

**Seventy-ninth session of the Commission
Bangkok, 15-19 May 2023**

Streamlining Nature-based Solutions to enhance mitigation and climate resilience in the Asia-Pacific Region

15th May 13:15-14:15

Meeting Room: CR-4 Level 1, United Nations Conference Centre

Meeting Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82166645017?pwd=Wlc1aGV0K0hLUlc2NHk0QW14T1RhQT09>

Co-organisers:

IUCN

Embassy of Japan in Thailand

ESCAP

Description, strategic value and expected outcome of the event

The Asia-Pacific region is extremely vulnerable to climate change.¹ Rapid population growth, coupled with economic growth and urbanization is putting a strain on food and water supplies and further degrading ecosystems and compounding climate threats. Further, climate change is expected to heavily impact some of the key sectors in the region such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism that depend on healthy ecosystems and the services they provide. To address escalating climate threats, governments often turn to grey infrastructure solutions, such as seawalls or dams, which are costly and are designed to address a single purpose, acting as a short-term fix. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) provide an approach to address many interlinked challenges, and can be used in conjunction with grey infrastructure to extend their benefits, or be applied as hybrid grey/green solutions, supporting sustainable development in Asia-Pacific.

NbS is gaining traction with growing recognition that it can both help mitigate the negative impacts of climate change while delivering benefits to both ecosystems and human health. Estimates suggest that Nature-based Solutions can provide 37% of the mitigation needed until 2030 to achieve the targets of the Paris Agreement.² Despite significant recent progress, mainstreaming NbS in the region remains difficult and business as usual is still the dominant approach. Of the 49 countries in the region, 21 have quantified NbS-related baseline emissions, but only 14 have defined targets for emissions reduced via NbS.³

This session will focus on Nature-based Solutions to address environmental and sustainable development challenges in the Asia-Pacific region. The session will discuss the IUCN Global Standard on Nature-based Solutions, which outlines eight criteria that aim to help design effective NbS, to address societal challenges. Presenters will explore policy challenges and best practices from the region, and highlight needs to support the mainstreaming of NbS for mitigation, food security, climate adaptation and resilience, financing for NbS (through the GCF, Adaptation Fund, and GEF), and transparent, inclusive governance.

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

² Griscom, B.W., Adams, J., Ellis, P.W., Houghton, R.A., Lomax, G., Miteva, D.A., Schlesinger, W.H., Shoch, D., Siikamäki, J.V., Smith, P. and Woodbury, P., 2017. Natural climate solutions. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(44), pp.11645-11650.

³ United Nations 2023. THE RACE TO NET ZERO: Accelerating Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok, Thailand.

Expected Outcome: Increased understanding of best practices for integrating NbS across sectors and policies in Asia-Pacific.

Focal person for the event

Please provide information, including contact information of the focal person for the event:

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Agenda

Time	Session	Topic	Speaker
13:15-13:23	Opening Session	Introduction to the event	Ms. Kathryn Bimson, Programme Officer, Nature-based Solutions, IUCN Asia
		Opening remarks	Mr. OBA Yuichi, Permanent Representative of Japan to ESCAP, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan, Thailand
13:23-13:38	Presentation	Nature-based Solutions: Background, definition and the Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions	Raphael Glemet, Senior Programme Officer, IUCN
13:38-14:08	Panel Discussion: Opportunities to mainstream NbS in Asia Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Naoyuki Okano, Policy Researcher, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) • Ms. Elizabeth Erasito, Director, National Trust of Fiji • Dr. Dindo Campilan, Regional Director for Asia and Hub Director for Oceania, IUCN • Dr. Guilberto Borongan, Director of Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific, AIT 	
14:08-14:13	Closing Remarks	Closing remarks	Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary, UNESCAP

