



FINAL REPORT



**Asia-Pacific Network of
Early Career Professionals
for Global Change
Research (APN-ECAP):
Platform for visibility in
global change and
sustainability**

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1. Summary

The Asia-Pacific Network of Early Career Professionals for Global Change Research (APN-ECAP) was launched in September 2023 to empower early career professionals (ECPs) across the Asia-Pacific region by enhancing their visibility, building capacity, and fostering cross-border collaboration in sustainability and global change research. Recognizing the persistent underrepresentation of early career voices in scientific and policy dialogues, APN-ECAP was designed as a dynamic platform to bridge the gap between emerging professionals, senior experts, and policymakers.

Over two years, the initiative engaged more than 500 professionals from 34 countries, convening seven regional workshops that served as hubs for knowledge exchange, peer learning, and leadership development. This exceeded the KPI of four major events, with each workshop surpassing the expected 50–60 participants per event, thus achieving and surpassing its Success Indicator (SI) for participation. These workshops emphasized inclusive representation, ensuring gender balance and targeted outreach to underrepresented subregions such as the Pacific.

Beyond events, APN-ECAP successfully developed several key resources, including the APN-ECAP Handbook (providing governance and participation guidelines) and a member database (registering 400+ professionals). Both met their KPIs for timely completion, with multiple revisions undertaken to ensure quality, and positive stakeholder feedback serving as the SI. A Communications Toolkit was also finalized, which contributed to a 25% increase in digital engagement, exceeding the KPI of a 20% growth in outreach.

Retention and engagement also met targets: 60% of members remained engaged across multiple activities, fulfilling the KPI and exceeding the SI of at least 40% retention. High-level visibility was achieved through representation at the APN Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM 2024), Conference of Youth (COY19), and UNFCCC COP29, which matched the KPI of securing participation in at least three international forums and met the SI of recognition by global stakeholders.

The initiative's outcomes are evident in increased confidence and leadership among participants, strengthened regional collaboration, and heightened visibility of early career contributions to sustainability research. The impacts include the institutionalization of APN-ECAP within APN structures, the establishment of sustainable governance mechanisms, and a growing community of practice that extends beyond the project's timeline. In conclusion, APN-ECAP has laid a strong foundation for empowering a new generation of sustainability leaders, consistently meeting or exceeding its KPIs and Success Indicators.

2. Objectives

- Capacity Building: Strengthen the leadership, engagement, and communication skills of Early-Career Professionals (ECPs) in the Asia-Pacific region to enable them to actively contribute to global change and sustainability processes.
 - KPI: Produce a working Handbook with consultation form ECPs through different workshops.
 - SI: Achieved; Handbook completed after multiple revisions.
- Visibility of ECPs: Enhance the visibility and recognition of ECPs in regional and global climate and sustainability dialogues, ensuring their perspectives are meaningfully integrated into policy and practice.
 - KPI: 70+ new members at introductory workshops; 50-60 participants per event.
 - SI: Exceeded, with 500+ ECPs across 7 workshops.
- Networking and Collaboration: Establish a regional platform that fosters collaboration among ECPs, academic institutions, and policy stakeholders across Asia-Pacific to co-create solutions for sustainability challenges.
 - KPI: Minimum 5 members per country.
 - SI: Achieved, with 400+ members across 34 countries.
- Knowledge Sharing: Facilitate the exchange of knowledge, tools, and best practices through workshops, publications, and peer-to-peer learning to build a community of practice.
 - KPI: At least 3 high-level global engagements.
 - SI: Achieved through participation in IGM 2024, COY19, and COP29.

3. Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts

Please complete the table below and provide results based on the original objectives. To help visualise the difference between the terms, please refer to this simple explanation:

<https://analyticsinaction.co/definition-output-outcome-impact-with-examples>

Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
7 regional interaction workshops held	500+ ECPs engaged across Asia-Pacific.	APN-ECAP established as a recognized capacity-building platform.
Membership database with 400+ ECPs.	Improved inclusivity/diversity across 34 countries.	Institutional foundation for future growth.

APN-ECAP Handbook & Governance Framework finalized.	Clear structure for operations and decision-making.	Institutionalized governance for sustainability.
Establishment of Communication channels and toolkit with 20% increase in engagement.	Active LinkedIn community with enhanced branding and consistent outreach.	Strengthened visibility of ECPs globally with 25% growth in digital reach.
Over 40% retention of engaged members.	60%+ participation sustained across activities.	Stronger community of practice beyond project lifecycle with 60% engagement achieved.

4. Key facts/figures

- **7 regional workshops** convened across Asia-Pacific.
- **500+ early-career professionals** engaged through training, dialogues, and peer-to-peer exchanges.
- **34 countries represented** in total. Largest participant representation:
 - Nepal – 112**
 - Thailand – 40**
 - Indonesia – 30**
 - Philippines – 29**
 - India – 26**
- Notable participation also from Fiji, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Vietnam, Pakistan, Japan, Australia, Solomon Islands, Mongolia, Cambodia, and China, among others.
- **200+ participants** received structured training in science-policy communication, leadership, and sustainability research skills.
- **4 official workshop reports** published and accessible on the APN website.
- **1 video introduction** produced for outreach and visibility.
- **Gender balance achieved**, with close to 50% women’s participation across events.

5. Publications

[APN-ECAP Science Bulletin](#)

6. Media reports, videos and other digital content

<https://linktr.ee/APNECAP>

7. Pull quotes

1. Dr. Linda Anne Stevenson, Acting Director / Programme Director; Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN): *For sustainability, the idea is to institutionalize APN-ECAP as part of APN. This is our long-term goal, but please give us time to develop those targets.*
2. Dr. Dhundi Raj Pathak, President; Center of Research for Environment, Energy, and Water (CREEW): *The shared commitment to empowering early career scientists and professionals' forms a common ground for both CREEW and APN. The inception of APN-ECAP represents the next step in establishing a dynamic, responsive community of young and early career scientists dedicated to addressing global change and promoting sustainability. We look forward to the transformative impact of this initiative.*
3. Prof. Sangam Shrestha, APN Invited Expert to the Steering Committee, Asian Institute of Technology; *This initiative, will empower young scientists and researchers in the Asia-Pacific region, nurturing them into leaders, collaborators, and knowledge holders for global sustainability.*

8. Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the vital role of our institutional partners, including the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, Thailand, and the United International Federation of Youth (UN1FY), whose collaboration strengthened outreach and inclusivity.

We also wish to recognize the constant encouragement and guidance from APN SPG members Prof. Douglas Hill of the University of Otago, New Zealand, Prof. Madan Lall Shrestha of the Nepal Academy of Science and Technology, and Prof. Sangam Shrestha of the Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand. Their steadfast support from the inception of APN-ECAP has provided inspiration, strategic guidance, and academic leadership, ensuring that the initiative remained focused, impactful, and forward-looking.

Our appreciation further extends to the universities, research centers, civil society organizations, and youth networks across Asia-Pacific that contributed and supported to our workshops and knowledge products. Finally, we acknowledge all the early career professionals from 34 countries who engaged actively in the network, shared their expertise, and shaped APN-ECAP into a dynamic and inclusive community of practice.

9. Appendices

1. [Report: APN-ECAP Kick-off Meeting, November 2023](#)

Background and Purpose

The inaugural regional workshop, "APN-ECAP Nexus: Sparking ECAPs Visibility in Global Change Research and Sustainability," was organised by the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) and implemented through the Centre for Research for Environment, Energy and Water (CREEW), Nepal, hosted at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand.

Its purpose was to empower early career professionals (ECAPs) in the Asia-Pacific region by enhancing their visibility, building networks, and co-creating governance structures for the emerging APN-ECAP platform.

Participants and Diversity

Participants represented a broad cross-section of the Asia-Pacific region, including academia, government, civil society, and youth organisations. The demographic spread showed strong gender balance, 55.3% female, 42.7% male, and 1.9% non-binary, with participants largely under 40 years of age. Their research interests spanned APN's key thematic areas: biodiversity and ecosystems, climate, air-land-coasts, risk and resilience, and the food-water-energy nexus.

Workshop Activities

The programme opened with remarks from senior representatives of APN, AIT, and CREEW, who emphasised intergenerational collaboration and the importance of ECAPs in advancing sustainability science.

Participants were divided into five breakout groups:

- Groups 1 and 2 worked on membership management, flagship activities, and knowledge-product ideas.
- Groups 3 to 5 focused on developing governance models for APN-ECAP.

These sessions encouraged intergenerational dialogue by pairing emerging and senior professionals to co-develop actionable frameworks.

Key Outputs

Membership and Retention:

Participants proposed thematic recruitment aligned with research areas, balanced representation by age and experience, and retention strategies through benefits such as exchange programmes, newsletters, and regular community meet-ups.

Flagship Activities:

Recommendations included mentorship programmes, internships, skill-development workshops, collaborative research projects, and integration of emerging technologies like AI and data science into sustainability research.

Knowledge Products:

Suggestions included monthly newsletters, blog and social-media features, and opportunities for peer-reviewed publications and journals to amplify ECAP visibility.

Governance Framework:

Groups 3–5 proposed a structured governance model including an Advisory Committee, a Secretariat, and regional representation mechanisms to ensure transparency, inclusivity, and long-term sustainability.

Conclusions and Way Forward

The workshop concluded that intergenerational dialogue, “where the wisdom of experience meets the energy of youth”, should be at the core of APN-ECAP’s identity. Strengthening networks, fostering collaborative research, and implementing the proposed governance structure were identified as key next steps.

The event established a strong foundation for APN-ECAP as a sustained regional platform that empowers early career professionals to lead transformative research and policy action for sustainable development across the Asia-Pacific.

2. [Report: APN-ECAP Regional Workshop, December 2023](#)

Background & Purpose

The APN-ECAP initiative, launched by APN and implemented by the Centre for Research for Environment, Energy and Water (CREEW) in Nepal, is designed to integrate and elevate early-career professionals (ECAPs) in global-change and sustainability research across the Asia-Pacific region. The December 2023 regional workshop titled “*APN-ECAP Nexus: Sparking ECAPs Visibility in Global Change Research and Sustainability*” focused on enabling ECAPs to take leadership roles in research, policy engagement and network building.

Participants & Demographics

The workshop brought together a diverse group of ECAPs and senior professionals from the Asia-Pacific region, representing academic institutions, governments, NGOs and youth organisations. The participants spanned bachelor through post-doctoral stages and covered all of APN’s thematic focus areas, air/land/coasts, biodiversity & ecosystems, climate, food-water-energy, and risk & resilience. The gender balance and intergenerational mix were emphasised to foster inclusive, forward-looking conversations.

Workshop Activities

- Opening remarks by senior APN, host-institution and CREEW representatives highlighted the importance of intergenerational collaboration and ECAP visibility.
- Breakout sessions organised into five groups:
 - Two groups (Groups 1 & 2) focused on membership management, flagship activities and knowledge-product planning for APN-ECAP.
 - Three groups (Groups 3–5) developed governing-structure proposals (advisory bodies, secretariat, regional nodes) to guide network evolution.
- These sessions paired younger ECAPs with more experienced professionals to promote mentoring, cross-generation dialogue and co-creation of actionable plans.

Key Outputs

- **Membership Strategy:** Proposals included thematic recruitment, balanced age/experience representation, member retention through benefits (newsletters, local meet-ups, exchanges) and a community-platform mindset.
- **Flagship Activities:** Suggested priorities encompassed mentorship/internship programmes, capacity-building workshops (including AI/data science in sustainability), collaborative research projects, friendly contests and increased ECAP visibility through publications and blogs.
- **Knowledge Products:** Intended deliverables included monthly newsletters, blog/social-media content, an ECAP journal or special issue, and research-to-policy briefs to boost profile.
- **Governance Framework:** The groups produced schematics for a network governance model, featuring an Advisory Committee, Secretariat, regional nodes or chapters, transparent selection processes, and mechanisms for intergenerational representation and sustainability.

Conclusions & Way Forward

The workshop reaffirmed that the network's vitality will depend on **intergenerational dialogue**, where the wisdom of senior professionals meets the energy of emerging ECAPs. The next steps include finalising the governance structure, rolling out flagship activities, launching membership drives, and developing the first tranche of knowledge-products. The foundation laid in this workshop sets the stage for APN-ECAP to evolve into a sustained platform empowering ECAPs to lead transformative sustainability research across the Asia-Pacific.

3. [Report: APN-ECAP Regional Interactive Workshop, May 2024](#)

Background & Purpose

The Interaction Workshop organised under the APN-ECAP initiative aimed to deepen collaboration among early career professionals (ECAPs) across the Asia-Pacific region, strengthen peer-networks, share good practices and co-design forward-looking action for global-change research and sustainability.

Participants & Scope

The workshop gathered ECAPs from diverse thematic areas (climate, biodiversity, human-dimensions, food-water-energy, risk & resilience) and represented multiple countries/regions of the Asia-Pacific. The agenda emphasised interactive formats (group work, peer-exchange, breakout discussions) rather than purely plenary sessions.

Key Activities

- Opening plenary framing the value of ECAP-led research and the need for intergenerational/linkage networks.
- Breakout sessions where participants explored (i) thematic research coordination (ii) regional collaborations and peer mentoring (iii) knowledge-product development (blogs, policy briefs, joint papers) (iv) governance/representation of ECAPs in the APN-ECAP platform.
- Networking and peer-match sessions: participants paired or grouped to identify potential joint projects, mentorship links, or cross-regional research themes.

Main Outputs

- **Collaboration Roadmap:** Short-term (6–12 months) and medium-term (1–3 years) action plans for ECAP partnerships, including co-author networks, regional working groups, and peer review clusters.
- **Knowledge-Products Pipeline:** Plans to launch a quarterly newsletter for ECAPs, a blog series highlighting early-career research, and a special issue or thematic publication showcasing ECAP-led work in global change.
- **Governance & Representation Model:** Draft framework for ECAP representation within APN-ECAP, recommending regional nodes, thematic leads, age/experience diversity, and an advisory-peer board for transparency and sustainability.
- **Membership Strategy:** Defined criteria for ECAP membership, benefits (mentorship, training, network access, visibility), and retention mechanisms (exchange programmes, virtual meet-ups, local/regional hubs).

Conclusions & Way Forward

The workshop emphasised that ECAPs are integral to advancing sustainability research and policy across the Asia-Pacific, *not just as future successors*, but as current change-agents. For APN-ECAP to succeed, three elements were stressed:

1. Strong peer-networks and cross-regional linkages;
2. Visible, tangible opportunities for ECAPs (mentoring, publishing, leadership);
3. A robust governance and membership architecture that ensures inclusivity (region, gender, discipline) and sustainability.

Next steps include launching the first set of knowledge-products, setting up regional working groups, formalising the governance model, and mobilising membership drives across national/regional partner organisations.

4. [Report: 26th APN Intergovernmental Meeting, June 2024](#)

Background & Purpose

The APN's 26th IGM/SPG meeting convened stakeholders from 19 Asia-Pacific member countries, including government officials, scientists, observer organisations, at National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), Indonesia, on 13-14 June 2024. The meeting served as a major forum to review progress in global change research, sustainability challenges, regional coordination, and to launch the early-career professionals platform Asia-Pacific Network of Early Career Professionals for Global Change Research (APN-ECAP).

Key Activities & Engagement

- The meeting featured plenary sessions, thematic panels on climate change, disaster risk reduction, regional research initiatives, and an ECP poster and networking session, the "10th APN Early Career Professional Poster & Networking Session on Climate Change Adaptation & Disaster Risk Reduction" on 13 June.
- The APN-ECAP initiative was formally introduced during the evening reception, highlighting membership, benefits, mentorship, networking and strategy for engaging early-career professionals in APN's agenda.
- Through interactive sessions, participants reviewed APN's thematic work-streams, capacity-building activities, and opportunities for collaboration between senior scientists, policy-makers and early-career professionals.

Main Outcomes

- The meeting reaffirmed APN's commitment to enhancing scientific capacity across the Asia-Pacific region; especially placing emphasis on early-career professionals, networking, research visibility and cross-regional solidarity.
- The APN-ECAP initiative was integrated into APN's broader strategic framework, highlighting its mission as a platform for early-career professionals to network, plan, act and shape global-change research in the region.
- A roadmap was articulated: building the ECAP database, refining membership criteria, creating networking/training opportunities, and aligning ECAP activities with APN-hosted research events.
- The importance of regional representation, inclusivity, thematic diversity (air/land/coasts, biodiversity & ecosystems, climate, food-water-energy, human dimensions, risk & resilience) and intergenerational linkage was underscored.

Conclusions & Way Forward

The meeting concluded that early-career professionals are not just future researchers, but present actors in sustainability and global-change research. For the APN-ECAP platform to succeed, three pillars were emphasised:

1. **Networking and visibility** – ensuring ECAPs have access to events, mentoring, publications and policy-engagement.
2. **Capacity and thematic focus** – building skills and research leadership across the APN themes.
3. **Governance and representation** – embedding ECAPs into APN’s procedures, ensuring age, experience, discipline and regional balance.
Next steps include formalising the launch of APN-ECAP, expanding its membership, activating its training and networking programmes, and integrating ECAP-led outputs into APN’s research ecosystem.
5. [Report: APN-ECAP Pacific Interaction Workshop, September 2024](#)

Background & Purpose

The Pacific Interaction Workshop, conducted under the APN-ECAP initiative, was designed to centre Pacific region voices, especially early-career professionals (ECAPs) from Pacific Island Countries (PICs), in global-change research and sustainability discourse. The event recognised the social, cultural and environmental uniqueness of the Pacific region, and aimed to integrate Pacific perspectives into the broader APN-ECAP network.

Participants & Scope

Participants included ECAPs and senior professionals from across Pacific Island countries, representing diverse thematic areas (climate change, biodiversity, human dimensions, food-water-energy, risk & resilience). The workshop was structured to foster peer network building, mentorship link-ups, and the co-design of future Pacific-region-led research activities within the APN-ECAP platform.

Key Activities

- Opening sessions highlighting the importance of Pacific region-driven research and inclusion in regional/global networks.
- Breakout groups focused on: (i) thematic research priorities for the Pacific (ii) mechanisms for amplifying Pacific ECAP voices (iii) designing knowledge products (blogs, policy briefs, regional publications) and (iv) how to structure governance and membership to ensure Pacific inclusivity and leadership.

- Networking and peer-match sessions: ECAPs agreed on potential collaboration topics, mentorship pairs/groups, and regional working groups tailored for Pacific contexts.

Main Outputs

- **Pacific Collaboration Roadmap:** Short- and medium-term plans for Pacific ECAP-led work, regional working groups, and cross-PIC collaborative research.
- **Knowledge-Products Pipeline:** Commitment to launching newsletters, blog series, a special-issue publication featuring Pacific ECAP work, and region-specific research-to-policy briefs.
- **Governance & Representation Model:** Draft structure recommending strong Pacific regional nodes/hubs, thematic leads from Pacific ECAPs, age/experience diversity, and mechanisms for sustained engagement and leadership of Pacific ECAPs within APN-ECAP.
- **Membership Strategy:** Defined criteria tailored to Pacific ECAPs (e.g., region-specific support, mentorship, exchange programmes, visibility opportunities), with retention mechanisms such as virtual meet-ups, Pacific-regional sub-networks, and local/regional meet-ups.

Conclusions & Way Forward

The workshop concluded that effective inclusion of Pacific ECAPs is critical to APN-ECAP's relevance in the Asia-Pacific region. Three pillars were emphasised:

6. Strengthening Pacific-region peer-networks and collaborations.
7. Ensuring visible, tangible opportunities for Pacific ECAPs (mentoring, leadership, publications, regional research leadership).
8. Embedding Pacific-voice driven governance and membership architecture into APN's framework.
Next steps include formalising the Pacific-regional node for APN-ECAP, launching the first set of Pacific-focused knowledge-products, activating the regional working groups, and initiating membership drives across Pacific Island nations.
9. Photo Bank
10. Quotes Bank
11. [Handbook](#)

12. [Social Media Toolkit](#)
13. [APN-ECAP Short Video](#)
14. [APN-ECAP Long Video](#)
15. APN-ECAP 2024-2026 KPIs
16. APN-ECAP Database
17. Outreach Business Card