6TH ASIA-PACIFIC
CLIMATE CHANGE
ADAPTATION FORUM

17-19 October 2018
Manila, Philippines

Enabling Resilience for All:
Avoiding the Worst Impacts

SUMMARY REPORT

apan asia pacific ADAPTATION NETWORK
UN environment
ADB

*One of the most beautiful water creatures is the **Nautilus**, a cephalopod encased in a gorgeous shell, which features the best natural example of a logarithmic spiral. It is also considered as a symbol of strength and resilience since this shell can withstand very high pressure. This is why the Nautilus is the only shell that managed to survive past the dinosaur era—the exact reason why it is often referred to as a 'living fossil.'*

The Nautilus is found along the reefs in the Indo-Pacific region, in both the Philippines and Palau.

apan asia pacific ADAPTATION NETWORK

The Asia Pacific Adaptation Network, developed and launched by the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) in 2009 under the Global Adaptation Network (GAN), is the first regional adaptation network. APAN is an open network that strives to equip adaptation actors in the region with knowledge for designing and implementing adaptation measures, building capacity to access technologies and finance, and integrating climate change adaptation into policies, strategies, and plans towards building climate change resilient and sustainable human systems, ecosystems, and economies. APAN has established close partnerships with key sub-regional organizations and has become an important adaptation knowledge mobilizer in Asia and the Pacific region.

Co-Hosts

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to the majority of the world's poor. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants,and technical assistance.

CLIMATE CHANGE COMMISSION

As the lead climate change policymaking body of the Government of the Philippines, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) is mandated to review and recommend policies, as well as coordinate, monitor, and evaluate projects and programs in ensuring that climate action is mainstreamed into the country's development plans. Through the Communities for Resilience (CORE) Convergence Program, the CCC aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of local government units in climate science and finance, as a way for them to formulate their own local climate change action plans and access the People's Survival Fund (PSF), a local adaptation fund.

THE REPUBLIC OF PALAU

Represented by the Office of the President and Office of Climate Change under the Ministry of Finance

Office of Climate Change (OCC) was created as a governmental agency responsible for leading the development and implementation of national policies and actions through the lens of climate change. Beyond its borders, Palau champions ambitious actions on climate change with the global community, and the symbiotic relationship between climate change and our oceans.

“Adaptation ensures that we, as a people, are prepared and resilient enough to survive through the impacts of climate change with our culture and identity intact for generations to come.”

Tommy E. Remengesau, Jr.
President of Palau

“We need to find solutions to pave the road for a resilient society, economy, and ecosystem using platforms from Asia and the Pacific.”

Yasuo Takahashi
Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs
Ministry of the Environment, Japan

“We embrace adaptation because our lives and livelihoods depend on it. There is no other recourse for us but to usher in green growth and transform our economy towards a low carbon and climate-resilient path. We pursue this path not only because we know it is the best way to protect our people and climate, but also because we know it will spur economic growth.”

Loren Legarda
Commissioner
Global Commission on Adaptation

“We must take stock of what we can do – adapt but also deploy more efficient, competition-driven, decentralized clean energy systems, promote inclusive mobility, embed transparency, promote accountability, and bake resilience into long-term development planning.”

Emmanuel M. De Guzman
Secretary
Philippine Climate Change Commission

“The recent IPCC report not only highlights the possibility and feasibility of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, but also the need for transformative transition in many aspects of socio-economic activities. This Forum is taking place at a very special time and at a cusp of transition in climate action.”

Youssef Nassef
Adaptation Director
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

“As one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of this phenomenon, we have placed adaptation at the core of long-term strategies and have promoted national climate policies to ensure that we avert losses and build our resilience.”

Rodrigo Roa Duterte
President of the Philippines

“The effects of climate change will get more severe in time. However, there is resilience in sharing the adversity we face, learning from the experience of others and bringing home with us the lessons learned: this makes this APAN Forum so important.”

Elbuchel Sadang
Minister of Finance, Republic of Palau

“Climate change has emerged as a new threat to the continuing sustainable development of the region, with the potential to undermine five decades of progress. Investing in building resilience to climate and disaster risks has to be a new norm.”

Bambang Susantono
Vice-President for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development, ADB

“Climate change resilience is imperative for the Asia-Pacific region. We have no choice but to adapt. Fortunately, here in Asia, we have the tools and insight to do so. The APAN Forum builds partnerships to share this knowledge.”

Dechen Tsering
Regional Director, UN Environment Asia and the Pacific Office

“Adaptation is all about the solutions, not about the problems. We need to learn from each other - through harnessing South-South knowledge exchange.”

Saleemul Huq
Senior Fellow, International Institute for Environment and Development
Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development

Overview

The 6th Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum took place from 17 to 19 October 2018, at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Headquarters in Manila, Philippines.

This is the sixth flagship biennial event of the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN), which constitutes the primary regional platform for adaptation practitioners to share adaptation knowledge and collaborate to address the challenges and opportunities of climate change.

Co-hosted by the Government of Palau, the Philippine Climate Change Commission, and ADB, together with the APAN secretariat at UN Environment, the Forum is the largest gathering of adaptation practitioners in the Asia and Pacific region. The 2018 Forum theme was 'Enabling Resilience for All: Avoiding the Worst Impacts', and featured interactive sessions, panel discussions, knowledge exchange, and an exhibition of adaptation technologies.

The Forum brought together more than 1,000 scientists, government officials, representatives from civil society and businesses, as well as development partners from 60 countries. Delegates gathered to forge partnerships and share learnings from cutting edge science and practical solutions, to strengthen resilience. The Forum also helped to advance regional priorities and mobilize political support for the international climate conference (COP24) in Katovice, Poland in December 2018.

Resilience provided a unifying theme for the 2018 Forum, which focused on learning from adaptation action, moving towards climate resilient development. This reflected the views of participants from previous APAN Forums, as well as the wider network of APAN partners.

Discussions at the Forum were built around four streams: Resilience of social and human systems; resilience of natural systems; resilience of industry and the built environment; and resilience of island communities. The special focus on island communities recognized that the numerous and diverse island communities within Asia and the Pacific face particular challenges associated with natural hazards and socio-economic shocks as a result of climate change.

Resilience embodies the desired end-point of adaptation, applicable to natural, human, economic and engineered systems. For this Forum theme, adequate enabling conditions and access to support through which resilience may be built, maintained, and strengthened were identified. These were: policy and governance, planning and processes; financing and investing; technologies and practices; and science and assessment.

The Forum took place shortly after the release of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, which served to galvanise delegates and bring added urgency to all discussions. The report paints a bleak picture of a future world riddled by climate impacts if drastic changes are not made to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Delegates were all mindful that even under this best-case scenario, the Asia and Pacific region faces significant devastation, from inundated coastlines to destructive droughts. Immediate action is needed to scale up efforts and build resilience to avoid severe effects on livelihoods, public health, and economies.

This Summary Report was compiled by the APAN Secretariat and brings together Forum highlights, lessons learned in key aspects, and takeaways from the 6th Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum.

Forum Streams

RESILIENCE IN HUMAN AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS

Human societies have long demonstrated resilience in the face of ever-changing environmental, political and technological circumstances, although climate change is testing our capacity to adapt, particularly where communities are also struggling to address poverty, environmental degradation and conflicts over land and resources. Resilience strategies must further reflect inter alia the special considerations associated with gender and the special needs of highly vulnerable groups in society (children, elderly, differently abled). This stream focused broadly on evidence of how specific actions and strategies can deliver resilience benefits, emphasizing the linkages between governance (institutions), policy, technology, science, and finance and how resilience of human and social systems can be enhanced and build on demonstrated resilience in other areas.

RESILIENCE OF NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS

Natural ecosystems, when wisely managed, can support human resilience through a range of functions and services. Ecosystems are themselves under threat from climate change and variability, and wise management of existing ecosystems as well as human induced modification can improve ecosystem resilience. Reciprocal resilience-building provides the basis for ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) and other nature-based approaches, which can be implemented as stand-alone resilience strategies or in synergy with infrastructure-based approaches ("grey-green"). Potential benefits include disaster risk reduction, livelihood and food security, community health and economic diversification in both urban and rural settings. Significant learning has taken place in recent years within the region concerning the effectiveness of EbA and nature-based resilience strategies, and sessions under this stream explored that evidence.

RESILIENCE OF INDUSTRY AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Asia-Pacific's rapid urbanization, catalysed by economic growth and increasing demand for goods and services, represents both concentration of risk and opportunity to invest in resilience-building at large scale. Many organizations are currently working to understand what makes the economic sectors and the built environment - including critical infrastructure - resilient to a changing climate, and are putting this knowledge into practice. Examples of approaches already under implementation in Asia and the Pacific include water-sensitive-, "sponge -" and green cities. Development banks and bilateral development finance organizations have also established extensive portfolios of climate-resilient infrastructure investment. Sessions under this theme took stock of these experiences and good practices to support climate resilience investment in the built environment.

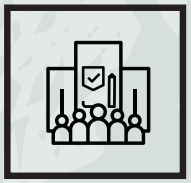
RESILIENCE OF ISLAND COMMUNITIES

International assessments consistently find that island states and communities are among the most vulnerable to climate change and disasters. Islands are highly exposed to stronger cyclones, sea level rise, saline intrusion, and coastal erosion among other impacts – all of which threaten livelihoods, economies and cultures which depend on the oceans. At the same time though, these communities have shown time and again their remarkable capacity to survive and rebound from catastrophe, and to adapt and thrive under new conditions. In this way, island communities can be seen as learning "laboratories" of adaptation practices and approaches. With the active involvement of this year's island Forum hosts, the Republics of Palau and of the Philippines, sessions addressed such issues as destination resilience, loss and damage, strengthening commitments and action, and enacting targeted efforts tailored to specific challenges and needs to enhance adaptive capacities.

Resilience Enablers

Resilience: The ability of a system and its component parts to anticipate, absorb, accommodate, or recover from the effects of a hazardous event in a timely and efficient manner, including through ensuring the preservation, restoration, or improvement of its essential basic structures and functions. *IPCC*[1]

Forum Sessions were organized under the following enablers:



Policy and Governance

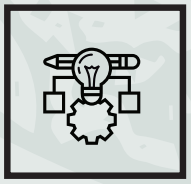
Resilience is interpreted in multiple ways, bringing together disparate groups, institutions, disciplines and scales. Notwithstanding the progress in the development of policies and governance toward enhancing resilience to climate change impacts, gaps are still apparent. For instance, we need to improve transparency of information on climate change adaptation measures as it provides a driving force for integrating policy measures and implementation, and for committing to greater ambitions and shared actions with encouraging narratives.

Planning and Processes

Adapting successfully to the negative impacts of climate change requires productive collaboration among various stakeholders especially in identifying capacity constraints in planning and implementation of sustainable and inclusive policies.

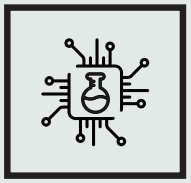
Financing and Investing

The means to connect financing and investments to projects that build national, local, and community climate resilience and support socio-economic national development, are real and urgent gaps. However, they also present huge opportunities for governments, civil society, and even business. Actions to improve adaptive capacities also help achieve the SDG co-benefits - improved health, reduced hunger and better food security, women's empowerment, and access to clean water and air, among others.



Technologies and Practices

Application of existing technologies, new and innovative climate-smart technologies, big data applications, social and integrated media for awareness and outreach, unconventional partnerships and collaboration, all create effective cross learning and knowledge sharing opportunities, and actual collaboration opportunities.



Science and Assessment:

There will always be an element of uncertainty to adaptation planning and decision making. The intrinsic variability in the climate and in the human, social, economic, and environmental systems impose this to a certain degree, as does the situation that the knowledge in possession is imperfect.

[1] *https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/special-reports/srex/SREX-Annex_Glossary.pdf*

Policy and Governance

Red Constantino
Executive Director
Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (iCSC)

"It is not enough to just say adaptation or mitigation; the main yardstick is whether this translates into development. We need to bake climate policies into development policies and make sure that we put money to who needs it the most."

Loren Legarda
Senator of the Philippines, Chair of the Philippine Senate Foreign Relation Committe

"Integrating gender equality across all aspects of climate action is fundamental, not only because women and men are differently affected by the impacts of climate change, but also because of the role of women as holders of valuable knowledge and skills and as a powerful force driving climate action and ambition."

Policy and governance structures should be inclusive, gender-responsive, and capable of supporting communities, as well as natural and physical systems, to deliver best resilience outcomes. Only people-centered, integrated policies, supported by coordinated governance systems and mindful of local realities, can achieve this.

CURRENT PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

1. Climate change strategies and sectoral action plans (names may vary by country) are in place and have set the tone for actions. Several countries in the region have also developed climate change policies, enacted laws and set up institutional structures. However, connections between national-level policy and governance structures and the local level often remain weak and unsubstantiated.

2. Experiences show the limitations in existing governance structures, limited financial and technical capacity and lack of understanding on how these policies, strategies and action plans will be implemented and supported at various levels. This is evident at either end of the government spectrum – i.e. national and local – but more acutely at local levels. For island communities, this limitation is exacerbated by the low population and the strong reliance on common resources by multiple stakeholder groups.

3. There are inadequacies in the scope of policies, strategies and action plans, and limited involvement of state agencies and non-state actors such as civil societies, traditional leaders, communities, NGOs and the private sector. This is evidenced by the challenges experienced in mainstreaming gender, designing infrastructure standards, or accommodating nature-based approaches in climate change policies.

4. Lack of climate data and limited climate information analysis constrains the formation of informed policies, and impedes the development of comprehensive strategies and action plans. There is also limited analysis of gender and climate change, and of displacement resulting from disasters and climate impacts. While some climate information analysis and data exist, this is often not apposite to the policymakers. Policies, strategies and action plans may therefore not consider the necessary climate data in an iterative manner.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

1. While inherited gaps are evident within the policies, strategies and action plans, the main gap remains in translating policies into action and implementation. Limited capacity and knowledge, inadequate coordination across several levels, and lack of clear leadership are key challenges in implementing policies. Furthermore, the weak connections between top-down national-level policies, and local-level operations that aim to address immediate and urgent needs, make it difficult to appreciate and analyze national-level policy decisions and translate them into local-level actions. There are challenges in aligning interests and bringing actors together to scale-up actions for building ecosystems resilience, since political and administrative boundaries do not necessarily coincide with ecosystem boundaries.

2. Collaboration among agencies during implementation of adaptation actions is a considerable challenge. Communications between offices is sometimes inefficient. Insufficient technical capacity, including the ability to effectively monitor and evaluate to measure efficiency of policies, remains a challenge both at national and local levels.

3. Gender-based barriers and blind spots continue to exist across the major pillars of international, national and local policy processes on climate change and disaster risk reduction. There is a considerable requirement for disaggregated gender and climate change impact analysis, to support comprehensive and gender-sensitive policy-making.

Xianfu Lu
Senior Climate Change Specialist, ADB

"When it comes to managing climate risks and building resilience, policies and regulatory frameworks play an important role in setting standards, guiding market behavior and promoting good practices."

Daniel Murdiyarso
Principal Scientist
Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

"Catch up with the times! Combining mitigation and adaptation is the key to enhancing resilience."

OPPORTUNITIES AND MOVING FORWARD

1. In Asia and the Pacific region, most countries are taking steps to translate multilateral environmental agreements and development agenda, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) under the Paris Agreement, and Sendai Framework for Action, and formulating national and sectoral level of action plans. These national-level efforts provide significant opportunities to integrate both climatic and non-climatic drivers of vulnerabilities, and design actions in an integrated manner, while covering a full range of resilience-building measures.

2. For seamless implementation of policies and strategies, a comprehensive approach which involves and consults with all state and non-state actors (government agencies, civil society organizations, community leaders, youth, vulnerable groups and communities, NGOs and private sectors), needs to be adopted. Roles and responsibilities to undertake actions must be clearly defined and translated from broader national-level policy perspectives. A bottom-up approach in formulating policies – which recognizes the role of local institutions and community-led initiatives and considers vulnerable communities and groups not only as beneficiaries but as agents and drivers of change – will assist the vertical connections of actors and highlight their roles in implementing policies. This will also ensure that the voices of the poor and marginalized are truly integrated into policy development and involved in an inclusive governance system. There is a need for policy and governance structures to incentivize participation from the private sector, ensure supply chain readiness, and allow for direct action on the ground.

3. Policies should support integrated approaches to enhance resilience of human and social systems, to protect vital ecosystem and ecosystem services, and to develop resilience of industry and infrastructure. Moreover, actions should respond to local conditions. National and local government interventions related to improving the wider built and socio-economic environment, should be aligned and coordinated at all levels. Technical and financial assistance for communities to build their resilience should be designed in a way that is pertinent to, and accessible by, local communities.

4. Gender equality aspects should be integrated into climate adaptation plans, strategies and actions. This supports and strengthens existing capacities, and facilitates women's economic empowerment, and builds women's leadership and skills – particularly in plans relating to migration, resettlement/relocation, and disaster preparedness and response. Women are agents of global change and must be empowered, while their climate adaptation actions, stories and innovations should be highlighted.

5. It is also important to empower migrant communities, as well as host communities and countries with policies that facilitate integration and social cohesion. It is vital to strengthen channels for these diaspora communities within and from the region, to contribute to sustainable development in their home countries.

6. Policies should focus on supporting climate data systems and information provision, and the development of early warning systems to manage the risks associated with displacement events. This would allow for more proactive efforts to shorten the time for recovery from extreme events and enable recovery within the extreme event return interval.

7. There is a need to establish a knowledge management platform on gender mainstreaming in climate change adaptation. This would allow for upscaling efforts, including attracting investments in technology and data, which would assist in equipping women to build resilience in their communities, in the face of projected disasters.

Planning and Processes

Shantanu Mitra
Senior Climate and Environment Adviser, UK Department for International Development

"Resilience requires integrated, multi-dimensional approaches, integrated thinking, working at different scales and with different partners."

Ronaldo Golez
Mayor, Dumangas City, Iloilo Province, Philippines

"Let us not worry about the cost of disaster risk reduction and climate resiliency programs, let us be concerned on protecting and uplifting the lives of our people."

Planning and designing actions to adapt successfully to the adverse impacts of climate change requires science-based planning and the use of both traditional and modern knowledge. There is a necessity for better integration of climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) and an urgent imperative to improve the flow of information for effective planning and management. Coordination and collaboration must be improved, to deal with divergent interests and agenda among various stakeholders during both planning and implementation.

CURRENT PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

1. Planning and designing adaptation interventions are context-specific. It is vital to consider the local context for adaptation interventions and to develop a clear understanding of community perspectives and their needs. The importance of bottom-up and multi-stakeholder engagement should not be underestimated. Following an iterative planning process and learning from actions, is also vital. State and non-state institutions and actors are already engaged in DRR and CCA planning, but there are still considerable requirements for better integration. This involves preparing communities with the right mechanisms to deal with hazards, starting from the national-level technical working groups, down to the provinces.

2. Numerous approaches, methods and tools are available for planning and designing adaptation interventions. Many of these are assisting communities to articulate and reflect on their own needs, and thereby enhancing buy-in and ownership. Guidelines for planning and designing climate-resilient infrastructure are being developed and applied to investment projects. National-level frameworks and standards for infrastructure design are often available, but these need to be updated to reflect the changing characteristics of hazards, and adjusted to a level that is critical for implementation – e.g. – for cities and coastal zones. This makes the frameworks and standards accessible and relevant for project planners, designers and developers

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3. Knowledge and experiences are emerging on the planning and designing of 'gray-green infrastructure'. This is now recognized as an important approach to combine urgent and immediate needs, and long-term solutions to the adverse impacts of climate change, towards building resilience. There are, however, limited pilot projects involving nature-based solutions, particularly within urban areas. This means that up-take is reduced, even though this offers a promising approach with numerous co-benefits for urban populations. Difficulties also lie in communicating the benefits of Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) approaches to municipal authorities, particularly in cities where land values are high and paramount.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

1. There is an ongoing lack of scientific and technical knowledge, as well as limited expertise to plan and design adaptation actions at various levels. Financial resources are also inadequate. There are few opportunities for sharing experiences in planning and designing effective interventions, and in dealing with the diverse interests of various stakeholders. It is vital for stakeholders to collaborate in sharing information and experiences, particularly on the design of infrastructure for multiple sectors, including agriculture, water, and urban/built environments.

Saleemul Huq
Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)

"We must urgently address non-economic loss and damage, such as forced displacement, so that 'no-one is left behind' as we push for integrated adaptation solutions."

Tony Wong
Chief Executive Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities)

"Urbanization will refocus for us the whole concept of resilience. Nature-based solutions in combination with grey infrastructure offer great opportunities and multiple resilience outcomes if properly planned."

2. Often the planning and designing of adaptation interventions lack alignment with broader development perspectives. This can overlook the iterative aspects of planning, which requires the mainstreaming of adaptation into development and management strategies. Weak governance structures and the disconnection between nature and people – particularly in an urban environment – remain significant barriers to the success of EbA. Communicating the benefits of urban EbA to the private sector is challenging because of the prevailing interests of land value.

3. Countries in the Pacific have demonstrated excellent climate change planning process with effective planning instruments. The challenge now is to move from planning processes towards implementation. It remains important to update and refine the planning process by incorporating iterative learning from implementation, while adjusting the design of adaptation interventions. Reliance on international frameworks is a burden but is currently a reality for many small Pacific Islands.

OPPORTUNITIES AND MOVING FORWARD

1. Countries in Asia and the Pacific are aspiring for development. Significant investment is ongoing in infrastructure, but fewer resources are being invested in natural resource management and ecosystem services. This aspiration for development – as well as the continued investment in maintaining existing infrastructure and building new infrastructure – provides a vital opportunity to integrate climate risk consideration, integrate improved design, support synergies among sectors, and engage all stakeholders into the planning processes.

2. A platform is required which would enable scientific communities, national and local governments, planners and designers, NGOs and academic institutions to interact. This would support the integration of science and scientific information, assist in keeping standards updated and enhance the development of guidelines for infrastructure design. Establishing an asset management system for climate-resilient infrastructure – such as road networks – would allow for broader participation of the private sector. Furthermore, it would allow stakeholders to consider exposure and trends in climatic hazards and risks over various timescales and scenarios. Other aspects such as the changes in enabling conditions and regulatory frameworks could also be factored in – which would enable the private sector to assess transitional risks.

3. Incentives are necessary for high-risk investment and to foster EbA. This may include a combination of engineering and soft interventions. Evidence-based awareness is important for the private sector to consider investment in ecosystem-based approaches, as an opportunity to increase their potential dividends. Success stories of EbA interventions would assist in attracting investment in pilot projects, to address the demand for such nature-based solutions.

4. Future development approaches and project interventions need to ensure that development efforts not only support near-term economic and social development but are also build long-term climate-resilience. For Pacific Island countries, planning approaches should be framed within the wider context of Ocean States as opposed to Small Island Developing States. It is necessary to upscale CCA / DRR interventions focusing on food security and coastal protection, to secure the resilience of islands which are physically cut off from food sources during disasters, with the breakdown of shipping and air transport.

Financing and Investing

Yuki Yasui
Asia Pacific Region Co-ordination Manager, UN Environment Finance Initiative

"The currency private sectors speak is profit. But if impact measurements and performance could be part of the profit element, that would make a difference ... make 'impact' a value-creation driver for financiers and the economy."

Bjoern Surborg
Principal Adviser Support CCCII, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

"The idea of climate risk transfer and risk insurance is relatively new. We have to integrate risk insurance and transfer in the resilience framework. It is a race against time."

There are real and urgent gaps concerning the availability of viable instruments to ensure the connection between finance and investment. There is also a gap in the development of projects which enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities and natural and built environments, while advancing socio-economic development. It is important to explore and mobilize both traditional and non-traditional sources of climate finance, such as blended finance and innovative sources, including within the private sector, to scale-up climate finance and investment to match urgent needs. Social protection programs, innovative risk financing and blended schemes like micro-insurance, etc. can support vulnerable communities, attract investments for ecosystems and tourism assets, and build resilience in industry and infrastructure.

CURRENT PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

1. Every country in Asia and the Pacific region – small or large – has experience in accessing finance for implementing climate change activities, ranging from enabling activities to implementing projects on the ground. Sources of finances, however, vary widely – as do modalities for access and the focus of projects and partnerships to implement adaptation actions. But the prevailing inadequacy of climate finance and investment is an issue which needs to be overcome. Island communities have the greatest challenges in accessing available financial resources. In some cases, capacity building is required to enhance fiscal management skills and to improve budgets management. Capacity building for accessing climate finance, which focuses on enhancing mentoring services, developing opportunities for knowledge exchange, and providing accessible information on how to develop strong and bankable project proposals, etc. are critical priorities.
2. In addition to building capacity to access climate funds established under multilateral climate agreements, there is a pressing need to work with ministries of finance and environment, and other government departments, to mainstream adaptation into government budgets to ensure resources are directed to adaptation activities. Social protection programs of government and urban lending schemes should also support integrating climate resilience efforts.
3. While funding mechanisms under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have established their own criteria and processes for accessing funds, many financing institutions and mechanisms are yet to configure their current criteria to accommodate the reality of delayed returns and benefits which accrue from financing and investing in adaptation – such as building ecosystem resilience. Investing in activities that make natural systems resilient require long-term and 'patient' investments – a challenging proposition given the orientation of traditional financial institutions towards realizing short-term returns on their finance and investments. There is a need to set up a platform to harness the interests of the private sector in green incentives. This would assist in matching private sector interests with lenders and the local communities, to enable them to collaborate and discuss how they can find solutions which suit the interests of all parties.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

1. Scale and predictability, finance and investment are critical gaps in building resilience. A lack of evidence, credible data and information which could present a clear justification and narrative in project proposals – particularly regarding nature-based solutions – as well as the limited project-based approaches, are significant challenges. Research, assessment and validation, and evidence of intervention impacts are critical – particularly for complex ecosystems, while local impacts of climate change are hard to predict. It is a challenge to generate support from the private sector for climate change adaptation and resilience building, when dealing with these unknowns. It is also difficult to create a multidisciplinary team to work in proposal development and pitch it effectively.

Jonathan Batangan
First Vice President and Group Head, PJ Lhuillier Group of Companies, Philippines

"Micro-insurance should be affordable and pro-poor. Multi-stakeholder collaboration is the key for the macro, meso, and micro risk insurance. There is a need for more support from the government to bring the other players in the industry put the structure in place."

Nana Künkel
Adaptation, REDD and Biodiversity Head, Programme Office, International Climate Initiative

"Change the mindset of the private sector on how they see climate change—they should be able to see the risk elements and what it means to their business. They should look at climate change from the value chain perspective."

2. Instruments to unlock domestic finance need to be developed and explored, not solely from the central government, but also through the contribution of local government, communities and local groups – including in-kind contributions – to ensure ownership and sustainability of actions. It is important to identify and include successful EbA initiatives to attract financing, particularly from domestic funds. Meanwhile, accessibility, timelines, and distribution of risk insurance to vulnerable sectors must be enhanced.

3. There is a need to shift away from project-based approaches and embed sustainability in proposed initiatives. At the outset of the project design and implementation agreement, efforts to institutionalize the initiative will help to ensure sustainability beyond the project life time.

OPPORTUNITIES AND MOVING FORWARD

1. Financial mechanisms established under the UNFCCC enable and facilitate climate change projects. Meanwhile, governments, bilateral development partners, multilateral development banks, and the private sector will continue to finance activities to support social and human development, invest in cities and infrastructure – including rural infrastructure, agriculture and food systems etc. These initiatives provide opportunities to institutionalize and drive policy for climate finance and investment, to build resilience. This includes moving beyond programmatic support, and developing opportunities to blend public and private finance. Collaboration between the private sector and the government, through policies and legislation, is important for implementing and mainstreaming risk insurance and transfer.

2. Social resilience can be enhanced by building on existing institutional capacities and social protection programs. Resilience can be better supported when social protection comprehensively covers various areas, such as employment, livelihoods, institutions and skills development. Furthermore, financing early actions at the local level, and scaling up micro-insurance will build the capacity of vulnerable communities to better manage risks and absorb climate shocks without suffering major setbacks. It is important to stock-take climate and adaptation intervention evidence at the grassroots level, to provide justification for scaling up adaptation efforts in other localities. This can then lead to national and local-level mainstreaming.

3. Institutionalizing the use of climate risk information will support the targeting of beneficiaries for effective social protection programs. Climate risk information should also underpin knowledge of the unique vulnerabilities and sensitivities of communities, and inform how to address varying magnitudes of climate shock. It should also inform the participation of various stakeholders and communities in demand-driven projects. Local governments and the communities must be equipped with the knowledge and skills to properly articulate their needs for which multi-sectoral collaboration is necessary to strengthen their capacity. This will also significantly contribute to access finance for building community resilience.

4. Making strong financial cases and presenting opportunities through monetizing resilience benefits are necessary to engage the private sector – particularly small and medium enterprises. Towards this end, it is valuable to involve national sources of suitable expertise, such as from universities and research institutions, to develop these business cases to attract investment from the private sector.

Technologies and Practices

Bernie Besebes
Project Coordinator
Policy & Planning
Program, Palau
Conservation Society

"We are looking towards low-tech, low-cost, so we do not hit community members in the wallet; instead we bring traditional knowledge and science together."

Isabelle Louis
Deputy Regional Director
UN Environment
Asia and the Pacific Office

"There is a need to invest in technology and data that can arm women to build resilience in their communities, in the face of upcoming disasters."

Technologies and practices must be utilized to support job creation, food security, life and property, and sustainable livelihoods. They should enhance resilience of both the natural and built environments. There is a call for new forms of partnerships to scale up the application of existing technologies and generate new climate-smart technologies. Innovations such as big data and cutting-edge information systems should be employed to enhance resilience, as well as new media for awareness and outreach. There is vast scope for effective cross-learning and knowledge sharing opportunities in utilizing new technologies and practices for climate adaptation.

CURRENT PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES:

1. There is no scarcity of technologies and good practices to address the adverse impacts of climate change on economies, agriculture, food security and health, as well as environmental degradation. However, the challenge lies in how these technologies and practices can be adapted to the local context and upscaled. Technologies and practices need to be adjusted to suit social, economic and environmental circumstances. Indigenous knowledge can further inform the tailoring of site-specific technologies. Within island communities, efforts are underway to integrate new and traditional knowledge-based adaptation practices which build resilience and incorporate local practices.

2. Technologies and practices which enhance ecosystem resilience to climate change can increase societal wellbeing and enhance safeguards. Investments in infrastructure which promote the transition to a low-carbon economy and climate-resilient development pathways – such as shifting to sustainable energy, building a circular economy, investing in water infrastructure and reforestation etc. – will create new jobs and enhance wages. This will also increase socio-economic resilience. It is vital to identify and develop 'green technology' skills for even the most vulnerable communities, while strengthening education systems to facilitate access to a renewed jobs market – including the informal economy. Meanwhile, social protection systems must adjust to meet the demands of new jobs which will be created.

3. There are similar experiences throughout Asia and the Pacific region on the implementation of EbA. Supporting livelihoods and developing climate risk management is considered of primary importance, while ecosystem conservation and restoration are secondary. Efforts will have to made to convey that it is transformative adaptation and resilience building – incorporating EbA interventions – which will address the adverse impacts of climate change. Each type of ecosystem provides specific environmental resources and therefore the benefits can be harnessed differently. In some cases, a combination of nature-based and engineering solutions is delivering good results.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

1. There are weak consultation and feedback mechanisms to emphasize what is required to meet the needs of vulnerable communities – from local to national level. It is vital to scale-up adaptation technologies and share good practices. Communities, beneficiaries and local leaders must be consulted, to contextualize the technology needs, and to find the appropriate solutions. There is no one-size-fits-all. Scaling up nature-based solutions appears to be particularly challenging. This requires a good balance between focusing on community needs and those of ecosystem services.

Dilruba Haider
Programme Specialist
UN Women

"Green technologies are rapidly changing from being ineffective, inefficient, and very expensive. This change has to be fast and radical and we have to move with all men and women."

Anthony Mills
Founder and CEO
C4 EcoSolutions

"Research is urgently needed on how to restore the appropriate ecological infrastructure in different landscapes. Artificial intelligence and cutting-edge technology can potentially fast-track this research.'"

2. Infrastructure design and development often do not integrate climate change adaptation, and lack involvement of public-private partnerships. Nature-based solutions are frequently not yet integrated into existing planning frameworks. The benefits of nature-based approaches and solutions are understood, but their application is time-consuming. It is critical to employ a flexible management structure, and an approach of 'learning by doing'. There must be maximum stakeholder involvement, as well as good governance, to bring together multiple sectors and ensure an integrated approach. Engineering at large landscape scale is also vital to generate long-term sustainable land-use management.

OPPORTUNITIES AND MOVING FORWARD

1. Technologies and practices must be increasingly deployed – since technology provides vital opportunities to achieve development aspirations and generate resilient livelihoods. Technology provides opportunities to enhance climate resilience in human and social systems, industry and infrastructure, as well as ecosystem and ecosystem services. But governments must make this a priority by integrating new technologies into development plans, fostering investment in research and innovation for green technologies, and enabling public-private partnerships.

2. Appropriate technologies must be identified, which respond to the demands of new 'green jobs'. Suitable financing strategies should be put in place which support capacity building and skills upscaling, to develop green technologies. Technology for green jobs, and linking jobs and skills development efforts has the potential to improve lives, especially in rural areas. In particular, this new economic opportunity can benefit women, through capacity development and upscaling of skills – to benefit the environment and society. It is important to find ways to stimulate and incentivize businesses to invest in adaptation technologies. The role of enabling policies should be emphasized, since this is vital to generate green jobs and enterprises, while maximizing the economic benefits of climate action.

3. The resilience of the built environment can be enhanced through focusing on system interdependencies, for example between water/energy/transport, while utilizing innovative technologies and 'smart-cities' design. Soft technologies – such as forecasting applications and digital connectivity – should be widely disseminated and employed to support adaptation. Infrastructure development should always ensure safety and cost-effectiveness. Improving the maintenance of existing and new infrastructure can extend their viability, while generating more resilience to climatic extremes. There must be ongoing and long-term dialogue on infrastructure development between all relevant sectors.

4. Green infrastructure and EbA rely on the uptake of innovations in technologies and practices, as well as effective training and capacity building, awareness-raising and communications. Learning by doing and seeing, can effectively help sharing innovative technologies. Nature-based solutions need to be embedded within other agendas and must be integrated into existing frameworks. Communications between different sectors, as well as investment in data generation, is crucial to benefit sound decision-making.

5. Countries can benefit from working with organizations with technical expertise in infrastructure development plans and technical guidelines. Networks (formal or informal) can provide a further means to promote technologies through sharing experiences and exchanging knowledge. South-South cooperation and knowledge exchange/technology transfer can further facilitate the broader adoption and adaptation of technologies to suit specific needs.

Science and Assessment

Florence Kuali-Iautu
Communication Officer
Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department

"Science and traditional knowledge not only can work together, but together they work better to build community resilience."

Paul Watkiss
Independent Consultant and Associate, Stockholm Environment Institute

"We must scale up the quality and usability of climate information, and make it fit for purpose."

There will always be an element of uncertainty in adaptation planning and decision making. The intrinsic variability in the climate, and in the human, social, economic, and environmental systems, impose a certain degree of uncertainty associated with what to adapt to. Similarly, the available information and knowledge is often incomplete. Nevertheless, this cannot be an excuse for inaction. It is vital to make the best use of all available research and information – traditional, science-based, and risk-informed – so that actions are coordinated and transformative. Information as an evidence base is crucial, but there is a need to balance the urgent need for action and the requirements for detailed scientific evidence.

CURRENT PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES

1. Scientific information is necessary to plan and promote appropriate adaptation measures at all levels. A combination of science-based assessments, and perspectives drawn from various stakeholders currently informs the basis for climate actions. Hydro-meteorological data and information, climate change scenarios, national and sectoral level impacts, vulnerability assessment reports, and scientific assessment reports are available at regional and global levels. These science-based assessments are complimented by local level evidence of change and observed impacts from affected communities, to form the main sources of information which support adaptation planning and designing interventions.

2. Undertaking consultation at national, sub-national and community levels is essential to understand the perspectives of stakeholders and beneficiaries, as well as to validate information and knowledge. It is common practice to conduct targeted assessments of climate change aspects and their associated impacts on sector(s) and communities, and to appraise adaptation interventions. But the scale and thoroughness of these assessments vary depending on funding sources and their requirements, as well as the nature of the adaptation interventions. Moreover, cost-benefit analysis for EbA approach – for example – has limitations, since not all benefits can be monetized. In some instances, such approaches can even be counter-productive. There is a need to more effectively measure the value/cost of the potential climatic disasters which we plan to avoid.

3. Analytical tools are available to generate climate change scenarios, undertake impact and vulnerability assessments, appraise adaptation interventions. Yet there remains a lack of downscaled, science-based assessments for vulnerable sectors and societies, to support adaptation planning and the design of adaptation interventions. Climate risk information is often missing for development practitioners to carry out activities that are "fit for purpose". Climate-resilient investment decisions are often made despite a plethora of uncertainties. It is vital to upscale available information from successful adaptation actions, involving the local government, stakeholders and communities.

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

1. Hydro-meteorological data and information, analytical tools, and impacts and vulnerability assessment reports are available in many cases at national and sectoral levels. However, gaps and challenges remain with the lack of capacity to downscale climate information and generate climate change scenarios, then to identify impacts and vulnerabilities, and design adaptation actions which will address both the adverse impacts of climate change and community development needs.

2. Scientific information is necessary for adaptation. Yet there is a lack of information on how to use data and information in decision making. There is a requirement to improve climate information – including weather forecasting – by investing in technologies and systems to enhance seasonal forecasting. This would support decision making and facilitate the development of, among others, multi-functional farming systems that could withstand the impacts of climate change.

3. There is a tendency to utilize a single climate scenario and apply an approach of listing available strategies and eliminating options that have least potential to deliver adaptation and/or resilience outcomes. This creates a gap in identifying strategies and

Viliami Ongosia
Project Manager
Tonga Power Limited

"Built stronger, and with resilience, power projects can now recover from strong typhoons in days instead of weeks."

Masataka Watanabe
Professor, Research and Development Initiative, Chuo University , Japan

"Knowledge of resilience to climate change is best understood when it is co-developed with science and within social, economic, political and cultural contexts."

options that would perform best under a range of foreseeable future scenarios. Improved science-based assessment, linkages between science-policy-practices, empowering practitioners with practical information and knowledge and the ability to use the information for decision-making, will support access to finance, including from the private sector, to support adaptation.

4. Climate change impacts must be correctly and consistently analyzed, and the corresponding hazard and slow-onset indicators and trends must be identified. Adaptation options should be developed which avoid negative trade-offs between adaptation and mitigation, adaptation/mitigation and reduction of poverty/inequality. The integration of databases, knowledge and best practices through promotion of regional partnerships could better facilitate the development of adaptation options and bankable projects. Learning must be harnessed through the exchange of experiences; adaptation practitioners need to learn about effective solutions which are already being implemented, from each other and from scientists.

OPPORTUNITIES AND MOVING FORWARD

1. Climate change presents an opportunity to spur scientific, economic and social transformation. Scientific data which is needed to generate more informed adaptation action include: 1) Stronger tools and methodologies to assess climate risk, and appraise adaption actions; 2) climate change databases and knowledge systems – including hazard and vulnerability reduction, adaptive capacities, integrated risk probabilities; and 3) systematic mapping of data to identify the inter-dependencies and how each sub-system relates to the other components. It is also useful to trace the impacts of shocks and stress to show funding agencies how benefits are being monetized.

2. Opportunities exist for shared learning, strengthening regional partnerships, mobilizing resources and translating information into action. South-South exchange is a highly beneficial method for transferring knowledge between practitioners who are undertaking adaptation actions. This can be a more valuable way of building capacity than standard training. Developing information platforms and 'centers of excellence' to collect, manage, and disseminate relevant climate science data and information would enhance the knowledge base and support future adaptation interventions. Cooperation among ministries and related research institutions are important while developing such platforms.

3. Addressing slow-onset events must be embedded in the proposed budget/agenda of government agencies. Strengthening regional partnerships and sub-national programming can encourage provincial governments to develop local adaptation plans. Science and traditional knowledge must both be utilized to inform local governments and communities. It is vital to convey information gleaned in an appropriate manner, constantly mindful of the people who are receiving the messages.

4. There is a need to develop in-country national capacity to implement and monitor adaptation interventions. Universities can provide readily available and under-utilized sources of expertise and capacity which can complement the actions of governments, while performing as sustainable repositories of knowledge.

5. Research must work across sectors and utilize all available expertise. It is important to strive for gender parity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, to make the best use of human resources. Repositories of evidence exist and need to be expanded – following the increasing investment in pilot interventions over the last decade, which have provided a wealth of experiences and lessons learned. Traditional knowledge is a vital aspect; the loss of traditional knowledge means losing forever some aspects of adaptive capacity. It is vital to document how traditional and local knowledge can improve resilience. Climate change is a long-term phenomenon; therefore, there is a need to prioritize long-term monitoring and evaluation – and apply learnings iteratively. Traditional knowledge and science are not dichotomous; they can and must work hand-in-hand.

Summary

Rachel Herrera
Commissioner
Climate Change
Commission Philippines

"Achieving climate resilience is context-based and community-specific. Governments must empower their people to address risks and vulnerabilities. Adaptation means seeking innovative solutions."

Kaleb Udui, Jr.
Policy Advisor
Office of The President
Republic of Palau

"We need to be inclusive and consult with communities about what exactly they need in order to give them the right solutions. Bottom line, we need to think about clean, reliable, and cheap. Our work is cut out for us, so we must continue to go the distance."

Building and enabling resilience in our human and social systems, industry, and the built and natural environments, requires an integrated approach to withstand the wide ranging and largely adverse impacts of climate change. Systems thinking is becoming increasingly important to deal with the various elements and stakeholders involved in addressing climate change. Sectors are interrelated and therefore, actions in one area – whether positive or negative – will have consequences in other areas. The imperatives are evident, since avoiding the worst impacts of climate change is the best-case scenario we can hope for. Thus, moving forward, learning fast and applying adaptation approaches are the urgent tasks in hand.

- Countries in the region, particularly the island states, have already made strong headway through instilling climate change adaptation into the consciousness of policymakers and national leaders. However, more can still be done by stakeholders and government agencies, so that implementation can be managed in a more coordinated manner. A practical and united approach is required, integrating current and future efforts, while striving to minimize duplication and maximize resources. National and local decisionmakers must be consistently encouraged to embrace and implement comprehensive, actionable and realistic adaptation policies. Meanwhile, it remains crucial to build capacity and competence to enable these leaders and local champions to manage and implement policies and plans.

- Adaptation should be embraced at the local level, since achieving climate resilience is highly context specific. Local governments must employ the best available science and downscaled climate data, while empowering communities to address their risks and vulnerabilities. Adaptation often involves being innovative in finding solutions to address locally-specific risks. Science-informed governance which is inclusive, and puts the welfare of the communities, especially women, children and vulnerable groups at the core of climate action and investment plans, provides the ideal environment to build genuine resilience and ensure 'no one is left behind'.

- There will always be an element of uncertainty to adaptation planning and decision-making. The intrinsic variability in the climate and in the human, social, economic, and environmental systems makes this inevitable to a certain degree. It is well recognized that the knowledge we have in possession remains incomplete. Nevertheless, this cannot be an excuse for inaction. It is paramount to access the research and information that is already available for all – traditional and science-based social, physical, and natural information – and recognize the data gaps. Finding ways to close these gaps and the means by which to address them, is critical for the coordinated, and transformative resilience action that is required. Information as a basis for evidence is vital, but so is the need to balance the urgent need for action with waiting for thorough scientific assessments before moving forward.

- An improved understanding of climate-related risks and vulnerabilities is required to address divergent stakeholder agendas and interests, especially those of non-state actors, business and the private sector, who are increasingly recognized as key partners in resilience building. Understanding and prioritizing risks and adaptation options for key sectors and regions is also crucial for expediting adaptation finance and investment.

Xianfu Lu
Senior Climate Change Specialist, ADB

"Nature-based solutions are not a silver bullet. They need to work in conjunction with other types of solutions. Knowledge is key. We cannot solve problems on our own, we need interactive wisdom."

Mozaharul Alam
Regional Coordinator
Climate Change Programme
Asia and the Pacific Office
UN Environment

"An integrated approach is crucial. A truly integrated approach to climate change adaptation brings partners together and enhances access to finance and technology. Partnerships are the vehicle to build resilience."

- Adaptation finance is currently drawing on a growing and diverse range of sources, not only from national budgets, but particularly from public private partnerships, and other non-traditional, non-vertical mechanisms. This needs to gain more traction. If risk information becomes more readily available for designing adaptation projects, nature-based pilots, and social impact investments, this will improve investment decision-making, and support the mobilization of resources and financing.

- The private sector is becoming more proactive, and public private partnerships are providing strong opportunities for advancing adaptation action. South-South cooperation and learning exchanges are providing opportunities for sharing and upscaling technologies and processes.

The recent IPCC report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C released in early October 2018 indicates a timeframe of 12 years, beyond which the worst impacts of climate change will be unavoidable.

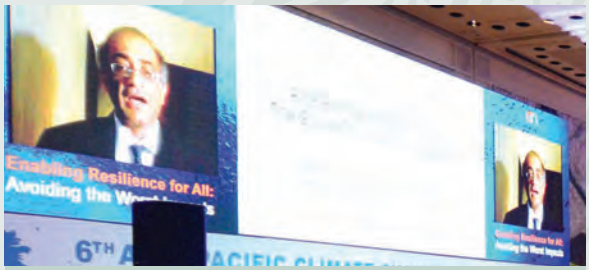
The urgent message is that actions to equip societies with the resilience to withstand the emerging impacts must continue and accelerate. There may still be disagreement about the finer points of the IPCC report. But the message is clear. Support must be further advanced for countries, governments, and communities as they address these issues. Integration, capacity building, partnerships, and innovative financing mechanisms, all need to be stepped up. There is an urgent requirement for coordinated policies and plans, supported by science, information and knowledge. This will help to directly target resources to support resilient infrastructure development and generate scaling technologies that specifically enhance security and livelihood opportunities.

The Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) and its biennial forums will continue to provide a platform to coordinate the interactions and partnerships between and among the adaptation community within the Asia Pacific region and beyond.

APAN works to connect with relevant thematic platforms, such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Nairobi Work Programme, the Global Adaptation Network (GAN), and the recently formed Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA).

The APAN knowledge platform also helps to establish regional priorities and mobilize support for international climate gatherings, such as the 24th Session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (COP24) in Katowice, Poland, and the upcoming Oceans 2020 conference. Moving forward, the APAN agenda will be guided by the outcomes of this Forum and will prioritize support for the adaptation community in advancing the adaptation agenda. APAN will continue to provide practitioners and partners with the opportunity to forge partnerships and share learnings from actions, cutting edge science, and practical solutions, to strengthen resilience.

Speaker highlights



"To us in Asia, climate change is not an abstract problem of the future, but a very real problem of the present. We can accelerate and achieve action by aligning the Adaptation and SDG agendas, delivering integrated financing approaches from multiple sources to multiple sectors for multiple benefits, and enabling and scaling local action."

Anand Patwardhan
Research Director, Global Commission on Adaptation

"What inspires me is my responsibility to take actions and do what I can to come up with solutions to address the oceans' problems since my generation and the next generations will be inheriting these problems."

18-year-old Miel Sequiera-Holm
Chair, Heirs to Our Oceans, Palau

"It's important for us to remember not to underestimate the power that we have. It's not just the leaders, it's not just the scientists who should work. Every single one of us in the planet – we're talking about the 1.5°C issue right now. It's really something that has to be solved by every single person."

Antoinette Taus
Founder, CORA and UN Advocate for Life Below Water (SDG 14), Philippines

"Let us put children and the vulnerable at the center of climate action and help sectors on climate risk management."

Seonmi Choi
Regional Environment and Climate Advisor, UNICEF

"Fighting climate change may look like a David and Goliath battle, but if you come from a place where you have been impacted every day, it is hard to find an excuse to give up."

Joanna Sustento
Eastern Visayas Area Coordinator, Greenpeace Southeast Asia-Philippines

"Time is ticking and we need to move faster, we have the solutions, we have the resources, we need to build partnerships."

Erna Witoelar
Co-Chair, Filantropi Indonesia

"Extinction is forever and ecosystem resilience takes a really, really long time."

Youssef Nassef
Adaptation Director, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

"The challenge that lies ahead in implementing green jobs is ensuring that no one is left behind."

Khalid Hassan
Director, Philippine Country Office, International Labour Organization (ILO)

"It is a challenge to get community engagement if your EbA program is pure conservation; it has to be connected to livelihoods to encourage community participation."

Donna Gordove
Executive Director, Manila Bay Coordinating Office, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines

"Uncertainties are inevitable and should not be the excuse for inaction. We can work with uncertainties by characterizing and managing them, pragmatically and transparently."

David Salter
Rural Development Specialist
Asian Development Bank

"My island's drowning... white tipped waves crash in my backyard, over my ancestors' graves... 2050 we are no more, my island has 32 years left... 1.5 degrees is all we've got."

Selina Leem
Youth Representative, Marshall Islands

"For every climate change adaptation intervention, we must consider; how do we sustain this? How do we institutionalize this? We need to shift away from project-based approach."

Edith Ofwona
Senior Program Specialist, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

Speaker highlights

"The power lies with our people. They should be empowered so they can be the drivers who push for the continuation."

Branessa Tsiode
Social Sector Planner, Ministry of Finance, Nauru

"Development partners are 'force multipliers' of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management initiatives."

Jose Bernardo Gochoco III
Project Officer, International Council for Local Environment Initiatives (ICLEI)

"We need to be able to make flexible adaptation options and not lock our decisions on certain pathways. We must consider adaptation options that look at the opportunities, instead of the past."

Nathan Rive
Climate Change Specialist
Asian Development Bank

"Ocean resilience is our business... the Pacific is vast ... the only way we can work to make it a resilient Pacific is in a combined effort with all countries and organizations. The vision of our 'blue planet' inspires us to conserve and work together."

Gillian Cambers
Programme Manager
Secretariat of the Pacific Community

"It is not enough that workers survive at work, but it's more important that they develop and participate in economic development in the era of climate change."

Jerome Ilagan
Policy Chief, Philippine Climate Change Commission

"Every other breath we take is gifted to us by the oceans. It's our lifeline for resilience. We are educating ourselves and others so we can find solutions to the problems we are inheriting."

Miel Sequeira-Holm
Chair, Heirs to Our Oceans, Palau

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