Scientific Capacity Building/Enhancement for Sustainable Development in Developing Countries (CAPaBLE)

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Having the capacity to conduct high quality research that provides underpinning scientific support for policy-makers and policy-making processes is vital for least-developed countries in the Asia-Pacific region and is recognised by the APN as crucial for improving the scientific and technical capabilities of these nations.

In realising this, the APN embarked on a strategic approach to capacity development through the launch of its CAPaBLE programme, under which, leading scientists of developing nations, early-career scientists, and members of the policy and civil communities are provided with opportunities to develop their knowledge and capabilities in global change including climate-related issues.

Of particular relevance to CAPaBLE is Part 111 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD):

Establish regular channels between policy-makers and the scientific community for requesting and receiving science and technology advice for the implementation of Agenda 21, and create and strengthen networks for science and education for sustainable development, at all levels, with the aim of sharing experiences and best practices, and building scientific capacities, particularly in developing countries.

APN CAPaBLE

This policy brief aims to highlight activities of APN under the CAPaBLE Programme.

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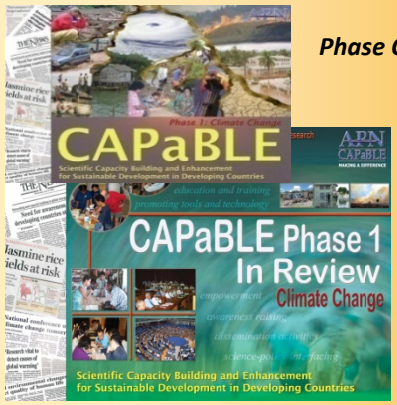
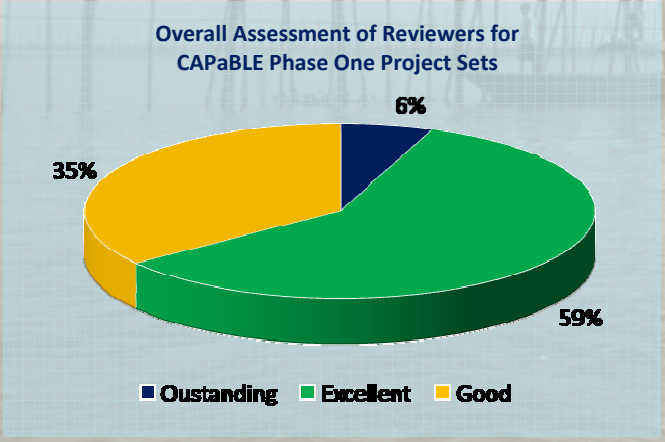
HIGHLIGHTS



Phase One: CLIMATE CHANGE

In CAPaBLE's first phase, which spanned 3 years from April 2003 to March 2006, 17 projects throughout Asia-Pacific were completed.



Publication: CAPaBLE Phase I In-Review

In an evaluation of Phase I of CAPaBLE the chart presented summarises reviewers' general findings and there was consensus that CAPaBLE successfully attained its objectives in its first phase to varying degrees of strength.

CAPaBLE has facilitated the development of research infrastructure and the transfer of expertise and technology through the provision of equipment and user-knowledge, transferring and sharing of data, and the provision of information and methodologies to researchers and institutions.

CAPaBLE has provided opportunities for scientists and policy-makers to develop their knowledge and understanding of climate change issues that include climate variability and change, climate extremes as well as impacts and adaptation over a broad aspect of socio-economic issues.

CAPaBLE Phase I was instrumental in developing the capacity of least-developed nations in the region. The activities conducted were not only commendable but considered highly relevant for the region.

The publication "CAPaBLE Phase I In-Review" showcases the key activities and successful outcomes of Phase I of the programme, which essentially focussed on Climate Change.

Climate in Asia and the Pacific: A Synthesis of APN Activities

Scientific understanding of climate change is advancing at a significant rate, with new information emerging about the likely impacts of climate change, the options to adapt to these changes, and new approaches to mitigative options. Through many national and international fora, it is becoming clear that climate is one of the most, if not *the* most, pressing issues in the political arena today. The 34th G8 Toyako Summit in 2008 underscored its commitments to climate change, adaptation and mitigation as well as the need to support developing countries in financing, transferring technology and capacity development for these nations to be able to respond effectively to climate change.

With this, the APN has embarked on a two-year synthesis *entitled Climate in Asia and the Pacific: A Synthesis of APN Activities*; taking into account APN projects and other related activities in climate change and their contribution to the challenges that the global community is being faced with in the light of a changing climate.

The Climate Synthesis Team will be synthesising the work of over 50 APN-funded climate projects, focussing specifically on:

- Food, Agriculture and Climate
- Seasonal Climate Prediction & Applications
- Climate Variability, Trends and Extremes
- Regional Climate Change Modelling
- Vulnerability & Adaptation to Climate Change
- Climate Change Mitigation
- Coastal Cities and Climate Change
- Climate Change Policy and Outreach

The synthesis will produce key outcomes of APN activities as well as emerging issues and priorities for climate research in the Asia-Pacific region. The synthesis will be published in March 2011 and is expected to be a key citation for the IPCC AR5.

The climate synthesis team

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Scientific Capacity Development for Climate Impact & Vulnerability Assessments

The IPCC AR4 notes that, in terms of the distribution of impacts and vulnerabilities to climate change, there are sharp differences across regions, and those in the weakest economic position are often the most vulnerable to climate change and the risks it presents. In this respect, the Asia-Pacific region is particularly vulnerable.

Key vulnerabilities to climate change may be associated with many climate-sensitive systems, including food and water resources, coastal systems, ecosystems, biogeochemical cycles, and modes of oceanic and atmospheric circulation. The IPCC and the UNFCCC recognise that science can support informed decisions. However, under this premise, many countries lack the scientific capacity to be able to conduct crucial impact and vulnerability assessments in order to make informed decisions on how best to reduce the risks associated with climate change.

Following a special call for proposals for capacity development to conduct impact and vulnerability assessments, APN has awarded seven one-year grants to developing nations in the region.

- *Vulnerability Assessment & Urban Development for Asian Coastal Cities (Thailand)*
- *Capacity Development on Integrating Science and Local Knowledge for Impact & Vulnerability Assessments (Philippines)*
- *Advancing Community-based Scientific Capacity to Support Climate Change Adaptation (China)*
- *Capacity Development for Impact & Vulnerability Assessments: In-Situ/Satellite Measurements of Sea-Level rise (Indonesia)*
- *Developing Research Capacity on Assessing Community Livelihood Vulnerability to Climate Change Impacts in Central Viet Nam and Mekong River Delta (Thailand)*
- *Capacity Development for Climate Change Adaptation in Rural Coastal Zones of Viet Nam*
- *Developing Capacity of the Scientific Community for Assessing the Health Impacts of Climate Change in Pakistan (Pakistan)*