member lacked access to electronic mail.

The Director outlined the desire of the APN to increase funding for its activities and to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat. In this context, he reported on plans to move

the Secretariat to the city of Kobe in Hyogo Prefecture, Japan. This move would mean an increase in Secretariat personnel particularly through the appointment of a full time Director, and also increased administrative and financial resources thanks to the support of Hyogo Prefecture. In response to comments, he assured participants that the APN would retain its strong international character. Indeed, one of the first actions to be taken following the relocation would be the organisation of a workshop on an area of importance to the region, the content of which will be discussed in a special session of the IGM. SPG members voiced their strong support for the strengthening of the APN Secretariat that the move to Kobe would bring and their interest in the proposed workshop.

7. 1999/2000 APN Project Proposals

The Director announced that with increases in support from Japan and the United States the total budget available for APN funded activities would be about US\$1 million in the next fiscal year. This development was warmly welcomed by SPG members, although there was clear agreement that such an amount was still insufficient for the needs of the region. The Director confirmed that according to APN guidelines about 10 to 15% of the project budget would be reserved for the contingency/programme development fund.

The Director explained the process used to evaluate the 69 proposals received by the 30 September deadline. After initial ratings by SPG members the Secretariat had narrowed the selection to those projects with an average score of 3 or higher. These projects were then sent questions and comments by reviewers, and in some cases the responses provided by proponents had led SPG members to change their rating. The Small Group had used the ranking as the basis of their funding recommendations, but had made much effort to consider important factors such as selecting the most relevant projects where proposals were received on similar topics, requesting more collaboration between certain projects, and offering smaller funds than requested in some cases. The SPG supported the recommendations of the Small Group. The outcome of the discussion, including funding amounts for the projects will be presented as a recommendation to the Inter-Governmental Meeting.

There was general agreement that the APN should be selective in considering requests for funds to send participants to meetings and conferences, since in many cases the benefits of sending participants are not always clear. SPG members agreed that the APN should ensure it has the right to influence the selection of participants and to require that appropriate recognition is given for the APN support. A number of specific recommendations were made, for instance that APN-supported participants should be clearly identified as such in the participants list and on their name badges, etc. There was agreement that good geographical coverage in the Asia-Pacific region is desirable in APN-funded activities. The concern was expressed that each member country should be involved in at least one project wherever possible.

The Director explained that after the SPG meeting, proponents of the 12 projects recommended for funding will be contacted about possible changes in budgets and project content suggested by the Small Group, in preparation for a final decision on funding by the IGM.

8. APN Strategic Plan

The Secretariat made a presentation on the main elements of the draft Strategic Plan, and thanked SPG members for their positive contributions to the planning process. There had been a great deal of agreement on the strategic direction that the APN should take during the next 5 years. It was suggested that the main issues for discussion at the SPG should be those relevant to the scientific concerns of the APN, namely the proposals concerning Key Scientific Priorities, the APN Project Funding Model, the concept of APN Facilitated Projects and the re-draft of the Scientific Agenda.

At that point the floor was opened for a general discussion of the Strategic Plan. Comments were made about the need to ensure that the plan be carried forward into concrete objectives, and the Secretariat outlined their intention to undertake annual operating plans. It was also agreed that as part of the emphasis on science/policy links the plan should state more explicitly that the APN needs to give an input to the UNFCCC process and the IPCC Assessment Reports. There was also agreement of the need to reach out into the regions and to make greater use of the APN Liaison Officers.

The issue of Key Scientific Priorities (KSPs) and their interaction with the proposed APN Project Funding Model was then discussed. After some consideration and debate, general agreement was reached that in the annual proposals cycle the allocation of KSPs should not exclude proposals in other areas from being eligible for funding. Instead, funds should be set aside each year to ensure that projects relating to the KSPs be funded, the actual amount of funds to be decided on an annual basis. If an insufficient number of scientifically sound proposals are submitted in relation to a KSP, the APN should instead use the allocated funds to develop proposals and initiate work in relation to that KSP.

The question of communication and coordination with START and the international global change programmes was discussed in relation to both the selection of KSPs and the model for APN Facilitated Projects. It was agreed that the latter will need to be carefully designed so they do not duplicate other research efforts and so the initial stage should be to identify the knowledge gaps which exist. START Oceania's experience in this area was that with thorough coordination and the identification of all relevant participants such a model could be extremely effective. It was suggested that governments, scientists, funding agencies and NGOs should be involved in such exercises.

With regard to the proposed model for Facilitated Projects it was suggested that the APN should be careful not to take a linear approach, but instead should take the time to

ensure that the results of work undertaken would be fed back for consideration at each stage. The first workshop should also concern an issue of great importance for the region as a whole, so as to draw attention to the impacts of global change.

The re-draft of the Scientific Agenda was presented and Dr. Fuchs gave an explanation of the underlying rationale. Clarification was made that the Scientific Agenda is intended as a statement of the full range of research topics with which the APN is concerned, and agreement was reached that it should be re-titled to reflect this fact. The suggestion was made that the appropriate place for this diagram to appear was alongside the mission statement. Some particular suggestions for change were agreed, namely that inland waters would be a more suitable term than international waters. Also, the central section of the diagram should express more clearly the community, economic and political concerns of the region and the way they interact with the scientific aspects of global change processes, with the ultimate intention that there be a feed in to the policy process.

The discussion closed with the Director indicating that the Secretariat would now re-draft the plan and issue a revised version within 2 weeks so that an improved version could then be presented to the IGM.

During the discussions on the plan, the Director introduced a draft Memorandum of Understanding for the APN. He clarified that the most important thing was to move quickly toward the establishment of a more formal status for the APN. SPG members agreed to discuss the draft MOU with their Focal Point after returning to their country.

The Director introduced the draft MOU and explained that this was an integral part of the Strategic Plan, intended to strengthen the basis of the APN. It was agreed that in order to progress, the APN needs official recognition from member countries and the Director clarified that the intention is to achieve that without, at this stage, introducing any legal or financial obligations. The draft MOU was being introduced via the SPG so that members could take this draft back for discussion with their national Focal Points and following that consult with the relevant government authority for a full consideration of the policy and legal aspects. The APN would like an early indication of how long each member country considers it would take to agree such an MOU and whether it would be appropriate for it to be signed at Ministerial or Official level. The intention was that it should be the former where possible.

It was agreed that the lack of an official agreement was a weakness in the development of the APN. SPG members acknowledged that an MOU was necessary and expressed their appreciation that a draft had been produced. A number of specific points were raised about the nature of the draft MOU. In particular it was felt that the preamble should be expanded to explicitly identify the benefits of membership of the APN. Furthermore, an accompanying brief on the history of the APN and what it has achieved to date, together with an explanation of the legal status of the IAI and ENRICH would be very helpful in presenting the draft MOU. The Secretariat agreed to produce this as soon as possible.

There was also discussion about whether a multilateral or bilateral agreement would be most appropriate. It was acknowledged that a series of bilateral agreements would be quicker to achieve, but that there may be difficulties in framing the MOU in this way. Again, the Director expressed that he would be very eager to receive advice from member countries on their assessment of the best way forward.

9. APN Priorities for Scientific Programme for 2000/2001

The Director reminded the SPG that climate change and human dimensions were priorities in last year's proposal funding process and after making some suggestions invited comments on priorities for the next funding cycle. As discussed during the session on the Strategic Plan, a portion of the proposals budget for next year could be set aside for the priorities decided by the IGM though funds would of course remain for other areas. It was also hoped that demonstrating clear priorities might attract funds from other sources.

SPG members commented that the APN should be careful not to change priorities too often and would need to be aware of the different priorities of the scientific and policy making communities. This point had been clearly illustrated by the responses to the APN questionnaire issued during the Strategic Planning process.

There was general agreement that the SPG should recommend to the IGM that "the question of how Asia-Pacific countries can respond to the Kyoto Protocol" and "global change and environmental security" be priorities in the next cycle. Other topics proposed included "coastal zones and inland waters", "global change impact on desertification and land degradation"; "human dimensions", and responses to the "COP4 resolution on support for maintenance for meteorological observations for monitoring climate change and variability". SPG members were encouraged to discuss APN scientific priorities for the next project funding cycle with focal points in their countries and prepare their opinions for discussion at the next IGM.

10. Other Business

Many suggestions and comments were made for the future development of the APN during a free discussion. It was pointed out that non-governmental organizations already play important roles in discussions relating to global change, and the APN as an inter-governmental network should consider the best ways to involve them. There was a suggestion that Focal Points be more involved and informed about APN-funded activities throughout the year. Some participants shared the view that APN should maintain a decentralized nature, which may include more active roles for APN Liaison Officers and SPG members throughout the year. The Secretariat should provide support to SPG members to be more broadly active on global change issues within their countries.

Although ultimately the selection is up to each member country, a comment was made that the APN should consider how best to identify suitable Focal Points and SPG members in order to maximize the effectiveness of their roles. For example, it may be better if both are from different departments or ministries.

There was considerable discussion about communications, networking and information dissemination. The usefulness of an APN electronic directory of persons and organizations relating to global change was indicated. Suggestions were strongly supported that the APN use the Internet more, and that the Secretariat provide assistance to access the Internet for SPG members who need it. A suggestion was made that the APN publish a journal in the future to report on global change issues in the Asia-Pacific region. Another suggestion was to use a numbering system for publications about APN-funded projects, to show continuity even if the publications come from different countries. Other ideas were for SPG members to arrange publication in their countries of reports about APN-funded activities in scientific journals and to arrange for reprints of APN newsletter articles, for the APN to commission special reports on timely issues such as Southeast Asian fires. More opportunities are needed for SPG members to share information with the APN network during the year.

It was generally agreed that best way to raise the profile and effectiveness of APN was for the APN to support excellent, relevant and influential projects that would be recognized by the scientific community and governments in the region. An example was an international conference on El Nino Southern Oscillation or Asia-Pacific regional responses to global warming involving leading scientists from inside and outside the Asia-Pacific region, with the results published. The Director said that these may be good topics for an inaugural symposium of the Secretariat office in Kobe, and welcomed other suggestions for topics.

There was support for the suggestion that APN increase time for briefings from and opportunities for linkages with global change programmes (IGBP, IHDP, WCRP and START), in recognition of their expertise and specialties. APN should get input from them on the latest progress on global change issues, in particular about the frontiers of global change science. This input is important as a knowledge base to guide selection of high quality, timely and relevant projects for APN support.

11. Election of One Co-Chair and Location of Next SPG Meeting

The Director explained that one new Co-Chair must be selected since according to APN rules decided at the last Inter-Governmental Meeting one of the current Co-Chairs' terms terminates at the next Inter-Governmental Meeting. Dr. Aprilani said that after many years of involvement, in order to pass on the position to a new person, that he would step down as Co-Chair, and nominated Professor Zhao Zong-ci of China as his successor for consideration by the SPG. Dr. Lim of Malaysia seconded the nomination. . The term will be for two years starting after the fourth Inter-Governmental Meeting and

ending after the sixth. Dr. Zhao graciously accepted the nomination and was accepted as a new SPG Co-Chair by acclamation.

On behalf of the SPG, Prof. Higuchi thanked Prof. Aprilani for his many years of contribution to the APN. The SPG applauded his many years of involvement, guidance and dedication to the APN in an expression of deep appreciation.

The Director announced that the next Inter-Governmental Meeting would decide on a proposal to jointly hold the SPG meeting and Inter-Governmental Meeting in the following year. Therefore, no discussion on location would be needed today.

Participants expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the Government of Indonesia and LAPAN for hosting this meeting and to the Secretariat for its work in organizing the meeting.

Attachment I

Fourth APN Scientific Planning Group Meeting

2-4 February 1999, Jakarta, Indonesia

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Attachment II

AGENDA (as adopted by the SPG)

Tuesday, February 2

9:00

1. OPENING

Welcoming remarks will be presented by Dr. Ir. Agus Nuryanto. Remarks will be made by Mr. Hideyuki Mori, Director of the APN. Opening remarks will be made by Prof. Dr. Harsono Wiryo Sumarto, Chairman of National Institute of Aeronautics and Space (LAPAN).

9:15

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Draft agenda to be considered, and final agenda adopted Document 1

9:30

3. SECRETARIAT REVIEW - FUNDED ACTIVITIES FOR 98/99

Secretariat Review Document 2A

Reports of 1998-1999 Projects Document 2B

The Secretariat will provide an overview of the past year's APN funded project activities and will raise issues regarding the implementation of project activities.

9:45

4. PROJECT PRESENTATIONS BY DRS. FU, KOSHY, AND MANTON

Project Representatives for three projects will be invited to provide highlights from 1998/1999 APN funded projects.

10:30 Floor will be open for discussion of all funded activities

10:40 Break

11:00

5. PROJECT PROPOSAL CRITERIA AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Document 3

Secretariat will present findings from an informal survey and lead a discussion recommendations to improve criteria and evaluation process for project proposal reviews. Floor will be open for discussion following Secretariat presentation.

12:30 Lunch

14:00

6. REVIEW OF SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES

Liaison Officer Report (TEACOM) Document 4

Liaison Officer Report (SASCOM) Document 5

APN Secretariat update

14:30

7. 1999/2000 APN PROJECT PROPOSALS (1) Initial Discussion

Table: Original Proposal Ranking Document 6A

Table: Report from Small Group Document 6B

Small Group Recommendations Document 6C

A Representative of the Small Group will provide an overview of the proposals and the outcomes of the work of the Small Group to prepare assessments made by SPG members, and discussion on which projects to fund in 1999/2000 and at what levels. Floor will be open for discussion following Small Group presentation.

15:10 Break

15:30 1999/2000 APN PROJECT PROPOSALS Initial Discussion (Continued)

16:30

8. DRAFT APN STRATEGIC PLAN (1) Initial Discussion

Draft Strategic Plan Document 7

Handout of presentation Document 7A

Secretariat will give a brief overview of draft APN Strategic Plan prepared by the APN Secretariat and Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC) with input from stakeholders, and which will result in a final draft to be submitted to the Inter-Governmental Meeting (IGM) in March. Floor will be open for discussion following Secretariat presentation.

17:30 Adjourn

18:30 Bus departs from hotel for Reception Dinner (Hosted by Indonesian Government)

21:00 Approximate return time to hotel

Note: In the evening the Small Group will revise the recommendation for projects to fund.

Wednesday, February 3

09:00

9. 1999/2000 APN PROJECT PROPOSALS (2) Continued Discussion

Revised Small Group listing of recommendations of 1999/2000 Project Proposals based on the previous day's comments and discussion sessions. SPG members will reach consensus and finalize recommendations on projects to support for Inter-Governmental Meeting (IGM) in March.

10:30 Break

10:00

10. DRAFT APN STRATEGIC PLAN (2) Continued Discussion

Floor will be open for review and discussion on Draft APN Strategic Plan.

12:00 Lunch

13:30

11. DRAFT APN STRATEGIC PLAN (3) Continued Discussion

15:00 Break

15:30

12. APN PRIORITIES FOR SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM FOR 2000/2001

Brief Presentation by Co-chairs of the SPG Document 8

Discussion will provide input for a decision at the IGM about the overall scientific program, in the context of the Strategic Plan, and about priority funding for projects in the 2000/2001 round of proposals.

17:30 Adjourn

Evening: Drafting Session for Chairperson's Meeting Report Summary

Thursday, February 4

9:00

13. OTHER BUSINESS

Members and observers can report on any issues relevant to APN activities, and raise any issues of concern that have not already been discussed.

9:30

14. CHAIRPERSONS' MEETING REPORT SUMMARY

11.40

15. ELECTION OF ONE CO-CHAIR AND LOCATION OF NEXT

SPG MEETING

It will be necessary to elect one co-chair for a term of two years and discuss a location for the next SPG meeting.

12:00 Close of SPG Meeting

18:30 Farewell reception dinner (Hosted by APN)

Attachment III

Procedures and Criteria for Selection of Funded Activities

Results of Discussion by the SPG

1. Issue: Define clearly who is eligible to submit proposals to APN.

Recommendation: Proposals may be submitted by an individual, organization, or government agency from an APN member country, or from a country in the Asia-Pacific Region which has expressed an interest in becoming an APN member.

2. Issue: Proposals submitted for funding which do not involve at least 3 Asia-Pacific countries.

Recommendation: Proposals may be submitted by one country but must include the involvement of at least 3 countries in project activities. SPG recommended that in the case of a single country proposal of sound science, policy relevance and regional importance, the APN Secretariat will make reasonable efforts to contact the proponent to revise the proposal and make it more appropriate for APN consideration.

3. Issue: Eliminate very large funding requests by proponents.

Recommendation: The APN will institute a \$150K ceiling for funding requests for an individual project in any one year. There was an understanding among the SPG members that APN should limit the amount of funds spent to support attendance at meetings and conferences, and that a ceiling should also be considered on an annual basis in the region of \$60K.

Note: The ceiling level will be decided, taking into account the budget availability for APN projects each year.

4. Issue: Project proposals, which request multi-year funding.

Recommendation: SPG be allowed to recommend multi-year funding to IGM in specific cases for projects which identify total number of project years and clearly identify project stages and anticipated accomplishments for each year of activities. There would be no guarantees and funding would be conditional on a proponent successfully completing previously funded project activities before a recommendation for continued funding would be made.

5.Issue: Address potential conflict of interest for SPG members in review process.

Recommendation: SPG members may not review proposals involving themselves and should declare a conflict of interest where they consider one exists.

Note: The mere fact that a proposal involves, or has originated from, the country of an SPG member is not considered to be a conflict of interest. In the event that a conflict of interest is declared, the Secretariat will decide whether or not the reviewer concerned should be allowed to rank the relevant project.

6.Issue: Elimination of proposals submitted to APN that clearly do not meet criteria eligibility requirements.

Recommendation: The APN Secretariat should be allowed to eliminate for consideration those proposals that are clearly ineligible. Proponents whose proposals are determined to be ineligible for consideration will be notified by the Secretariat with an indication of why the project proposal is not acceptable. Copies of proposals determined by the Secretariat to be ineligible for consideration will be sent to SPG members for information purposes along with the Secretariat's reason for such determination.

7.Issue: Maintaining a manageable number of project proposals in review process.

Recommendation: Following an initial review and scoring by SPG members of all eligible project proposals, those projects whose combined average score is above 3.0 shall remain under consideration in the selection process. In the event that there are not enough good proposals, the SPG members agreed that the Small Group could recommend alternative ways to spend these project funds or place them in a contingency fund for future APN activities during that budget year.

8. Issue: Improve quality and consistency of proposal submissions.

Recommendation: Secretariat will develop a new standardized format that all

proponents will be required to follow and that will ensure the consistent presentation of information.

9. Issue: Improve the processing of SPG member questions and comments to proponents.

Note: SPG members noted that the answers to questions from proponents should be made available to all SPG members, so that they could have the opportunity to revise their scoring. It was noted that the responses from proponents should be carefully considered by the Small Group during their evaluation. There was a consensus among SPG members that reviewing responses to questions from proponents added a large workload for them in the evaluation process. The use of a standardized form for proposal submissions might help to reduce the number of questions needing answers by proponents.

10. Issue: Current deadline for proposals does not allow adequate time for processing, review, evaluation, and selection process.

Note: SPG members noted that a shorter process time from proposal submission to decision would be better, and should be as short as possible.