Title of the side event: Rising Tides: The Power of a Healthy Ocean to Accelerate Climate Action

Side event date: 2/21/2024
Organizer(s): UN ESCAP, UNEP-COBSEA
Co-organizer(s): Republic of Indonesia

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. How can island States in the region effectively address the widespread degradation of marine ecosystems and coral reefs and how does this relate to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts?
2. In what ways can coastal communities, governments, civil society, and other stakeholders, collaborate to promote inclusive and sustainable blue economy opportunities while accelerating climate action?
3. What role do Nature-based Solutions play in enhancing the resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems, mitigating climate change, and protecting coastlines from the impacts of climate change, and how can these solutions be upscaled and financed effectively in the region?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

- The ocean is not only impacted by climate change, it is also a hero for climate action through nature-based solutions. Integrated approaches and stakeholder engagement are key to success.
- Dr. Artha shared Indonesia's efforts to restore and protect coastal ecosystems to store carbon and protect communities from sea-level rise, creating multiple benefits for people and planet. A sustainable blue economy approach is needed to address national and global seafood needs and the Indonesia SBE Roadmap is an example of how socio-economic and environmental goals can be balanced.
- Dr. Wichin highlighted the potential of area-based conservation measures, blue carbon storage in mangroves and seagrass, ecosystem-based management, and ecosystem restoration, to address societal challenges, protect human wellbeing, and benefit biodiversity in Thailand. A shift to environmentally friendly marine tourism is needed to reduce GHGs and protect these vital ecosystems and their services.
- Thailand's national ecosystem assessment will strengthen the science-policy interface to bring together knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
Ms. Pyn shared her inspiring mission to protect Thailand's vital coral ecosystems from climate impacts and pollution. Youth are leading efforts around the region to raise awareness and take action on climate change and to restore and protect marine ecosystems. She urged all decision makers and participants in APFSD to take action for a healthy ocean.

Ms. Kilponen highlighted the role of communities and knowledge sharing for inclusive and impactful action for ecosystem-based adaptation. The EbA Fund supports projects globally to leverage traditional knowledge and science to empower communities to adapt to climate impacts like storm surges and sea-level rise.

We heard that NbS can also play a role in disaster risk reduction, in combination with 'hard' or 'grey' infrastructure.

France recognizes the importance of the Regional Seas to tackle the triple planetary crisis. Collective action to protect ocean health is imperative. France will host the 3rd UN Ocean Conference in Nice in 2025 to make real progress in implementing SDG 14 and related goals, including on IUU fishing, plastic pollution, and BBNJ, and to mobilize funding for a science-based action.

Conclusions / next steps

- Explore with France a side event on SDs and role of RS to implement an action programme they envisage as an outcome of the UNOC
- ESCAP Ocean Dialogue on 13 October, Commission Session in April (side event on oceans), hope to see concrete action for the ocean and NbS in the region

Title of the side event: Building a Greener Future: Education as a Climate Solution

Side event date: 21/02/2024
Organizer(s): United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
Co-organizer(s): Save the Children, Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Plan International, World Vision, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. How can education play a crucial role in addressing climate change?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities in integrating climate education into national curricula?
3. How can youth be empowered to lead climate actions and engage in decision-making processes?
4. What partnerships and financing mechanisms are necessary to support climate education and children's learning outcomes?
5. What policy reforms are needed to ensure climate accountability and rights-based approaches to education?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations
1. Integration of Climate Education: Advocate for the integration of climate education into national curricula and ensure its implementation.
2. Youth Engagement: Empower youth to lead climate actions and involve them in decision-making processes at all levels.
5. Policy Reforms: Advocate for policy reforms to ensure climate accountability and rights-based approaches to climate education.

Conclusions / next steps

The event concluded with a resounding call for action, emphasizing the pivotal role of education in building a greener and more sustainable future. Participants highlighted the urgency of integrating climate education into national curricula and empowering youth to lead climate actions. Recommendations were made to strengthen partnerships, mobilize financing, provide capacity building, and advocate for policy reforms. Moving forward, it is essential to implement these recommendations and foster collaboration between governments, organizations, and communities to address the interconnected challenges of climate change and education. By investing in climate education and empowering youth, we can build a more resilient and sustainable world for future generations.

Title of the side event: Managing Ecosystems for multiple benefits via EbA for Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Side event date: 22/02/2024
Organizer(s): India Water Foundation
Co-organizer(s): South and South West Asia Office UN ESCAP

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. What are the key policies, institutional and capacity barriers to implementing EbA at the local, regional and national levels over the long term? What, if any, opportunities emerged for replication, scaling up or mainstreaming the EbA initiative or for influence over policy, and how?
2. Out of all the Nature based solutions do you think ecosystem based adaptation can restore, maintain or enhance the capacity of ecosystems to continue to produce services for local communities, and allow ecosystems to withstand climate change impacts and other stressors?
3. What are the best approaches that allow human communities to maintain or improve their adaptive capacity or resilience, and reduce their vulnerability, in the face of climate change, while enhancing co-benefits that promote wellbeing?
4. What are the general economic costs and benefits of the EbA initiative? How cost-effective is it, ideally in comparison to other types of interventions, and are any financial or economic benefits sustainable over the long term and what changes in in donor policies are required to implement more effective EbA initiatives?
Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. EbA takes into account the transversality approach of water and emphasizes water as a socio-economic connector and indicator that interlinks sectors like agriculture, energy, biodiversity through actor-sector synergy and inter-sectoral convergence.
2. Financing and better investment is crucial, including external funding for creating social capitals. The private sector is benefited by the ecosystem hence it should also contribute to the financial building of the ecosystem.
3. Adopt integrated coastal management approaches that consider ecological, social and economic aspects. Build capacity and equip local communities with the knowledge and skills to participate in coastal resilience efforts.
4. Expanding regenerative pathways by increasing soil quality and health through nature based solutions are crucial for agroecology
5. Nature based solutions need to be recognised, quantified, invested in and managed at scale and integrated within policies at all levels.

Conclusions / next steps

Humans directly depend on ecosystems and their goods and services for their well-being. However, the abilities of ecosystems to supply these goods and services are being threatened by both climatic and non-climatic drivers of change. We have to understand the system dynamics, climatic and non-climatic drivers for the specific social-ecological context. Involve all relevant stakeholders in setting the adaptation objective and choosing context-appropriate EbA measures and complementary approaches. Identify temporal and geographic trade-offs and limitations, 'winners' and 'losers' to help ensure costs and benefits are as equitably distributed as possible, and to avoid mal-adaptation. Establish effective monitoring and evaluation from the outset. Incorporate activities that build the economic evidence on the full range of benefits delivered by EbA. Build ‘business cases’ comparing EbA options to alternatives. Use economic evidence to help integrate adaptation into plans, budgets and policies across sectors. Monitor progress towards intermediate outcomes, as well as eventual impact. Include activities to generate quantitative risk assessments that address the role of ecosystems to inform national adaptation planning. Ensure wide ranging stakeholder participation in building the evidence base and in planning processes to capture all perspectives on costs and benefits of impacts and policy options. Strengthen the role of national or jurisdictional budgets and their revision cycles in integrating adaptation into sectoral plans. Work to harmonise policy and legal frameworks to deliver adaptation objectives through EbA. Build in well-developed monitoring and evaluation in knowledge management. With its global outreach and extensive network, through partners and collaborators India Water Foundation is uniquely positioned to equip to communities/decision-makers and planners with such knowledge that can help drive a much needed paradigm shift: moving the world from cycles of degradation driven by unsustainable development to making best use of ecosystem services to support resilient societies and economies.

Title of the side event: SDG 13 and climate action through sustainable transport: challenges and opportunities in developing national electric mobility ecosystems in Asia and the Pacific

Side event date: 21/02/2024
What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. What are the national experiences on transitioning to electric mobility, for example in Sri Lanka and in China?
2. What role does the government play in promoting the electric vehicle industry in Thailand? What are recommendations to further promote EV development in Thailand?
3. What are the opportunities and challenges faced in the global shipping industry in decarbonization?
4. How can ESCAP further support countries and key stakeholders in the shift to electric mobility, and more widely, the 2030 Agenda?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. Transport is a major source of GHG emissions. The transport sector is responsible for 13% of all carbon dioxide emissions and around half of oil product consumption in Asia and the Pacific.
2. For China's electric vehicle industry, government incentives – such as consumer subsidies and production requirements - have helped to support the industry's growth as well as a cooperative international environment.
3. In Thailand, the electric vehicle industry has grown in recent years. However, there are still challenges with technology and workforce preparation for the industry's development.
4. For the shipping industry, the case of Maersk illustrates the importance of green fuel production and regulatory standards to achieve carbon neutrality.

Conclusions / next steps

Transitioning to an electric vehicle-based transportation system presents an effective approach to reducing emissions and decarbonising the transport sector. Key climate action strategies that the transport sector can undertake are to shift to renewable energy sources and support electric mobility. The side event concluded with a call for continued collaboration and innovation in promoting electric mobility to address climate challenges effectively.
Co-organizer(s):

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. What is the current status of young people’s access to SRHR information and services in the region in the context of climate crises?
2. What are some of the commitments made by governments to advance young people’s universal access to SRHR information and services in the context of climate crises in the region?
3. What are some of the key challenges and recommendations?
4. What are some of the innovative ideas for scale up and replication to advance the implementation of Agenda 2030 with a particular focus on Goal 13?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. The past decade has shown a doubling of climate- and weather-related disasters and it is estimated that the majority of people displaced by climate change are women, according to the UN.
2. These displacements often occur in contexts where there is already existing fragility and insecurity and call for comprehensive approaches that address the complex realities women and girls live in.
3. Voluntary, rights-based access to reproductive health and family planning services contributes to climate change resilience and socioeconomic development through improved health and well-being of women and their children, including increased access to education, gender equity and economic status.
4. According to research, up to 40% of women experiencing displacement across diverse settings want to avoid becoming pregnant. Yet incidents of rape and other forms of gender-based violence increase during times of crisis, affecting women and girls more acutely. And it’s a time when health systems become severely strained and skilled care is often out of reach.
5. Planned families are healthier families, they’re more stable families, and they’re more resilient families. If you have the number of children you desire, you are more prepared for whatever crisis comes next – be it the effects of climate change, displacement, or something else.
6. Only 5% of multilateral climate funding goes to adaptation. Of that 5%, only 1% is allocated to health programs. An even smaller amount of that money goes toward rights-based family planning programming, education, and provision.

Conclusions / next steps

We understand that Asia and the Pacific region is at a crucial juncture in this point in time, more than halfway through the timeframe set for Agenda 2030. Youth, specifically young women and girls, in the Asia and the Pacific region face insurmountable disadvantages. To achieve true meaningful inclusion, young people cannot be silenced or left behind. The future belongs to the young people and we call on Member States to adopt an equitable, non-discriminatory and participatory approach that fosters youth empowerment and leadership, human rights and gender equity.
Title of the side event: Unlocking investment and financing to tackle biodiversity loss in Asia and the Pacific

Side event date: 22/02/2024
Organizer(s): ESCAP
Co-organizer(s): AFD

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. What are the drivers and barriers to biodiversity finance?
2. How can government and regulators help accelerate the provision of biodiversity finance?
3. What role should biodiversity markets such as offsets and credit play in the provision of financing?
4. How can more private capital be mobilized to accelerate biodiversity financing?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. Urgent Need for Increased Investment: It is imperative to triple investment by 2030 in the context of biodiversity. The current funding for biodiversity is grossly insufficient, making it crucial to mobilise increased financial resources.

2. Private Finance Impact on Nature: Crucial to redirect private capital towards nature-friendly initiatives. The panellists underscore the importance of better regulations, improved data, enhanced risk management, and financial risk measures to achieve this redirection.

3. Challenges in Biodiversity Financing: There is a challenge in the lack of bankable projects for biodiversity. The financial gap, especially for smaller and non-bankable projects, is substantial. Governments, Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), and other stakeholders are urged to develop instruments and mechanisms that can be replicated to address this issue and bridge the financing gap.

4. Policy Recommendations for Private Sector Involvement: To drive private sector involvement in biodiversity, several policies were discussed, including establishing a clear taxonomy, leveraging green finance to de-risk biodiversity projects and exploring innovative financing mechanisms such as biodiversity credits and green bonds with support from governments and MDBs. Additionally, panellists emphasised involving local communities.

Conclusions / next steps

The panel discussion underscored the interconnectedness of financial systems, nature, and society, the growing awareness of the risks posed by biodiversity loss and the need for transformative change in financing to align business and finance with nature for a sustainable and just future.
The urgency to bolster investments in biodiversity, coupled with the fact that nature-negative investments far surpass nature-positive ones, demands immediate action. Challenges, such as the scarcity of bankable biodiversity projects, underscore the necessity for collaborative efforts, innovative solutions, and a systemic shift in financing practices. Effective solutions will require the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders.

The next steps include implementing robust policy to guide private sector investments and ensure they align with biodiversity goals and sustainable development. As well as investment in improving data quality and availability to overcome barriers hindering investor confidence. Leveraging green finance mechanisms to de-risk biodiversity projects and attract private capital and the importance of community involvement and inclusivity, learning from successful models to ensure that local communities are active participants in and beneficiaries of biodiversity initiatives. Encourage collaboration between nations, financial institutions, and civil society to establish a cohesive global approach to biodiversity financing.

Sharing best practices and lessons learned will expedite progress and comprehensive communication campaigns to educate stakeholders on the interconnectedness of biodiversity, finance, and societal well-being to foster a broader understanding and support.

To create an environment conducive to increasing nature-positive investment and pave the way for a future where financial systems actively contribute to preserving and restoring biodiversity.

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<tr>
<th>Title of the side event: Promoting Synergistic Approaches in Asia and the Pacific: Addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis</th>
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<td><strong>Side event date:</strong> 20/02/2024</td>
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<td><strong>Organizer(s):</strong> Ministry of Environment Japan</td>
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<td><strong>Co-organizer(s):</strong> Institute for Global Environmental Strategies; Embassy of Japan in Thailand</td>
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**What are the key questions discussed in the side event?**

1. What are some of the key opportunities and challenges for promoting synergies in Asia and the Pacific?
2. How can countries in the region develop robust planning and reporting frameworks for synergies?
3. What kind of good practices that generate synergies among SDGs do countries have and what are lessons learned from those?

**Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

1. The side event helped to communicate the importance of synergies for tackling the triple planetary crisis
2. It drew attention efforts Japan is making to raise the profile of synergies in the UNEA, as well as SDGs, climate, and biodiversity processes
3. The side event underlined that the entry points for synergies vary across contexts
4. It emphasized the need to build a critical mass of support for synergies among countries and demonstrate its application for businesses, including by, inter alia, establishing a global platform to consolidate evidence.

Conclusions / next steps

The triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution continues to pose obstacles to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Synergistic approaches have potential to address these three crises in an integrated manner by working across the different dimensions of sustainable development. In recent years, the international community has recognized the need for robust planning and reporting frameworks that can help effectively implement synergies, yet the evidence-base for synergistic actions often is not readily accessible or well communicated. In view of these gaps, greater efforts are needed to strengthen the science-policy-society interface on synergies, which includes building institutional capacities as well as promoting cross-sectoral and multilevel coordination. Translating these efforts into scalable interventions also require acknowledging the context-dependent nature of synergies and noting that entry points for implementation may vary widely between and within countries. Key examples of effective government initiatives include Fiji’s national climate policy and its focus on net zero objectives; Thailand’s emphasis on integrated air pollution and climate mitigation measures; Kawasaki City’s use of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) to reduce the risk of heat stroke; and the many demonstrated regional, national and subnational air quality strategies adopted under ADB’s Asia Blue Skies Program.

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<th>Title of the side event: Meaningfully Engaging Youth in Climate Governance</th>
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<td><strong>Side event date:</strong> 21/02/2024</td>
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<td><strong>Organizer(s):</strong> Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform (YECAP)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Co-organizer(s):</strong> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centre (RCC) for Asia-Pacific</td>
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What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. How can Johor’s youth benefit from this Green Deal and where can they help the state to realize and eventually lead in this ambitions? (Amira)
2. Did you receive any support from any local or national government for LCOY? Was there any entity that supported you with human resources, technical knowledge and more importantly financially? (Akhilesh)
3. Why is important for youth to partake in their country’s NDC formulation? (Aneta)
4. When you are working toward formulating climate policies in the state assembly how do you ensure that youth interests are represented in the policy? - Is there any push back and how do you deal with push back? (Amira)

**Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**
1. Youth Engagement is Crucial: The active involvement of youth in climate action initiatives is essential for fostering sustainable development and mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.

2. Empowerment Through Education and Skill Development: Directing resources towards green technology education and skill development for young people is imperative to leverage their potential as key agents of change.

3. Inclusive Policy Formulation: Incorporating youth interests into policy discussions and ensuring their voices are heard is vital for effective and inclusive policy formulation.

4. Nature Conservation and Inspiration: Recognizing nature as our greatest resource and inspiring more people to give back to nature are essential components of sustainable development efforts.

5. Advocacy and Policy Lobbying: Young people have a crucial role in advocating for policy changes, pushing for sensitization of teachers, and lobbying for effective climate policies where governments may lack capacity.

Outcomes:

1. Recognition of Youth Importance: The discussions highlighted the recognition of youth as indispensable contributors to climate action efforts and sustainable development goals.

2. Call for Action-Oriented Measures: There was a clear call for action-oriented measures, emphasizing the urgency of empowering youth and fostering an enabling environment for their active participation.

3. Emphasis on Inclusive Policy Processes: The importance of inclusive policy processes that incorporate youth perspectives and ensure their representation was emphasized throughout the discussions.

4. Focus on Nature Conservation: There was a notable focus on the importance of nature conservation and the need to inspire more individuals to give back to nature.

5. Role of Advocacy and Policy Lobbying: The discussions underscored the significant role of advocacy and policy lobbying by young people in driving effective climate policies and sensitizing educators.

Recommendations:
1. Invest in Youth Education and Skill Developments: Direct resources towards green technology education and skill development to empower youth and prepare them for active participation in climate action.

2. Facilitate Youth Engagement in Policy Formulation: Ensure inclusive policy processes that actively engage youth, starting with town hall meetings and ongoing dialogue to ensure their voices are heard.

3. Promote Nature Conservation Initiatives: Encourage initiatives that promote nature conservation and inspire individuals to give back to nature.

4. Support Youth Advocacy Efforts: Provide support for youth-led advocacy efforts, including policy lobbying and sensitization of educators to integrate climate education into various subjects.

5. Strengthen Partnerships with National International Organizations: Collaborate with national organizations such as Ministries and international organizations like UNDP and UNFCCC to integrate youth perspectives into national climate policies and foster a supportive environment for youth-led initiatives.

Conclusions / next steps

The panel discussion during this side event painted a clear picture: youth are not peripheral figures in the fight for climate action, but essential partners in building a sustainable future. Their energy, innovation, and insights are crucial assets, and empowering them requires concrete action. The panellists highlighted the need to invest in education and skill development, specifically in green technology areas. This equips young people with the tools and knowledge to become active agents of change. However, empowerment goes beyond technical skills. Inclusive policymaking is critical, ensuring youth voices are heard and integrated into climate strategies at all levels, from local communities to international forums. The importance of nature conservation resonated deeply. Protecting our natural world is not just an environmental issue, but a collective responsibility. By supporting initiatives that promote conservation and inspire connections to nature, we can ensure future generations become responsible stewards of the planet. Youth engagement extends beyond awareness. Their passion translates into powerful advocacy efforts. Supporting these efforts, whether lobbying for effective climate policies or sensitizing educators to integrate climate change into various subjects, is crucial to amplify their impact. Achieving a sustainable future requires collective action and collaboration. Partnering with international organizations like UNDP and UNFCCC is vital to mainstream youth perspectives into national climate strategies and create supportive environments for youth-led initiatives. This fosters a global network of empowered young changemakers. Investing in youth empowerment is not simply a good deed, but a strategic investment in our shared future. Their energy, innovation, and dedication are the driving force towards a more sustainable world. So it is important to join hands support their initiatives, and turn words into action. By working together, with youth at the forefront, we can build a future where every voice is heard and every action counts.

**Title of the side event:** Financing Local Actions for SDG 13: Enabling Frameworks to Accelerated City Climate Finance in Asia Pacific
Side event date: 21/02/2024
Organizer(s): ESCAP
Co-organizer(s): GIZ, UCLG ASPAC

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. What are the common challenges of cities in the Asia Pacific in accessing climate finance? How does an assessment of the enabling condition at the national and subnational level help to identify those challenges and formulate strategies to overcome them?
2. What are specific challenges in panellists’ countries/cities in terms of accessing climate finance? What is the existing enabling condition at the national and subnational levels? And what are the opportunities/focus to enhance the condition?
3. What are the major challenges for Indonesian cities to implement climate action in terms of securing financing and how do Indonesian national policies enable city governments to access climate finance from domestic and international sources?
4. What opportunities does Tagbilaran (The Philippines) have for strategically enhancing financing mechanisms and effective partnerships, implementing robust policies, and scaling up investments to build disaster resilience?
5. What are strategies or initiatives that Siraganj (Bangladesh) has used to attract climate finance? What are the key components of an enabling framework for cities in Bangladesh to access climate finance, and how do they differ from one city to another?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. Gaps in climate finance at the city level in Asia Pacific are quite wide, mainly challenged by institutional, financial, and knowledge barriers. CCFLA and ESCAP under the Urban-Act project are currently developing tools to assess these conditions at national and subnational levels, covering climate policy, budget and finance, climate data, and vertical and horizontal coordination. The national assessment tool is being piloted in India and Indonesia. Although the tools will not directly improve the conditions, stakeholders’ consultation over the assessment process is expected to lead to action to improve the condition by filling the identified gaps. The assessments can also monitor changes if conducted multiple times.

2. Indonesia's financing gap to achieve the country's climate ambition is wide at national and subnational levels. Challenges at the local level include leadership capacity to mainstream climate action into the development agenda, fiscal capacity, and technical capacity in accessing climate financing mechanisms (domestic and international). The national government’s support to address the challenges includes assisting subnational governments in integrating climate action into their development planning, establishing an M&E platform to monitor progress, and providing technical assistance on development priorities and project preparation. However, the gap in mobilizing non-public funding for climate action is still significant.

3. One major national enabling condition for local governments in implementing climate action in The Philippines is the policy of a five per cent mandatory allocation of local budget for disaster risk management including climate-related risks. Tagbilaran is updating its local climate action plan and comprehensive land use plan to strengthen the evidence-based policy. The city also actively works with CSOs to encourage multisectoral participation as
well as obtaining support from international development organizations, for example with JICA on reducing plastic pollution and providing economic opportunities (for especially women) by upcycling plastic waste.

4. Key components of enabling framework for cities to act on climate in Bangladesh include legal mandate at the city level; policy and planning documents at national and local levels; internal capacity in terms of human resources, finance, knowledge, development direction, culture, and politics. Sirajganj is currently receiving support to implement nature-based solutions for adaptation capacity from several international institutions such as ICLEI, UNEP, and KfW facilitated by the Bangladesh Government. Disparities among cities depend on the technical capacity, financial, interest and political priority. Efforts to improve cities’ ability to access climate finance include a policy vacuum on urban development and long-term spatial plans, continuous capacity building, awareness of climate emergencies, and complex and competitive processes to access international finance mechanisms.

Conclusions / next steps

Enabling cities to access climate finance is crucial in realizing climate-resilient and low-carbon cities. However, some cities encountered different challenges horizontally and vertically including institutional, fiscal, and technical capacity. Aligning with Urban-Act ambition to strengthen cities’ capacity in climate action, assessment of the enabling framework condition at national and subnational levels can help governments in identifying gaps and prioritizing action to close them as well as leveraging opportunities. ESCAP and CCFLA are currently developing a tool to assess the condition that is currently being piloted in India and Indonesia and is expected to be completed by mid-year.

**Title of the side event:** Enabling Social Enterprises towards Innovative Solutions to Eradicate Poverty and Reinforce the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific

**Side event date:** 22/02/2024
**Organizer(s):** Institute for Social Entrepreneurship in Asia (ISEA)
**Co-organizer(s):** Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Catalyst 2030, Office of Social Enterprise Promotion (OSEP) Thailand, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Philippines, Poverty Reduction Through Social Entrepreneurship Coalition (PRESENT Coalition), Social Enterprise Thailand, Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism - Social and Community Enterprise Constituency

**What are the key questions discussed in the side event?**

The speakers and reactors highlighted their current initiatives to enable an environment for Social Enterprises (SEs) to thrive. Lessons were drawn from the experiences of Thailand and the Philippines. In Thailand, Mrs. Napa Setthakorn (Speaker) shared how the Thai Social Enterprise Law has impacted the development of the SEs in the country. Enacted in 2019, the Law contains salient features such as SE qualification, committee on SE promotion, administration and operation of the Act, provision of social enterprise fund and other incentives, among others. The Law also aims to establish an ecosystem where the government, financial institutions, partners, and support agencies will come together for the benefit of SEs. However, Mrs.
Setthakorn discussed that throughout its 5-year implementation, the Office of Social Enterprise Promotion (OSEP) observed challenges and complexities that necessitate certain amendments. With this, OSEP is actively talking with relevant agencies to resolve these concerns. Reacting to this discussion, Ms. Tarlapraporn Punyorin from SE Thailand recognized the efforts of OSEP to assist SEs in their country. She proposed amendments based on experiences of the SE sector which could enhance the law and ensure its greater reach among SEs in Thailand. Among these include revisiting the SE qualification process, SE promotion fund, tax benefits, and government procurement provisions of the Law. Ms. Punyorin emphasized that implementation of the Law should have flexibility and inclusivity. In the case of the Philippines, speakers Hon. Jose Manuel Alba and Undersecretary Ma. Cristina Roque shared significant strides to develop SEs in the country. The Poverty Reduction through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Bill proposes a comprehensive framework that will empower SEs serving as change agents to alleviate poverty in pursuit of sustainable future. Among its key features include the establishment of a comprehensive program to develop SEs; incorporation of viable plans to local government agenda as well as calling for collaboration with relevant stakeholders, and; provision of capability-building, support mechanisms, financing models, and government procurement opportunities to SEs. Pending the enactment of this legislative measure, the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise Development (MSMED) Council housed within the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) recognized the importance of SEs and issued Resolution No., 3 Series of 2021 recognizing social enterprises as partners in poverty reduction and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The resolution provides a definition of social enterprises highlighting its transformational role for the poor and marginalized. Meanwhile, reactors briefly shared how Nepal and Korea have started their local movement already by identifying where the SEs are and conducting relevant programs for SEs. In Nepal, Mr. Arjun Battharai reflected that there are still data gaps that must be resolved to propose policies for SEs. Meanwhile, Ms. Buyoung Cho from Korea emphasized their initiatives to help SEs in other countries like the Philippines to promote sustainability and strong connectivity. She further discussed that with SEs, SDGs can be achieved in 2030, not 2062. These discussions answered the major questions related to the objective of the side event – to share current initiatives and explore innovative solutions in support for the development of SEs.

**Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

1. Existing initiatives within the Asia-Pacific region could help other countries to learn from current experiences and navigate their way to achieving an enabling environment for SEs to thrive. In Thailand, the enactment of the Thai Social Enterprise Law not only showed that the government is supportive of SEs but has also proven that SEs could be granted with resources to assist their development. Though there are necessary amendments that need to be done from their 5-year experience in implementation, the country is capitalizing on its good relationship between the government and SEs. In the Philippines, advocates of the PRESENT Bill are moving closely together with government champions and support from the private sector, development organizations, and non-government organizations. On the side, the DTI through its MSMED Council is already making significant strides in assisting SEs. A comment raised in the online chat mentioned that the PRESENT coalition in the Philippines is also doing SE profiling to measure the breadth and scope of SEs in the country. Moreover, online participants shared their initiatives to help marginalized and vulnerable communities via the online chat. Lessons from these countries serve as inspiration to other countries that with supportive leadership and strong collaboration, SEs may reach their full potential.

2. Measuring the impact of SEs is one of the major discussions raised in the online chat. ISEA shared Development Indexing and Social Return on Investment as tools which may be used impact measurement.

3. Raising awareness is key to encourage collaboration among the government, relevant sectors, and SEs to contribute to the global movement. Enabling policies for the development of SEs would help foster synergy, inclusivity, and flexibility.
Government support is crucial in establishing a legal framework and promoting sustainability and development of SEs. Financial assistance and incentives, marketing support, and SE qualification/definition were among the most important aspects that must be included in SE policies.

**Conclusions / next steps**

Looking ahead and beyond the pandemic, governments and practitioners have realized how broken systems are which brought light to the need to look for new ways of doing things. Given the great potential of Social Enterprises (SEs) in eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development, agencies need to place much focus on establishing an enabling environment for SEs to thrive. However, this is not an easy task, but a rather complicated one. With the diverse business models of SEs, they should be taken more seriously. It is important to devise policies tailored to their specific models and requirements. Policy experimentation is a viable strategy, drawing insights from countries that have SE policies in place like Korea and Thailand. Meanwhile, countries like the Philippines and Nepal are also showing significant strides that may also inspire other countries to do the same. Investing in SE development paves a clearer path in achieving our Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. However, everybody needs to be involved – the private and public sector, the communities, and SEs – is essential to cultivate a healthy environment for SEs. Collaboration is key to spark and sustain the global movement to build SEs. Standardizing the language used to describe SEs, as some countries may identify them using alternative terms such as "social business," is crucial. Additionally, establishing uniform economic metrics and policies should be done. In 2025, there would be an inter-governmental meeting involving 62 countries, facilitated by UNESCAP. SE development and policies will be part of the agenda wherein policy resolutions and recommendations will be discussed to encourage country members to look in this direction.

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<th>Title of the side event:</th>
<th>Empowering People through Human Rights to Accelerate Climate Resilience and Food Security in Asia-Pacific</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Side event date:</strong></td>
<td>22/02/2024</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organizer(s):</strong></td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Co-organizer(s):</strong></td>
<td>The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) Fair Finance Asia (FFA)</td>
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**What are the key questions discussed in the side event?**

1. How is climate change affecting the full realization of the right to adequate food of people in vulnerable situations, for example, Indigenous Peoples, smallholder farmers, women, and children in the Asia-Pacific?
2. What specific measures, including public policies, legislation, practices, or strategies has your government undertaken, in compliance with applicable international human rights law, to promote an approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as loss and damage, that ensures the full and effective enjoyment of the right to food?
3. What are mechanisms and tools in place to measure and monitor the impacts of climate change and climate change policy and project on the full realization of the right to food and the ability of IPs and smallholders and examples of promising practices and challenges in the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of the full realization of the right to food in the context of the adverse effects of climate change.

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

Climate change affects different people differently. Many small scale producers and Indigenous Peoples are under severe food security issues. Indigenous knowledge and practices should be taken into consideration. Climate change narrative should not overlook human induced destructions and food security. For many people, their only source of food from nature has been disappearing due to climate change and human interventions.

Conclusions / next steps

I represent small scale artisanal fishing community / coastal Indigenous Peoples - Mukkuvar in south India. I have learned some good practices exist in Indigenous Peoples in Thailand and Malaysia. I should learn from their approaches to protect and promote food security for all. We will adopt a clear data (a data gap is generally discussed as well) gathering - for example, how many people from our community and related communities are not able to have daily food consumptions or daily proteins. Second, identifying good practices within the Indigenous communities and others. Also understanding the knowledge upheld by these communities to support food security for all. Third, resources depletion - awareness about this should be highlighted within the community and beyond. Fourth, Advocacy campaigns against the companies, institutions and individuals who promote unsustainable practices and food security issues. Fifth, nature based solutions and Indigenous led conservations efforts should be strengthened and given much attention.

Title of the side event: Engaging Youth in a Green and Just Economy Transition at Scale

Side event date: 23/02/2024
Organizer(s): Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform (YECAP)
Co-organizer(s): United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Women and International Labour Organization (ILO), ESCAP

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. How to engage youth, particularly young women and girls and other underrepresented groups, in a green and just economy transition at scale?
2. The role of youth in a green and just economy transition, from engaging in green jobs, leading solutions, or co-creating programs with stakeholders.
3. The role of all stakeholders in identifying and promoting the required green, digital, and 21st-century skills to enable decent jobs for youth.
4. Public-private-youth partnerships

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

The importance of perceiving the youth movement as a net positive gain cannot be overstated. Young individuals play a pivotal role in broadening the understanding of what a just transition entails. Without their active participation, the crucial dialogues surrounding this topic risk remaining confined, both in terms of scope and reach. For instance, without the energy and organization brought by the youth, steering away from the current climate crisis would be an insurmountable challenge. Multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as the Green Jobs for Youth Pact, are critical to engage youth, particularly young women and girls, in a green and just economy transition. The principle of "Nothing about us, without us" highlights the necessity of a co-design and participatory approach in all endeavors related to just transition, with youth as well as all stakeholders. It is essential to actively foster an environment where young women and girls, and other underrepresented groups, are not only visible but also valued for their contributions. This approach ensures that policies and initiatives are truly reflective of and beneficial to all stakeholders involved. MSMEs being the major contributor to the economy, it is essential to involve workers in a just transition, especially in sectors at risk of massive job destruction. Academic institutions play a crucial role in guiding and inspiring students towards green jobs and sustainable careers. By providing concrete examples of how students from various disciplines can incorporate sustainability into their studies and future professions, these institutions help in solving specific environmental problems through specialized knowledge and skills.

Conclusions / next steps

Throughout the event, each speaker highlighted the critical role of engaging young people, particularly those from underrepresented communities, in efforts toward a just transition. We received a broad array of viewpoints, including initiatives targeting young women and girls at the grassroots level, as well as collaborations with labor unions. Perspectives from academic institutions and international organizations were also shared. This inclusive strategy not only underscores the importance of elevating youth voices but also advocates for granting them greater leadership and decision-making responsibilities. The importance of ongoing cooperation was another key theme discussed at the side event. All speakers underscored the significance of partnering with local government bodies and other entities capable of expanding their initiatives. YECAP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Women and International Labour Organization (ILO) will continue convening all stakeholders to engage youth, particularly young women and girls, in a just and green economy transition.

Title of the side event: Means of Implementation for Feminist Development Justice in Asia Pacific: Feminist Solutions and Practices in Achieving the 2030 Agenda

Side event date: 23/02/2024
Organizer(s): Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
Co-organizer(s): Center for Women's Resources, APRCEM Women's Constituency, CSO FfD Mechanism
What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

The side-event aims to recognise and celebrate solutions, alternatives and recommendations of grassroots women in Asia Pacific who are at the forefront of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Particularly:

- Unpack the impacts of multiple crises to women’s human rights in the region (debt, unemployment, austerity measures, resource conflict and extractivism, militarism, etc);
- Highlight existing feminist solutions, practices, alternatives at the grassroots level and discuss ways forward in supporting these through different Means of Implementation at the national, regional and global levels;
- Foster solidarity and encourage care building across feminist and intersectional movements and institutions in the region towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

The side-event was able to present the different issues of women from different sectors in the region, as well as their stories of struggles, and celebrate their practices and solutions. Shanta Laxmi Shrestha of the Beyond Beijing Committee, Ume Laila Azhar of HomeNet, Gene Rodriguez of EILER, and Urantsooj Gombosuren of CHRD shared their experiences with a particular focus on the domains of labor and informal work—including recommendations to improve wage systems and social protection mechanisms in the Philippines, Pakistan and Mongolia.

Conclusions / next steps

The side-event is among APWLD’s preparatory events for its engagement to the HLPF and FfD process. The lessons shared, experiences and recommendations will be used as references to the upcoming global engagements.

Title of the side event: Elevating Innovation and Building Capacity Towards Resource-Efficient, Circular, Low-Carbon, and Climate-Resilient Economy in the Pacific

Side event date: 22/02/2024
Organizer(s): EU SWITCH-Asia Policy Support Component
Co-organizer(s): UNFCCC Regional Collaboration Centre for Asia and the Pacific (RCC Asia Pacific) and the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)- DSDG/UN DESA

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?
1. Climate change impacts being of major concern to the Pacific Region and Countries, how can Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns and Circular Economy (CE) actions support the sustainability ambitions in the region?

2. How can mainstreaming SCP and CE in climate policies and practices in the Pacific contribute to implementing SDGs 13 and 17, and their targets?

3. How can the integration of SCP/CE into the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) strengthen the implementation of SDGs 13 and 17? Which are the steps to prioritize?

4. Being the pivotal stakeholders, how to induce and enhance innovations and capacity of the businesses and entrepreneurs, mainly MSMEs, towards resilient, resource efficient, circular economies in the region? Which are the sectors to focus on for quick wins in the transition pathway to sustainability?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

Key Messages

1. Significance of partnerships and entrepreneurship in preparing for the upcoming decade of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) sustainability programme, set to be discussed at SIDS4 in Antigua and Barbados from May 24-27, 2024.

2. Importance of strategic coordination and effective partnerships in accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in alignment with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, while working with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Pacific to enhance their resilience and resource efficiency.

3. The hidden social, economic, and environmental costs linked to current food systems should be addressed by investing in SCP and Circular Economy policies and practices.

4. Policies need to be geared towards ensuring the decoupling between economic growth and natural resource use, and that we need to move beyond waste management and towards the whole life cycle of resources.

5. There is a need to accelerate Circular Economy actions to achieve NDCs and the Paris Agreement goals. There are existing mechanisms to support Pacific countries like the digital toolbox in building circularity into their NDCs.

6. Pacific countries like Papua New Guinea emphasised the need for better coordination to bring local voices into the enhancement of the NDCs.

7. Importance for the private sector to be future ready. Companies need to shift their priority from profit only to profit-people-planet. Instead of thinking value chain, they need to think value cycle and integrate re-use at every step.

Outcomes

1. Increased awareness among the stakeholders on the potential of SCP and circular economy as an essential tool for sustainable development pathways and

2. Strengthened policy alignment of SDG 13 and 17 with SCP and CE strategies for the Pacific Region
**Recommendation**

Through Sustainable Consumption and Production, circular economy and climate action, the Pacific region can achieve better natural resource management, improved access to essential resources, enhanced health and resilience, and reduced environmental impact. This is particularly significant in the context of the Pacific's structural vulnerabilities, especially among Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Transformative actions must be tailored to the diverse needs of countries in the Pacific focusing, for instance, on resource efficiency, food and tourism systems, climate resilience, digitalization, innovative financing for MSMEs, and education.

**Conclusions / next steps**

In conclusion, there was a consensus on the multiple opportunities for transformative potential of SCP policies and strategic actions in catalyzing innovations and accelerating the transition towards a circular economy, climate change mitigation, and the achievement of SDGs targets in the Pacific. Innovations focusing on resource efficiency and community development, along with substantial support and capacity building for MSMEs, were identified as key drivers in this transformative process, addressing both local and national needs through collective actions with concerned local and regional partners in the Pacific. Ahead of the next Global SIDS conference, SIDS4, it is important to recognise the power of SCP in delivering resource-efficient, circular, low-carbon, and climate-resilient economy in the Pacific.

**Title of the side event:** Food Systems Transformation as an Accelerator for SDGs Implementation and Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific

**Side event date:** 21/02/2024

**Organizer(s):** UNFS Coordination Hub, ESCAP

**Co-organizer(s):** FAO

**What are the key questions discussed in the side event?**

1. What are some key lessons learned in policy coherence and synergizing the food and climate commitments taken by national governments?
2. What are some opportunities and challenges in climate-smart food system transformation?
3. What are the successful examples of multi-stakeholder collaboration resulting in coordinated actions leading to food systems transformation and impactful climate action? (Enablers/Barriers)

**Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

1. Hunger is on the rise! Progress in SDG2 is off track. Progress in achieving food security and nutrition has stagnated, if not reversed, between pre- and post-COVID years. The Asia-Pacific region faces significant challenges in meeting Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13). In the face of escalating
climate impacts and insufficient progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable food systems and innovative agricultural practices emerge as pivotal solutions.

2. The Emirates Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action adopted at COP28 highlighted the importance of Integration of Food System Transformation into climate plans. It is imperative to integrate strategies for food system transformation into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and reciprocally incorporate climate considerations into food system planning, bolstered by clear sectoral targets.

3. There is “proof of concept” regarding the viability of, and resilience-building impact of transition to natural, agroecological farming systems. Key enablers include: empowerment of farmers’ and women’s organizations and networks, strengthening farmer-to-farmer extension systems, cultivating deep understanding of natural farming principles, providing comprehensive government support including support on long-term land holding, and cross-sectoral and multistakeholder collaboration.

4. Furthermore, ensuring farmers’ embracing of new technologies for climate resilience necessitates the enhanced accessibility and affordability of these technologies and support from governments at various levels. Youth plays a key role in innovative solutions for climate-smart agriculture and would require targeted support for their involvement.

5. A critical need exists for a paradigm shift concerning connections across sectors – such as health and nutrition and food production, in support of food systems resilience. Such synergies require collaboration among various stakeholders— including government, civil society, development partners, and the private sector— to address the interconnected challenges of food systems and climate change effectively, and to ensure that consumer demand supports sustainability transitions. Drawing from the experiences in Cambodia, establishing a mechanism led by the president or prime minister at both national and subnational levels is recommended to drive coordinated action. At the same time, there is need to engage government for continued attention to critical issues such as post-harvest food waste, and the need for basic infrastructure.

Conclusions / next steps

In the face of escalating climate impacts and insufficient progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable food systems and agricultural practices emerge as pivotal solutions. In 2021, only 20% of climate-related development finance was allocated to agrifood systems, a decrease of 12% from the previous year. The unique potential of agrifood systems to tackle the climate crisis can only be realized by scaling up investments in agrifood system solutions and actions. The UNFS Hub, in partnership with regional social commissions, will compile key learnings from side events at the Sustainable Development Forums across five regions into an outcome report. This report will inform the development of the Climate Convergence Initiative, aimed at aligning food systems and climate agendas in countries. By synthesizing insights from diverse regional perspectives, the outcome report will provide valuable guidance and recommendations to support effective policy formulation and implementation while guiding strategic investments.
Title of the side event: Advancing a Sustainable, Rights-Based Development to Achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Side event date: 23/02/2024
Organizer(s): Indigenous Peoples International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba), Indigenous Navigator

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. How are Indigenous Peoples involved on the SDG processes from planning to decision-making and implementation?
2. What are the key policy recommendations of Indigenous Peoples to the UN agencies, states, and other regional and international organizations.
3. What are the experiences of Indigenous peoples from community to national level on the implementation of goals in review.

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. Meaningful participation of IPs in the implementation process of SDGs.
2. Produce the disaggregated data by gender and ethnicity to appropriately identify and address gaps in the status of IPs in their economic condition, health, education, and representation at the decision/policy-making level on the VNR report.
3. Indigenous Peoples need continuous support and solidarity for the recognition of IP rights on our land, territories, and resources, and recognition of our values and principles in keeping nature healthy, and we can (help by nursing the degraded areas).
4. The legal recognition of Indigenous Peoples and Council of Indigenous Peoples in Thailand are the added value mechanism and important tool for protecting our rights and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies in Thailand.
5. (States) need to adopt integrated policy planning that supports inclusive and adaptive social protection to ensure no is left behind amid complex global south at climate change and demographic trends.

Conclusions / next steps

1. Indigenous Navigator to join the Collaborative on Citizen Data by the UN.
2. Continuous monitoring the implementation of SDGs to Indigenous Communities through community-based monitoring systems.
3. Lobby with states on including data disaggregation by ethnicity.
4. Indigenous Peoples as one of the Major Groups in the UN to continue engaging on SDG processes.

Title of the side event: Nutrition for Food Sovereignty: Building Climate Resilient Food Systems

Side event date: 23/02/2024
Organizer(s): Young Women In Sustainable Development
Co-organizer(s):

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. What is food sovereignty? What is the need for food sovereignty and the challenges to achieve it?
2. How can we achieve Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) individually and collectively?
3. How do consumer sovereignty and food sovereignty coalesce to advance climate action in food systems?
4. Why does one need to know the sub-typologies of nutrition labels for processed foods?
5. How can youth be an integral part of building climate-resilient food systems?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. Going beyond both the access to food and availability of food narratives, the stable continuum of food availability in crisis situations and optimal utilisation of food resources is integral to food justice
2. Integrating intersectional youth perspectives in food supply and food processing chains to overcome barriers in the logistics sector.
3. Nutrition labels in local languages can consolidate awareness about nutrition in all parts of the countries
4. Interlinkages between food sovereignty, food security, food quality and food labelling
5. Instances of local seed banks operated by women Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) to farmers for indigenous plant varieties can enhance indigenous research and development
6. Involvement of youth through local NGOs, individual farming practices and capacity building on agri-food systems to change the landscape of consumerism towards sustainable food choices

Conclusions / next steps

We have created a policy brief previously on nutrition labelling and food sovereignty from a youth lens. Our team's involvement in the World Food Forum 2024 as part of the Policy Team and nominations for the Youth Observers are under process. Young Women In Sustainable Development is currently endorsing four young women in STEM for the aforementioned involvement in WFF 2024. Our team, both individually and collectively are involved in studying and researching water-food-energy nexus in creating sustainable food systems. The next step is to scale the food sovereignty and food justice research advocacy from the Asia-Pacific region to a global level by building strong community networks and enhancing food systems awareness and education.

Title of the side event: Promoting Synergistic Approaches in Asia and the Pacific: Addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis

Side event date: 20/02/2024
Organizer(s): Ministry of Environment Japan
Co-organizer(s): Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Embassy of Japan in Thailand

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. What are some of the key opportunities and challenges for promoting synergies in Asia and the Pacific?
2. How can countries in the region develop robust planning and reporting frameworks for synergies?
3. What kind of good practices that generate synergies among SDGs do countries have and what are lessons learned from those?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. The side event helped to communicate the importance of synergies for tackling the triple planetary crisis
2. It drew attention efforts Japan is making to raise the profile of synergies in the UNEA, as well as SDGs, climate, and biodiversity processes
3. The side event underlined that the entry points for synergies vary across contexts
4. It emphasized the need to build a critical mass of support for synergies among countries and demonstrate its application for businesses, including by, inter alia, establishing a global platform to consolidate evidence

Conclusions / next steps

The triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution continues to pose obstacles to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and other MEAs and relevant instruments. Synergistic approaches have potential to address these three crises in an integrated manner by working across the different dimensions of sustainable development. In recent years, the international community has recognized the need for robust planning and reporting frameworks that can help effectively implement synergies, yet the evidence-base for synergistic actions often is not readily accessible or well communicated. In view of these gaps, greater efforts are needed to strengthen the science-policy-society interface on synergies, which includes building institutional capacities as well as promoting cross-sectoral and multilevel coordination. Translating these efforts into scalable interventions also require acknowledging the context-dependent nature of synergies and noting that entry points for implementation may vary widely between and within countries. Key examples of effective government initiatives include Fiji’s national climate policy and its focus on net zero objectives; Thailand’s emphasis on integrated air pollution and climate mitigation measures; Kawasaki City’s use of Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) to reduce the risk of heat stroke; and the many demonstrated regional, national and subnational air quality strategies adopted under ADB’s Asia Blue Skies Program. Through this event and the adoption of the resolution on promoting synergy proposed by Japan at UNEA6, Japan, as a leader of synergies, will continue to make its utmost efforts to build momentum, together with Asia and the Pacific countries. The adoption of the resolution is an opportunity to expand synergistic initiatives around the world, leading to overcoming the triple crises and achievement of the SDGs. We believe that our efforts to pursue synergies will also bring positive impacts to the Summit of the Future in September this year.
**Title of the side event:** Advancing the Global Agenda toward Peaceful and Inclusive Societies - Bridging Humanity, Security, and Sustainability

**Side event date:** 21/02/2024

**Organizer(s):** Hiroshima Organization for Global Peace (HOPe)

**Co-organizer(s):** Hiroshima Prefecture, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, Reverse the Trend: Save Our People, Save Our Planet

**What are the key questions discussed in the side event?**

1. Will we link peace and security to the SDGs to go beyond the silos and utilize a sustainability approach as an enabler and accelerator of sustainable development?
2. Will this nexus approach make the central promise of the global agenda a reality?
3. Will we strengthen integration of security and sustainable development discourses not only to boost efficiencies but to promote inclusive outcomes?

**Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

1. Understand the importance of integrating nuclear disarmament into the global agenda for sustainability
2. Acknowledge and remediate the current impact of nuclear weapons on health and environment, particularly in the Marshall Islands
3. Scale the current policy collaborations active in Southeast Asian countries which invite countries of all sizes to advocate for a nuclear-weapon-free region
4. Recognize the current and potential for engagement of youth in advocacy for peaceful and inclusive societies
5. Continue highlighting the importance of education in raising awareness about the impacts of nuclear weapons.

**Conclusions / next steps**

Collective action and closer collaborations are both necessary among civil societies, governments, and international bodies, as well as across demographics, in order to achieve nuclear disarmament. The importance of youth engagement was underlined as crucial for future advocacy, with suggestions for further collaborations to amplify youth voices in nuclear disarmament initiatives. The event underscored the interconnectedness of nuclear disarmament with achieving SDGs and the essential role of peace and security in sustainable development.

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**Title of the side event:** Empowering Peoples through Human Rights to Accelerate Climate Resilience and Food Security in Asia-Pacific

**Side event date:** 22/02/2024
What are the key questions discussed in the side event?

1. How is climate change affecting the full realization of the right to adequate food of people in vulnerable situations, for example, Indigenous Peoples, smallholder farmers, women, and children in the Asia-Pacific?
2. What specific measures, including public policies, legislation, practices, or strategies has your government undertaken, in compliance with applicable international human rights law, to promote an approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as loss and damage, that ensures the full and effective enjoyment of the right to food?
3. What are mechanisms and tools in place to measure and monitor the impacts of climate change and climate change policy and project on the full realization of the right to food and the ability of Indigenous Peoples and smallholders and examples of promising practices and challenges in the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of the full realization of the right to food in the context of the adverse effects of climate change.

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. It is crucial to recognize and empower people as central elements of a rights-based approach to addressing climate change. Neglecting vulnerable populations in climate adaptation efforts perpetuates discrimination and exacerbates the challenges they are facing. Prioritizing the needs of those most adversely affected is paramount in mitigating the impact of climate change and fostering resilience.

2. The financial sector is critical to accelerating commitment and action on climate change impacts on human rights including the full realization of the right to food especially of communities, women, Indigenous Peoples, and other vulnerable groups, through responsible and sustainable funding decisions supported by enabling policies and legal frameworks.

3. It is essential to prioritize the sharing the loss and damage fund within countries, by directing support towards small-scale producers such as artisanal fisherfolk who are affected most by climate change. Discussions on loss and damage finance have predominantly been between countries, but there is a need for intra-country deliberation to ensure equitable distribution, focusing on various sections within each nation.

4. To effectively address climate change and food security, it is fundamental to include Indigenous Peoples, particularly indigenous women and girls, in decision-making processes. Recognizing and legally securing Indigenous Peoples land rights is crucial, as land and water are not only vital resources but also form the bedrock of indigenous identity, culture, and survival. Policies should be informed by indigenous traditional knowledge and practices, emphasizing the stewardship role of indigenous women in biodiversity conservation and agriculture.
5. Adopting a sustainable, rights-based approach is crucial for addressing climate and food security challenges. Transitioning from industrial and potentially unsustainable agricultural practices to agroecology, and incorporating indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge with scientific advancements, presents a holistic and effective strategy for sustainable development.

Conclusions / next steps

"The interlinkages between climate change, food security, and the contributions of groups such as as small-scale producers and Indigenous Peoples underscore both the challenges faced by these communities and their pivotal roles in fostering sustainable environmental stewardship. Indigenous Peoples, deeply rooted in their connection to the land, are key in adopting climate resilience and adaptation strategies. Similarly, the sustainable practices of small-scale producers, notably artisanal fisherfolk adapting to the changing dynamics of marine ecosystems, should be considered and accounted for in policy-making and development-planning processes. The financial sector, as a major influence of global initiatives, bears a critical responsibility in accelerating commitments and actions to mitigate the impacts of climate change on human rights. This necessitates a transition toward responsible and sustainable funding mechanisms supported by conducive policies and legal frameworks.

Moving forward, the following measures are recommended:

1. Strengthen and implement inclusive policy frameworks that safeguard the rights of Indigenous Peoples and small-scale producers, thereby enabling their substantial contributions to climate solutions.
2. Integrate traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples with evidence-based solutions within overarching strategies for climate action and food security.
3. Encourage financial institutions to adopt financing strategies prioritizing sustainable and equitable development, with a specific focus on projects that strengthen the climate resilience of vulnerable communities.

Title of the side event: Securing rights to land, territories and resources (LTR) enables to address poverty, hunger, climate change, and peace and security

Side event date: 21/02/2024
Organizer(s): Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)
Co-organizer(s): The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights), Regional Office, Bangkok, International Land Coalition (ILC), Asia, Indigenous Knowledge and Peoples of Asia (IKPA), Indigenous Peoples’ Human Rights Defenders (IPHRD), Network of Indigenous Women in Asia (NIWA), Asia Indigenous Youth Platform (AIYP), and Indigenous Voice in Asia Network (IVAN)

What are the key questions discussed in the side event?
1. What are Indigenous Knowledge and practices relating to agriculture; livelihoods; protection of land, water, forest and resources; and maintaining social harmony and peace?
2. What are the issues and challenges that our indigenous communities facing in terms of poverty, hunger, climate change, security, and justice?
3. What needs to be done to address the issues and challenges being faced by our indigenous communities?

**Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

1. Indigenous Peoples Knowledge system should be recognized as it more sustainable and efficient in balancing the environment.
2. Indigenous land rights should be recognized along with their Indigenous Knowledge and practices that are key to contribute to address poverty, hunger, climate crisis, and peace and security.
3. The land data of Indigenous Peoples is missing in SDGs that should be reflected and ensured in SDGs land goal for proper tracking of land tenure status of Indigenous Peoples.
4. The roles of Indigenous Youth and Women are important in achieving the SDG 2030 targets. They cannot be excluded from the process. Therefore, the strategic partnership with Indigenous youths and women is pre-requisite for achieving the SDGs targets.

**Conclusions / next steps**

It is observed that the SDGs lacks the visibility of very important section of the community, that is Indigenous Peoples. It is nowhere clearly mentioned Indigenous Peoples as the target group. Whereas Indigenous Peoples play a very important role in sustainable use of eco-system, natural resources and in its protection and development. And they are the stewards and guardians of 80 percent of the world’s biodiversity. Despite that they are directly impacted due to lack of legal recognition of their rights over their ancestral lands. It is essential that the governments are held accountable for a comprehensive and sustainable development of all the people in the world and practice the slogan "leave no one behind" if we are to achieve the 2030 agenda.

**Title of the side event:** Building a Greener Future: Education as a Climate Solution

**Side event date:** 21/02/2024
**Organizer(s):** UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok
**Co-organizer(s):** Save the Children, Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Plan International, World Vision, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat

**What are the key questions discussed in the side event?**

1. How are the climate and learning crises impacting poverty, gender equality and economic stability?
2. What is the impact of these crises on children and young people? What are their recommendations?
3. How are countries responding to these crises and using education to advance climate action?

4. What is the role of education in climate action? How can investing in education and climate contribute to sustainable development, children’s wellbeing and achieving gender equality and inclusion?

5. How can climate financing be more child-responsive and used to support education and children's learning outcomes?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations

1. The climate crisis presents an urgent threat to children’s well-being and all aspects of sustainable development. Education is a critical climate solution and can empower children to become architects of a resilient and sustainable future. Recognizing the critical link between education and climate action, countries should invest in strong, resilient education systems. In the Asia-Pacific, Bangladesh, Japan, Laos, Pakistan, Thailand, Tonga and Uzbekistan have already committed to action through The Declaration on the common agenda for education and climate change at COP28 (https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/declaration-common-agenda-education-and-climate-change-cop28). Others are invited to sign on.

2. Climate education is not merely a privilege but a universal right. It is imperative that every country integrates climate education into their educational frameworks across all stages, from early childhood education to higher education and lifelong learning. The potential for local actions in climate education to yield global impacts and their contribution to sustainable development must be more widely acknowledged. To achieve systemic change in mainstreaming climate education into education systems, it is crucial to exchange best practices, amplify youth voices, and forge partnerships across all levels of society. There should also be more emphasis on establishing and upholding current and forthcoming legislation, frameworks, and regulatory measures aimed at prioritizing climate accountability and safeguarding children's rights. More data is needed on the integration of climate education in the education systems across the region. Furthermore, innovative teaching methods should be employed to empower children as catalysts for environmental sustainability, thus emphasizing their role as agents of change.

3. Empowering youth and integrating their perspectives is fundamental to addressing the climate crisis and achieving the sustainable development goals. Leadership at all levels should involve youth in the entire policy process, spanning from formulation to execution and evaluation of climate policies. Adequate funding and resources must be allocated to support youth-led climate projects and initiatives. Furthermore, fostering collaborations between youth organizations, educational institutions, and governmental bodies is essential for a unified approach to climate action.

4. Developed nations, acknowledging their significant contributions, should provide support to low-income countries most affected by the climate crisis to enhance community resilience. At present, only 2.4 percent of climate financing responds to children’s needs, and within that, education projects are negligible. To change this, we need more political will, partnerships with the climate sector, and to enhance capacity within the education community to integrate climate into education sector plans, policies and budgets, and increase climate financing into the education sector to ensure children are learning and protected through climate-shocks.

Conclusions / next steps
Building climate-smart education systems that are resilient to climate crises and can help people adapt and mitigate climate change’s impacts is critical. This includes advocating for policies to ensure education is prioritized throughout climate disasters and comprehensive climate education is integrated into national curricula across the Asia-Pacific region. A critical piece of this would be providing training for teachers and communities to effectively address climate challenges and promote sustainable practices. Capacity-building programs should be designed to equip educators and communities with the necessary knowledge and skills to integrate climate education into teaching and learning processes. Policy reforms are essential to ensure climate accountability and the adoption of rights-based approaches to climate education, especially policies that prioritize climate education and support the rights of children to a sustainable future. Youth should be a critical part of this process and involved in discussions at all levels and empowered to lead climate actions. Equally crucial will be building partnerships with climate stakeholders and mobilizing additional financing for education. The key findings and recommendations from this side event will be shared with the ASEAN Senior Education Officials to advance the agenda of climate education.

**Title of the side event:** Inclusion of Women in Climate-Resilient Skills Education and Livelihoods in the Asia-Pacific Region

**Side event date:** 20/02/2024

**Organizer(s):** Azad Foundation

**Co-organizer(s):** Asia South Pacific Association For Basic And Adult Education (ASPBAE) and United Nations ESCAP Sub-regional Office for South and South-West Asia

**What are the key questions discussed in the side event?**

1. What are the challenges and opportunities for marginalized women in accessing skill training and non-traditional livelihood opportunities in the green economy?
2. What are some good practices and lessons learned from existing skill training and livelihood programmes that have bolstered the skill training and livelihood opportunities of on empowering marginalized women in the Asia-Pacific region?
3. What are some recommendations for Asia-Pacific policymakers and other stakeholders on promoting women’s economic empowerment, particularly through skill training and non-traditional livelihood opportunities, in the green economy?
4. What are some recommendations on promoting regional and sub-regional cooperation to support women’s economic empowerment in the green economy in Asia and the Pacific?

**Key messages, outcomes, recommendations**

1. Lack of skill training opportunities, early marriage, burden of unpaid care work, gender based violence, gender wage gap, lack of infrastructure for women working outside home- like safe and hygienic washrooms, safe and well-lit roads, crèche, charging stations for electric vehicles, etc. are some of the primary challenges for marginalized women in accessing skill training and non-traditional livelihood opportunities, especially in the green economy.
2. Best practices:

- Azad foundation is a feminist organization that engages, transforms and enables resource-poor women to join non traditional livelihoods, in particular, become professional chauffeurs and riders (with a focus on green transport). Azad also works with young cis and trans women and men to create Gender-Just ecosystem in the communities. This enables women to attain remunerative livelihoods with dignity, become empowered decision-makers, create inter-generational impact and lead violence free lives. Additionally, it makes public places safer, contributing to reduced carbon mission.
- One of ASPBAE's members is promoting Community-based and Sustainable Tourism in Mongolia: Herder families, with women, implemented an ILO and University initiated concept of 'Sustainable Tourism', a viable alternative to commercialized tourism and respects local culture and the natural environment. It provides alternative and non-traditional source of livelihood for herder families and women in Ger and nature tourism; and contributes in protecting the environment and mitigates climate change.
- Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (ASPBAE’s member) has initiated ‘Food Hives to Nourishing Cities’- Inclusive, women-led and managed community seed resource centers for social entrepreneurship and long-term food security. They do surplus production of open pollinated varieties (OPVs) and indigenous varieties of seeds leading to healthy and affordable food commodities produced and distributed. It also contributes to skilling and learning of the communities in community seed banking and social enterprise development.
- PEKKA (Perempuan Kepala Keluarga or Women Headed Family are widows, divorced, abandoned, disability husband, under polygamous married, single, unmarried but having child, having an irresponsible husband). PEKKA transforms the lives of women heads of families living in extreme poverty through a grassroots economic and political organizing- by processing household waste to mitigate climate change. It facilitates marginalised women to overcome stigma and engage politically in the public sphere for sustainable collective action.

Conclusions / next steps

Engaging women in decent livelihood opportunities within the green economy contributes to social justice, gender equality, and climate change mitigation. This can be done through:

1. Increasing opportunities for women in unconventional areas of skill building, such as in green-transport
2. Adopting the comprehensive Gender-Just Skill Education Framework which includes:
   a. Building gender-just communities
   b. Imparting transformative capacity building through Skill++ training module
   c. Building gender-inclusive markets for ensuring women’s entry and sustenance in climate resilient non-traditional livelihoods
3. Ensuring access of women workers to gender-inclusive infrastructure in public places, such as safe and hygienic washrooms, well-lit roads, safe public transport, etc.
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<td>Ensuring gender-inclusive workplaces for women in particular in E-commerce as newly evolved markets</td>
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<td>5. Increasing investment in women's skill building in non-traditional professions</td>
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<td>6. Creating job opportunities for women in E-transport</td>
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