



ASIA-PACIFIC NETWORK FOR  
GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH

# MID-TERM EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE FIFTH STRATEGIC PHASE (2020-2026)





ASIA-PACIFIC NETWORK FOR  
GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH

## Mid-Term Evaluation Report for the 5th Strategic Phase (2020-2026)<sup>1</sup>

© 2024 Asia-Pacific Network for  
Global Change Research

**Task Force Members:** Wenjie Dong, Lance Heath, Muhammad Helmi Abdullah, Douglas Hill, Yuji Masutomi, Virasith Phomsouvanh, Yam Prasad Pokharel, Krishan Pratap, Juan Pulhin, Tserendulam Shagdarsuren, Madan Lall Shrestha, Awnesh Singh, Gen'ichiro Tsukada, Luis Tupas, Fariza Yunus and the APN Secretariat

## CONTENTS

3	<b>Foreword</b>	
5	<b>Introduction</b>	
	Background: Explanation of APN and its mission	5
	Objectives of the Mid-Term Evaluation: Purpose and aims of the evaluation	5
6	<b>Goals</b>	
	Goal 1: Research	6
	Goal 2: Capacity Development	7
	Goal 3: Science-Policy Interactions	9
	Goal 4: Community Engagement <sup>2</sup>	12
	Goal 5: APN and Its Operations	14
17	<b>Communication, dissemination and outreach</b>	
19	<b>Crosscuts</b>	
20	<b>Summary and conclusions</b>	
22	<b>Appendices</b>	
	Appendix 1: 5th Strategic Plan (FYs 2020-2025)	22
	Appendix 2: Annual Reports (FYs 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)	22

<sup>1</sup> From 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2026.

<sup>2</sup> APN discussed renaming this goal “Stakeholder engagement” because the term “community” implies that the focus is on communities, i.e., groups of people living in the same place, for example, in a rural village. However, this goal is intended to reach the group of stakeholder organisations in general.

# FOREWORD

The present Mid-term evaluation report provides a comprehensive overview of the work the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) implemented during the first three fiscal years (July 2020- June 2023) of its 5th Strategic Phase. It consists of summaries of achievements for the five goals and the critical area of "Communication, dissemination, and outreach" as stipulated in the 5th Strategic Plan. Links are created to the detailed monitoring reports on the goals of the activities conducted.

Looking back at the work conducted, APN has successfully achieved its goals in general. The summaries and monitoring reports attest to the impact APN-funded projects and activities had, as evidenced by the number of citations in IPCC reports and peer-reviewed publications. These highlight APN's vital role as a reliable knowledge broker and communicator between different stakeholder groups.

Capacity development activities, notably the CAPaBLE programme and the Proposal Development Training Workshop (PDTW) provided valuable opportunities to raise the capabilities of researchers, practitioners, and officials in the early stages of their careers. With increasing its efforts to connect with organisations pursuing similar goals, APN has actively explored possibilities to bundle energies and formulate agreements for closer collaboration.

Regarding Goal 5, "APN and its operations," remarkable success can be reported: the institutional base of APN has been examined and improved, for example, by establishing the Pacific Subregional Committee (P-SRC) that now addresses Pacific-specific challenges. The operation of the secretariat was reviewed, and more effective and cost-saving IT technology was introduced.

However, in the essential area of securing "*a balanced financial base with contributions from member countries as well as other sources including the private sector*", APN failed to make progress. The strategic development of seeking direct financial support from its member countries and strengthening their membership will be the most substantial challenge APN must work hard on in the second half of the 5th Strategic Phase. Developing fundraising capability is another area of highest priority in the coming years.



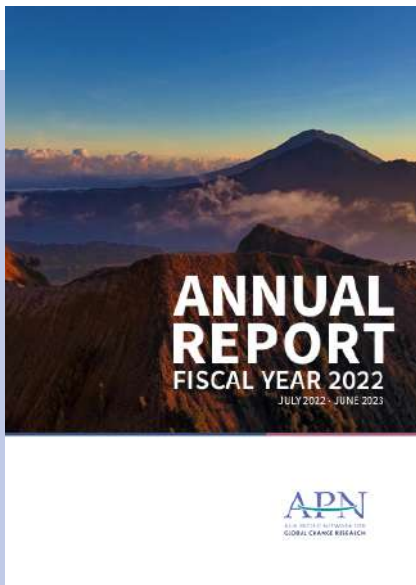
<sup>3</sup>APN 5th Strategic Plan, Page 10: Examples of activities of particular focus under Goal 5, Item 3.

APN expresses gratitude to the SC members assigned to evaluate APN's work according to the APN Framework Document for their summarising comments on the goals' achievements. Notably, SC Chair Dr Douglas P. Hill, national Focal Point and Scientific Planning Group Member for New Zealand helped shape the report by providing valuable advice to the APN Secretariat in hour-long sessions.



Thanks also go to the APN Secretariat staff assigned to compile the information needed for the Monitoring reports. Time-consuming drafting work was necessary according to each goal's character, dimension, and range covered.

While the present report can be a valuable tool for learning about APN and its performance, the immense amount of time and work invested in it is separate from its usefulness. Considering that one secretariat staff member was nearly working on the report full-time (let alone the time and work other secretariat members spent on writing the Monitoring reports), a more efficient way of reviewing APN and its work must be examined in the future.



The Annual Reports published by the secretariat, with summaries of outstanding projects concluded in each fiscal year, statistics related to APN-funded projects (selected topics, country involvement, subregion representation, gender balance, etc.), brief reports of highlight activities, and an overview of the institutional aspect of APN, notably explanations related to financial management, should be utilised more efficiently in the next round of developing an evaluation report.

# INTRODUCTION

**Background:** The Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) is an intergovernmental network that promotes global change research and capacity development in the Asia-Pacific region. The 5th Strategic Plan outlines the strategic goals and objectives to address global change and sustainability challenges.

**Objectives of the Mid-Term Evaluation:** The Mid-term Evaluation aims to:

- Assess the progress toward achieving the strategic goals in the first three years of the 5th Strategic Phase.
- Identify successes, challenges, and areas for improvement.
- Provide recommendations for the remaining period of the strategic phase.



## GOAL 1: RESEARCH (G1)

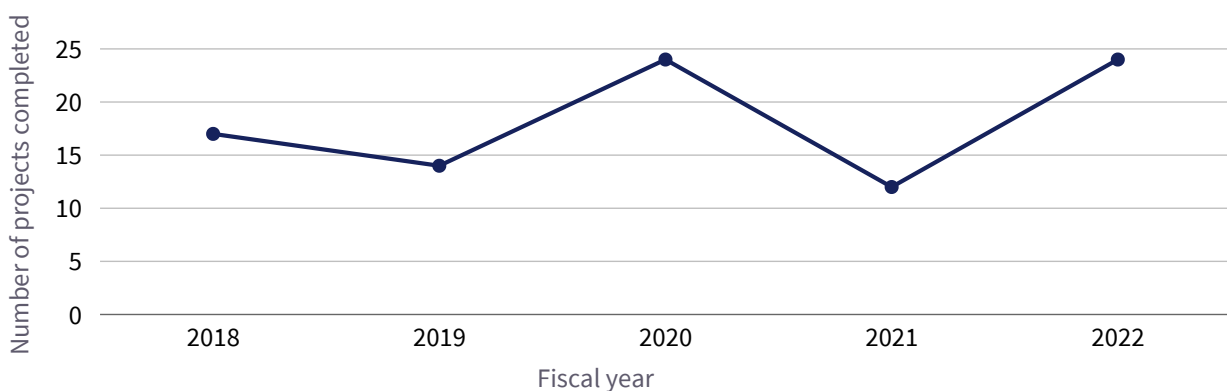
**Overview:** Goal 1 focuses on strengthening regional and international cooperation in research on global change and sustainability in the Asia-Pacific region. It includes exploring new research initiatives, advancing work in critical areas like climate change, and promoting holistic and transdisciplinary projects.

**Key Achievements:** Monitoring Report on Goal 1 “Research” comprehensively summarises APN’s efforts to strengthen regional and international cooperation in research on global change and sustainability in the Asia-Pacific region. The Monitoring report on this goal provides qualitative and quantitative outputs based on seven Focused Activities and established key performance indicators (KPIs) and highlights the progress made in various focused activities under Goal 1.

The activities outlined are centred around research and include exploring new research initiatives, advancing work in areas like circular and ecological economy, synthesising findings from APN-funded projects, promoting holistic and transdisciplinary projects, prioritising international agendas, engaging countries in research projects, and measuring project outputs against objectives. These focused activities are being closely monitored to ensure alignment with the strategic objectives of the 5th Strategic Plan.

In the first three years of the 5th Strategic Phase, APN aimed to foster collaboration with organisations and APN’s Subregional Committees (SRCs) on thematic areas with global agendas such as climate change, carbon neutrality, disaster risk reduction and resilience, circular and ecological economy, sustainable land and water management, and marine plastic pollution and promoted holistic projects through co-design and stakeholder engagement. Successes include strategic relationships, participation in key events, project funding, and international promotion of outputs.

APN increased its efforts in synthesising and disseminating APN-funded research findings aligning with science-policy interactions through workshops, publications, and contributions to global assessments.



## GOAL 2: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (G2)

**Overview:** Goal 2 aims to enhance the capacities of individuals and organisations to conduct high-quality research on global change and sustainability. This includes providing training, workshops, and networking opportunities for early-career professionals.

**Key Achievements:** Goal 2 “Capacity development” provides a comprehensive overview of APN activities that aim to enhance capacities for research on global change and sustainability while supporting science-based decision-making. The [Monitoring Report on Goal 2](#) was the basis for the following summary

APN has enhanced support for early-career professionals (ECPs) through tailored research activities such as the Collaborative Research for Early-Career Scientists (CRECS). Concentrated efforts to draw ECPs' attention to being engaged as proponents and collaborators in APN calls for proposals increased the proportion of ECP project leaders remarkably. Four webinars were conducted for ECPs in Mongolia, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Fiji with the specific objective of introducing APN.



The Proposal Development Training Workshop (PDTW), which provides training to ECPs to develop competitive proposals, is one of the flagship activities of APN to provide capacity development to ECPs by meeting their specific needs. The two in-person PDTWs (in South and Southeast Asia) and four webinar-based PDTWs were conducted to ensure a diverse and inclusive collaborative learning and networking environment.

The submission of proposals by the ECPs to the APN Call for Proposals in FY 2022 was a remarkable success for the PDTW. This outcome exemplifies the effectiveness of the provided training and mentorship. The PDTW also served as a platform for strengthening the network of ECPs for future collaborations.





Concretising this idea of a strong network of ECPs, in February 2022, a concept note was developed for the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Network of Early Career Professionals for Global Change Research (APN-ECAP) to establish a solid platform to strengthen communication of ECPs in the Asia-Pacific region. The idea was presented to the SC, which approved this future-oriented endeavour.

APN launched an opportunity for Early-Career Science Communicators (ECSC) to nurture the ability of ECPs to effectively communicate scientific outputs to policymakers across the Asia-Pacific region, aligning with APN's Communication Dissemination and Outreach agenda. By 2022, three projects successfully concluded.

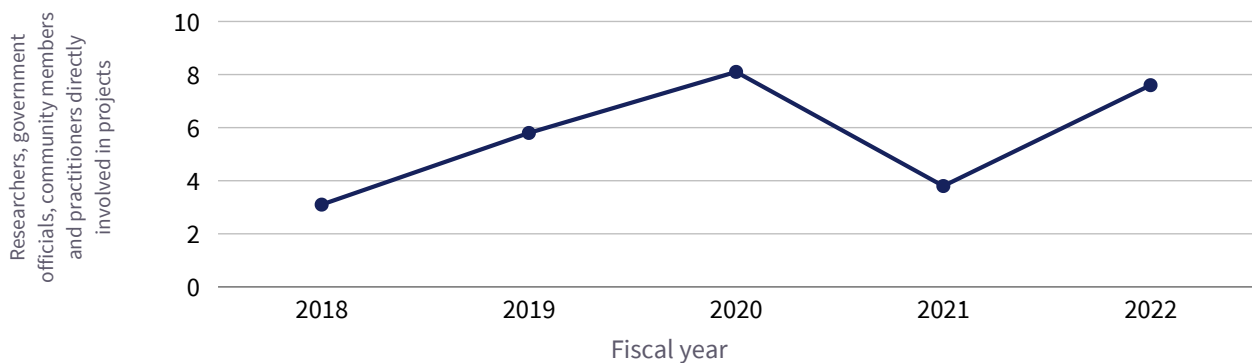
CAPaBLE, APN's capacity development programme, has evolved into a significant pillar of activity. It aims to create holistic and transdisciplinary capacity development activities that address topics relevant to society. Thirty-five CAPaBLE projects received funding support from APN in the first three fiscal years of the 5th Strategic Phase.

Measuring the outputs versus objectives of funded projects under the CAPaBLE Programme was another area of particular focus under Goal 2. In the three years of 2020-2022, CAPaBLE (52) and CRECS (5) projects generated 57 outputs with 397 citations to date. The CAPaBLE-generated publications cover a wide range of topics and underscore the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration for achieving sustainable development goals.

## GOAL 3: SCIENCE-POLICY INTERACTIONS (G3)

**Overview:** Goal 3 focuses on strengthening interactions between scientists, policymakers, practitioners, and other societal groups to exchange scientifically sound information for policymaking. These efforts include organising dialogues and workshops and contributing to global assessments.

**Key Achievements:** Goal 3 aims to strengthen interactions between scientists, policymakers, practitioners, and other societal group members to exchange scientifically sound information for policymaking. The [Monitoring Report on Goal 3](#) showcases APN's progress in facilitating the utilisation of scientific information for effective policymaking and addressing global change and sustainability in the Asia-Pacific region.



While the COVID-19 pandemic hindered APN from organising discussion and information exchange fora in FYs 2020 and 2021, in FY 2022, it took the initiative to organise two in-person science-policy dialogues in Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The dialogue in Sri Lanka focused on climate change and food security. The discussions confirmed that the collaborative efforts of all parties in co-designing future scenarios require the involvement of local communities and the incorporation of traditional and indigenous knowledge.

The dialogue held in Thailand explored strategies to enhance collaboration, communication, and the use of global change research knowledge by policymakers and other stakeholders. The dialogue underscored the importance of evidence-based policies, collaboration among stakeholders, capacity building, effective communication, and the integration of cultural aspects in addressing global challenges.

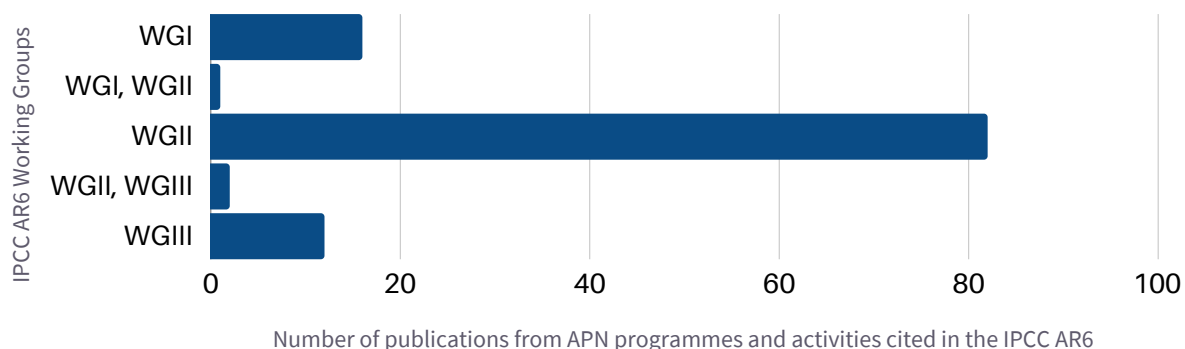
In September 2020, APN published a special issue titled “Climate change impact vulnerability and adaptation: Asian perspective” from Elsevier to support the formulation of adaptation policies to offset the negative impacts of climate change on natural and human systems.

In December 2021, another special issue titled “Assessing contribution to the Sendai Framework: Case study of climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction projects across sectors in Asia-Pacific (2015–2020)” was released from Elsevier. This publication reviewed 24 APN projects on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA) completed in 2015–2020 and assessed their contribution to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.



The publication identified challenges and recommendations for enhancing policy coherence and mainstreaming DRR and CCA into development planning by examining the projects.

In April 2022, a stocktake by the APN Secretariat revealed that more than 100 publications from over 60 APN-funded projects between 2007 and 2018, led by researchers and practitioners based in 15 of APN’s 22 member countries, have been cited in the contributions of Working Groups I, II, and III of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, which is a remarkable success of APN’s work.



Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability to meet in person, APN participated in several online science-policy conferences and meetings. For example, the participation of APN as a presenter at the Pacific Ocean Pacific Climate Change Conference (POPCCC) led to the establishment of communication with the event organiser, the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC). The participation at the Climate Adaptation Alliance First Funders Roundtable led to courtesy calls to the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) and the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) in May 2023, at which the possibility of future collaboration on topics that respond to the U.S. government's national policies and plans and meet APN's objectives were discussed.

The Hyogo Activity, organised by APN, the Hyogo Prefectural Government, and other organisations, aims to increase Kobe citizens' awareness and understanding of the Hyogo Prefectural Government's environmental and sustainability policies and plans. APN also provided lectures at the Graduate School of Disaster Resilience and Governance, University of Hyogo (a prefectural university), on APN projects on climate change and disaster risk reduction.



Contributing to the objectives of the Government of Japan, APN conducted, with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), the project “APN-IGES joint scoping activity on Regional Circular and Ecological Sphere (R-CES)” (AOA2020-01-RCES). It organised three workshops in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia to promote R-CES, a concept to develop sustainable societies through the more efficient utilisation and circulation of regional resources and establishing a self-reliant and decentralised society under different regional and local contexts.

The ongoing project “Regional partnership for localisation of NDC through community-led ‘local adaptation innovation hubs’ in the Asia-Pacific Region” (AOA2022-01MY-Shivakoti) aims to catalyse local adaptation innovations by identifying and addressing capacity gaps at the local level. The project's outputs and outcomes are expected to be integrated into the capacity-building pillar of the Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Platform (AP-PLAT).

## GOAL 4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (G4)

**Overview:** Goal 4 aims to enhance communication, collaboration, and engagement with organisations and stakeholders pursuing similar goals, including engaging with local communities, forming strategic partnerships, and promoting public awareness of environmental issues.

**Key Achievements:** This chapter, written based on the [Monitoring Report on Goal 4](#), summarises the efforts undertaken to enhance communication, collaboration, and engagement with organisations striving for similar goals.

While communicating with stakeholder groups has always been highly important for APN, contacts were limited to “working relationships“ related to contracts of APN-funded projects or quick opinion exchanges through short conversations at international events. Close collaboration through joint activities was rare.

In FY 2020, discussions for closer collaboration started, leading to the signing of two agreements, one with the Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO) and the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES). Both organisations share with APN the goals of supporting and promoting global change and sustainability research and enhancing the capability of researchers. Discussions on possible joint activities in a cost-sharing manner have started.

APN is also eager to reconnect with several organisations with which it communicated more closely in the past. APN will consider re-approaching organisations such as START, IAI and Future Earth to exchange ideas and bundle forces for future cooperation with active support from the member country governments as much as possible.

Establishing the Pacific Subregional Committee (P-SRC) in 2021 was a significant step forward for APN to re-confirm the importance of being visible in the Pacific region. With Fiji as a member country and the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) recognised as APN’s approved countries, the 5th Strategic Plan reinforces the need to strategically address the specific issues of the Pacific region and collaborate with local stakeholders.

Recognising that contacts with regional and subregional intergovernmental organisations are indispensable to enable APN to link scientific outcomes with policymaking mechanisms more effectively, the APN Secretariat started considering exploring possibilities of communications with ASEAN. The national Focal Point (nFP) for Indonesia has been approaching the ASEAN Secretariat to seek opportunities for opinion exchange.

Recognising that contacts with regional and subregional intergovernmental organisations are indispensable to enable APN to link scientific outcomes with policymaking mechanisms more effectively, the APN Secretariat started considering exploring possibilities of communications with ASEAN. The national Focal Point (nFP) for Indonesia has been approaching the ASEAN Secretariat to seek opportunities for opinion exchange.

The 5th Strategic Plan identified “Enhancing communication and collaboration with entities of the private sector” as a substantial area where APN must become more active. However, due to the lack of relevant knowledge to approach and possibly collaborate with the private sector, this area has not been elaborated on in the first three fiscal years of the 5th Strategic Phase.

## GOAL 5: APN AND ITS OPERATIONS (G5)

**Overview:** Goal 5 focuses on strengthening APN's institutional and operational efficiency. The efforts include improving administrative processes, enhancing the financial foundation and its management, and adopting cost-saving technologies.

**Key Achievements:** APN has been striving to strengthen its institutional and administrative base to effectively support its manifold activities. Based on the [Monitoring Report on Goal 5](#), this chapter summarises the efforts undertaken in four areas essential for operational functionality: APN's organs and the secretariat, the IT environment and the provision of office equipment, and the financial foundation and its effective management.

APN members are assigned to work on APN matters voluntarily beyond their day jobs. They demonstrate a solid commitment to their APN assignments, and their meeting attendance rates are consistently high. A review of the guidelines could optimise the work the organs may be mandated to do.

While the members of the Scientific Planning Group (SPG), the Scientific Planning Group Subcommittee (SPG-SC), and the Capacity Development Committee (CDC) show high dedication to their responsibilities, it would be worth striving if they could enhance their involvement in analysing the outcomes of APN-funded projects after their completion.

The change in the composition of the Steering Committee (SC) with members assigned by the four Subregional Committees (SRCs) aims to more effectively address the diverse interests and needs of the subregions in APN's strategy and activities. However, the fast turnover among national Focal Points (nFPs) challenges institutional memory.

The Secretariat, with its full-time employed staff, is responsible for the daily operation of APN. Over the years, it has maintained a stable number of staff members with a balanced mix of long-serving, mid-career, and new members. While staff turnover is estimated to be low to average, further investigation is warranted. The Operational Plan, developed annually, serves as a guide for staff tasks and evaluation. However, it does not fully reflect workload dynamics, leading to challenges such as unimplemented tasks due to human resource constraints and/or lack of capabilities. Over the years, there has been a growing workload, highlighting the need for strategic planning to address staffing and expertise gaps, including fundraising capabilities.

The APN website's user-friendliness improved significantly with professional help. So far, feedback has been positive, but a survey may provide more accurate satisfaction levels.

Regarding IT equipment, the Secretariat transitioned from leasing desktop PCs over four years to purchasing laptops, which are more cost-efficient and versatile for teleworking and missions. Balancing cost-performance and work efficiency is crucial for long-term economic solutions, especially as in-house publishing demands advanced hardware and software.

The Secretariat of APN has been implementing measures to enhance the cost-efficient and transparent management of financial resources. The operational costs of APN from FY 2017 to FY 2021 reflect the distinct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, in FY 2020, expenses for operational meetings were drastically reduced, resulting in an overall operational cost ratio of about 12%. This contrasts with FY 2017, which saw operational costs accounting for 27% of the total expenditure of that fiscal year due to the last in-person Joint IGM/SPG Meeting in July 2018, i.e., before the pandemic stroke. As the resumption of mission trips will increase travel expenses, finding a reasonable balance between in-person and online participation in meetings and activities is essential.

The ratio of operational costs decreased over the years while the allocation of funds for projects increased steadily, albeit without a corresponding increase in direct financial contributions by member country governments.

Items	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
Projects <sup>a</sup>	1,435,957	1,754,126	1,730,066	2,617,993
Operational related cost <sup>b</sup>	536,213	552,540	440,999	368,756
Operational meetings	134,829	116,066	51,196	1,000
Administration and operation	401,384	436,474	389,803	367,756
Total (a + b)	1,972,170	2,306,666	2,171,065	2,986,749
Ratio of operational cost (b) to total	27%	24%	20%	12%
IGM	Included in "Operational meetings" 23rd IGM (face-to-face), July 2018, Bangkok Thailand	<i>Not included</i>	Included in "Operational meetings" 24th IGM (online), February 2021, Kobe Japan	<i>Not included</i>
Influence of COVID19 (Outbreak in December 2019)	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<b>Included</b>	<b>Included</b>

<sup>a</sup>Projects include the total amount of the grants for the projects, that means 80% of the grants already disbursed, as well as the remaining 20% that are held by the APN until the completion of the projects

Notes on breakdown of Operational Cost (Operational cost = Operational meetings (A) + Administration and operation (B))

- Operational meetings (A) **include** APN meetings (IGM, SC, SPG, SPG-SC, CDC, SRCs) and monitoring and evaluation of the 5th Strategic Phase.
- Operational meetings (A) **do not include** science-policy linkages (SBSTA, IPBES, UNFCCC COP, etc.), scoping activities (R-CES, CAF), Proposal Development Training Workshop (PDTW), proposed new activity (AP-PLAT) and collaboration with like-minded institutions (ANSO, PICES, etc.)
- Administration and operation (B) **include** travel for institutional affairs and administrative purposes, administrative and operational cost, equipment upgrade and IGES administrative overhead.
- Administration and operation (B) **do not include** travel for scientific purposes and personnel cost of staff mainly working on APN's scientific activities

Conducting collaborative activities, such as joint science-policy dialogues with organisations in a cost-sharing manner, is an area worth strategically exploring. Additionally, efforts to secure external funding sources, such as submitting proposals to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), etc., can diversify funding streams for APN initiatives.

Improvements to streamline the management of APN-funded projects were introduced, for example, by using DocuSign for contract signing processes. The COVID-19 disruptions led to contract extensions and a need for swifter reporting processes while ensuring quality. Forming a financial reporting checking team increased the efficiency of administrative management.

Overall, APN has made strides in enhancing its institutional, operational, and financial foundations. Still, ongoing challenges such as workload management, succession planning, securing external funding, and direct financial contributions from its member countries require continued attention and innovation.

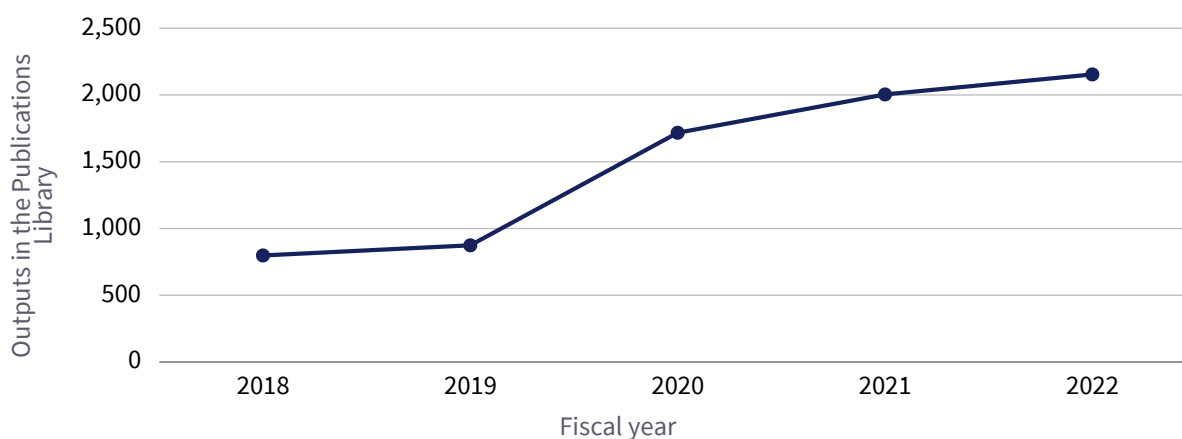
# COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION AND OUTREACH

**Overview:** This area focuses on effectively communicating APN's activities and outcomes to the global change and sustainability community and other stakeholders. It includes producing publications, organising events, and using digital platforms for outreach.

**Key Achievements:** The essential area of “Communication, dissemination, and outreach”, initially considered Goal 6 of the 5th Strategic Plan, serves as the communication tool for the other goals, connecting to the global change and sustainability community and other societal stakeholder groups.

Recognising the importance of widely distributing the outcomes of APN activities to combat the challenges the Asia-Pacific region is facing and, vice versa, receiving substantial feedback from outside, APN has strived to improve its “Communication, dissemination, and outreach” strategy over the years. This strategy includes communicating by meeting people physically and disseminating and reaching out through sharing information.

Because of the constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which hindered APN from initiating in-person communication through visits to member country governments and face-to-face activities such as Science-policy dialogues, APN has steadily improved its visibility and outreach of outcomes through producing and disseminating brochures and other small information materials, including publications, newsletters, reports, etc.



When travel restrictions due to the pandemic were lifted in the second half of 2022, in-person attendance at events and visits was carefully considered and implemented. Courtesy calls were paid with the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), the National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia (BRIN), and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), among others. APN also physically attended UNFCCC COP26 (Glasgow, UK) and COP27 (Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt).

Although virtually only, to better understand the interests and needs of its stakeholder groups, APN actively attended online events of international frameworks on global change and sustainability, including UNFCCC and IPBES. APN also actively maintained relationships with international and regional scientific organisations, such as WCRP, ICIMOD, AP-PLAT and PICES, by participating in virtual and in-person workshops, symposia, and other fora. While virtual discussions could be a suitable communication method, it was strongly felt that in-person meetings in reasonable dimensions cannot be entirely replaced, especially for a network like APN.

All publications and other information material, including the APN Science Bulletin, are available on the website. These helped increase APN's visibility, as demonstrated by increased page views and downloads. Self-hosted videos like those on YouTube could be considered a significant opportunity to enhance awareness and impact. Hyogo Activities were available on APN's YouTube channel in English and Japanese.

## CROSSCUTS

The present Mid-Term Evaluation Report is structured along with the Goals of the 5th Strategic Plan: Research (Goal 1), Capacity development (Goal 2), Science-policy interactions (Goal 3), Stakeholder engagement (Goal 4), APN and its operations (Goal 5), and the area related to “communication, dissemination and outreach”. However, when APN started to develop its 5th Strategic Plan, it was apparent that it could not be created based on siloed thinking and strict demarcation of goals: no goal stands alone and must not be considered independent.

In fact, the goals and the area around communication overlap and support each other. For example, research activities cannot be conducted by neglecting the crucial aspect of capacity development. Science-policy interactions and stakeholder engagement must go hand in hand. The area of “communication, dissemination and outreach” is an overarching element that serves all other goals in communicating APN’s work and the results of its activities with the outside world.

Therefore, possible repetitions in the Mid-term evaluation report could not be avoided entirely. They may hinder smooth reading but capture the crosscutting and transdisciplinary nature of APN’s work.

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

## Next Steps and Future Directions

To build on the progress made in the first half of the 5th Strategic Phase, the following areas should be considered for future steps and directions:

1. Enhance international collaboration in research
2. Advance capacity development initiatives
3. Increase science-policy interactions
4. Expand stakeholder engagement
5. Enhance operational efficiency
6. Strengthen member country engagement
7. Boost communication and outreach
8. Maintain and refine M&E Frameworks

By focusing on these future steps and directions, APN can complete the 5th Strategic Phase and further its mission to promote sustainable development and global change research in the Asia-Pacific region.

## In retrospect, one year after the end of the first half of the 5th Strategic Phase

Recognising the unexpectedly prolonged depreciation of the Japanese Yen and the resulting crisis faced by APN and its operations, the importance of implementing Goal 5 of the 5th Strategic Plan was confirmed at the Ad-Hoc SC Meeting held on 17 May 2024. During the meeting, attention was drawn to the following objective under Goal 5 “APN and its operations”:

*“Developing fundraising capability to secure a balanced financial base with the contribution of member countries, as well as other sources, including the private sector”*

The Ad-Hoc SC Meeting identified and confirmed several short-term action points, some of which have been implemented or are ongoing:

1. Developing a video showcasing the 26th IGM Meeting and APN's success stories over the past 30 years.
2. Designing and distributing member portfolios highlighting APN's engagement with its member countries.
3. Conducting research on fundraising mechanisms used by other institutions.
4. Forming a Task Force to focus on specific components of Goal 5 of the 5th Strategic Plan.
5. Designing, distributing, and analysing a survey by the Task Force post-portfolio distribution to gather insights to strengthen the institutional and financial capability of APN.
6. Considering ways to disseminate information on clean/green energy projects to the private sector and explore potential collaboration opportunities.

For mid- to long-term directions, a Task Force will develop an action plan and roadmap to diversify funding, focusing on co-funding modalities, financial foundations, and strengthening membership engagement. The Task Force will also examine fundraising models used by other organisations and investigate possible foundations for collaborative research to secure seed funding. The SC, at its 54th Meeting, agreed to focus on mid- to long-term directions in the remaining two years of the 5th Strategic Phase.

The SC reported the strategies outlined above to the IGM at its 26th Meeting, held on 13-14 June 2024, in Jakarta, Indonesia.

# APPENDICES

1. Appendix 1: 5th Strategic Plan (FYs 2020-2025)
2. Appendix 2: Annual Reports (FYs 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)