

Title	<i>Ecosystems, Climate Change and People: strengthening nature to enhance resilience in Asia- Pacific</i>
Date and Time	05.11.2020, 14:00 (GMT +7), 16:00 (GMT +9)
Lead organiser	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Background

The Asia-Pacific region is extremely vulnerable to climate change¹. Rapid population growth coupled with economic growth and urbanization is putting a strain on food and water supplies and further degrading ecosystems and compounding climate threats. Further, climate change is expected to heavily impact some of the key sectors in the region such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism that depend on healthy ecosystems and the services they provide. To address the escalating climate threats, governments often turn to grey infrastructure solutions, such as seawalls or dams, which are costly and are designed to address a single purpose, acting as a short-term fix. On the other hand, nature-based Solutions (NbS) provide an approach to address many interlinked challenges. NbS can be used in conjunction with grey infrastructure to extend their benefits, or be applied as hybrid grey/green solutions. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines NbS as “*actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits*”².

NbS is gaining traction with growing recognition that it can both help mitigate the negative impacts of climate change while delivering benefits to both ecosystems and human health. In 2020, the benefits of NbS become more apparent in the context of COVID-19. As the global economy reacted, local communities relied even more heavily on the ecosystem services provided by nature for sustenance from fisheries and non-timber forest products. NbS must also be integrated into plans for a green recovery, investing in the restoration of degraded ecosystems to provide jobs and strengthen ecosystem and community resilience.

To support the design and monitoring of effective and scalable NbS, IUCN members have developed a [Global Standard for NbS](#)³, assessing interventions against eight criteria including addressing societal challenges, design at scale, biodiversity gains, economic viability, inclusive governance, balancing trade-offs, adaptive management and sustainability. Further, the UN member states have been working on Ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation (EbA) for over 10 years, giving a mandate to organizations like the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to help integrate these approaches into their National Adaptation Plans (NAP) through initiatives like the [Global Adaptation Network](#) (GAN), under which the

¹ [Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2019. UN ESCAP.](#)

² [WCC 2016 Resolution 069: Defining Nature-based Solutions](#)

³ [IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions](#)

[Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network](#) (APAN) falls, which provides a platform to distribute and exchange adaptation knowledge, including ecosystem-based approaches for resilience.

Despite significant recent progress, mainstreaming NbS in the region remains difficult and business as usual is still the dominant approach. It is therefore critical to highlight the integration of NbS in policy and governance and national planning, breaking down silos between sectors and promoting the cross-cutting application of NbS. There is a need to promote the assessment tools already developed to better understand ecosystem services and climate vulnerability. The many research centres in the Asia-Pacific region can provide additional support in valuing ecosystem services and promoting their role in NbS.

Innovative technologies and practices used in the region must be scaled-up. Often these are relatively small to medium scale projects, and would benefit from upscaling and the further engagement and investment of the private sector. As NbS currently receive a small portion of climate finance, national governments must work with the private sector to explore more sustainable financing for NbS that benefit all stakeholders, and strengthen resilience to climate impacts.

Scope

The webinar will analyse climate governance, planning, science, technology and financing in the context of NbS for resilience. The panellists will discuss approaches to overcoming the barriers for NbS and to upscale case studies to strengthen NbS for climate resilience in Asia-Pacific.

Key questions to be discussed

- ✓ What are the key scientific and technical gaps, and policy environment to be addressed for implementing and scaling up NbS for resilience?
- ✓ What approaches can be used to better design and promote NbS in resilience frameworks?
- ✓ What is the best approach to maximise investment in NbS amongst governments in Asia-Pacific?
- ✓ How can lessons learned at the community level be used to support the scaling-up of NbS?

Key messages

- ✓ There is a pressing need to share learning on what makes NbS socially, economically, and environmentally effective for adaptation and to ensure that this information feeds into national climate commitments.
- ✓ Existing programmes, funds and institutional mechanisms that provide support for climate mitigation and resilience should highlight and promote NbS and its co-benefits for sustainable development.
- ✓ NbS demonstrations must be enhanced at scale including through transboundary collaboration within regions as well as globally.

Agenda

		Time
Registration	Via Zoom	13:30 - 14:00
Welcome	Ms. Maeve Nightingale , Senior Programme Officer, Marine and Coastal IUCN Asia Regional Office	14:00 - 14:05
Opening Remarks	Mr. Takahashi Kazuaki , Director, Climate Change Adaptation Office, Global Environment Bureau, Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MoEJ)	14:05 – 14:10
Interactive Activity	All participants go to www.menti.com and enter code: 3024172	14:10 - 14:15
Inspirational Opening	Dr. Ashok Khosla , Development Alternatives and TARA, India	14:15 - 14:30
Video	What is Ecosystem-based Adaptation?	14:30 - 14:35
Presentation of the Resilience Outlook	Mr. Raphael Glemet , Senior Programme Officer, Water and Wetlands, IUCN Asia Regional Office	14:35 - 14:45
Moderator	Ms. Maeve Nightingale , Senior Programme Officer, Marine and Coastal IUCN Asia Regional Office	14:45 - 14:50
Panel Discussion	Ms. Fatema Rajabali , Associate Programme Officer, UNFCCC/Nairobi Work Programme, UNFCCC Dr. Barney Dickson , Senior Programme Management Officer, UNEP Mr. Joshua Wycliffe , Permanent Secretary for Ministry of Waterways and Environment, Government of Fiji Ms. Sesimani Lokotui , GEF Small Grants Programme, National Coordinator, Tonga	14:50 - 15:10
Q/A from the floor	Ms. Lis Mullin Bernhardt , Programme Officer, Climate Change Adaptation Unit, UNEP to moderate audience Q&A	15:10 - 15:20
Interactive Activity	All participants go to www.menti.com and enter code: 3024172	15:20 - 15:25
Closing and Note of Thanks	Ms. Lis Mullin Bernhardt , Programme Officer, Climate Change Adaptation Unit, UNEP	15:25 - 15:30