



ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental
Leaders Network 2024:

Empowering the youth in tackling marine plastic waste in ASEAN and Japan





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Viet Nam Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

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ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO)

Introductory Message



Dr. Kunihiro Hirabayashi
Secretary General, ASEAN-Japan Centre

It is with great pride and deep admiration that I celebrate the remarkable achievements of the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders' Network (AJYELN) Program.

Comprising 36 exceptional high school students from the 10 ASEAN Member States and Japan, this dynamic network has taken bold steps to combat plastic pollution and promote sustainable environmental practices across our region.

At the Capstone Symposium in March 2024, these young leaders presented innovative, locally-driven solutions to reduce plastic waste and shift mindsets. Their energy, creativity, and determination to spark behavioral change and inspire multi-stakeholder action are truly commendable.

Thanks to targeted mentoring and financial support, AJYELN empowers youth to become not just future leaders—but leaders of today, already creating meaningful impact. By the end of this year's program, the 33 fellows had led 63 plastic pollution awareness campaigns, reaching over 17,500 elementary and high school students across ASEAN and Japan. Additionally, around 700,000 yen was invested in supporting their initiatives. The growing online community—now with over 48,000 young followers on Facebook and Instagram—demonstrates the expanding reach and influence of AJYELN as a leading youth environmental movement.

This progress is more than numbers—it represents real change. And change, when led by passion and purpose, inspires more change. It spreads outward like ripples in water, becoming a rising swell of collective action and hope.

Our shared journey is also grounded in a lesson I once learned in a small Asian village. A boy told me frankly: **"Show us through actions, not just words."** That moment has stayed with me — a reminder that it is not what we promise, but what we do, that defines us.

As we move forward, let us carry this spirit. Let our actions echo louder than words. Let us support and elevate these young changemakers, who are already showing us what it means to lead with heart, purpose, and action.

Together, we can shape a more sustainable, inclusive future — one ripple at a time.



Opening Remarks



Mr. Mizutani Yoshihiro
Director, Marine Environment
Division, Environmental Management
Bureau, Ministry of the Environment,
Japan

It is my great pleasure to deliver my message to you at the second ASEAN Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network Symposium.

First of all, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the ASEAN Japan Centre for organizing the symposium. As it is said, continuity is the father of success, and your continued commitment to promoting educational awareness and youth empowerment is essential to making a better future.

I would also like to celebrate the achievements of the young environmental leaders who turned their creative ideas into actions for addressing plastic pollution. I am aware that a total of 33 Fellows from 8 ASEAN Member States and Japan have conducted 63 activities which impacted approximately 18,000 individuals. That is such an impressive contribution to combating plastic pollution. We are honored to hear that the next recruitment is to be started.

We recognize plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, as one of the most serious global environmental issues today. ASEAN and Japan are both seriously affected by marine plastic pollution so we have discussed this issue in various opportunities. We have also been active in implementing regional programs to tackle this issue.

First, stakeholder engagement is critical in solving the issue of plastic pollution. As we know, plastic is used everywhere and plastic waste can go beyond borders. This is a transboundary issue. In addition, plastic pollution needs to be tackled throughout its life cycle, from production to waste management. Stakeholders, including but not limited to a government company, civil society, and the youth need to work together to find a solution to this issue. We will do our best to ensure that stakeholder engagement and various actions throughout the life cycle of plastics are included in the new Plastic Treaty.

Second, Asia holds the key to solving the problem of plastic pollution. In fact, Asia is considered to be a major region for plastic pollution as well as a source of plastic pollution. Thus, this network, which promotes wider stakeholder engagement, is essential.

Finally, I'm confident that current fellows who have already shown tremendous passion and incoming fellows with new ideas will continue to make positive impacts on plastic pollution. In doing so, I would like to encourage you to take action with your families, your friends, and local communities. Let's take action and build a more sustainable environment and future together! I wish you all the best, thank you very much.



Welcome Message

On behalf of the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, I am honored to welcome you to the 2nd ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network Symposium under the theme "Innovative Actions, Sustainable Progress". This followed the environmental leadership and mentorship at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia last year.

I extend my deepest appreciation to the ASEAN-Japan Centre and the Government of Japan for their step of commitment to youth engagement and environmental sustainability. In 2023, ASEAN and Japan celebrated the 50th anniversary of friendship and cooperation and over the years, ASEAN and Japan's partnership has flourished, particularly in people-to-people exchanges and environmental cooperation. At the 27th ASEAN-Japan Summit, Japan reaffirmed its commitment to youth empowerment and sustainable development, aligning it with ASEAN priorities. Also, at the Japan-ASEAN Youth Summit 2025, the Secretary General of ASEAN, Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, highlighted that our cooperation is not just about celebrating past achievements but also about harnessing the energies of our youth to shape the future. This symposium serves as a key platform in realizing this vision.

ASEAN recognizes that the youth are drivers of change. Our young people are the most powerful and innovative demographic force in our societies. In 2020, Southeast Asia was home to 224 million young people, with Generation Z (aged 15-25 years old) making up 53% and Millennials (aged 26-35 years old) comprising 47%. Moreover, the share of youth within the total ASEAN population is projected to peak in 2038—the largest portion of our population ever. ASEAN therefore places high importance on youth engagement. Malaysia's 2025 ASEAN Chairmanship under the theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability" placed particular emphasis on unlocking youths' potential to drive growth, unity, and excellence across the regions. Youth-centered initiatives and platforms such as the ASEAN Youth Agenda Indonesia 2023, the 3rd



H.E. San Lwin
Deputy Secretary General, ASEAN
Socio-Cultural Community Pillar,
ASEAN Secretariat

ASEAN Youth Dialogue in 2024, and the ASEAN Young Climate Leaders Programme provide opportunities for the youth to engage in critical and engaging issues in the region.

Moreover, the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) has been instrumental in fostering youth leadership and cross-cultural understanding and in aligning closely with ASEAN's vision for sustainability and innovation, as reflected in the ASEAN Regional Action Plans on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Member States particularly in 'Research, Innovation, and Capacity Building' and 'Public Awareness, Education, and Outreach'.

Through innovative solutions and youth-driven actions, AJYELN also plays a vital role in advancing the ASEAN Declarations on Plastic Circularity by mobilizing multi-stakeholder collaborations, including youth, public and private sectors, and government agencies in advocacies and outreach efforts. The theme of this symposium, "Innovative Actions, Sustainable Progress", underscores the dynamic roles of young leaders in driving innovative and impactful solutions for environmental sustainability. Most importantly, the initiatives and the enthusiastic participation of the youth reflect their commitment, creativity, and responsibility in shaping a more sustainable future—one where innovation drives lasting progress for our communities and the environment.

In closing, I encourage active participation and productive discussions from student fellows and youth leaders from ASEAN Member States and Japan. Your efforts in conducting public awareness campaigns on plastic pollution, proper waste disposal, and recycling practices are making a tangible impact in your community. ASEAN and Japan stand firmly behind you and we look forward to seeing your continued leadership in environmental sustainability.

I wish the symposium a great success. Thank you.



Message of Support



Mr. Reo Kawamura
Director, ERIA Regional Knowledge
Center for Marine Plastic Debris

It is my honor to speak to you today as we celebrate the achievements of the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network. Over the past year, you have demonstrated remarkable dedication to tackling marine plastic pollution, a challenge that requires innovation, collaboration, and strong leadership.

I think that some of you joined the ERIA office visit in Jakarta, Indonesia, last August. I hope that the visit and interaction with our team at the Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris was useful for your activities. For our team, the interaction also left a strong impression. You are not just young students with an interest in sustainability issues. You are emerging environmental leaders, eager to learn, exchange ideas, and take concrete actions. Seeing the progress you have made reaffirms my belief that young leaders like you are the driving force for positive change.

We hope that your journey with the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network has equipped you with further knowledge, skills, and networks to continue leading some actions against plastic pollution. As you move forward, I encourage you to build on this experience, share what you have learned, and mentor future young environmental leaders.

With the launch of AJYELN 2.0, the impact of this initiative will continue to grow, inspiring a new cohort to follow in your footsteps. I hope that you will remain engaged and continue making a difference in your communities.

Congratulations on this incredible milestone.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my appreciation to ASEAN Japan Centre's colleagues, as well as all the partners, for your support and dedication.

Thank you.



Message of Support

Warm greetings from the ASEAN Youth Organization!

We, the ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO), are honored and proud to be in partnership with the ASEAN-Japan Centre. We started this partnership last year with the spirit of promoting understanding and cooperation in the environmental fields among young leaders from ASEAN and Japan. We believe that the youth play a vital role in achieving climate justice. That is why in this program, we had youth leaders participate meaningfully in creating solutions for the climate through advocacy efforts, people-to-people engagement, community empowerment, as well as campaign awareness that also highlights the power of partnership between ASEAN and Japan to achieve a plastic-free future.



Ms. Sarah Rauzana
Chairperson, ASEAN Youth Organization

As an organization, AYO is guided by the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth and ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) developed by the ASEAN Secretariat, specifically from the Education, Youth and Sport Division. If we connect the dots between AJYELN, the ASEAN Work Plan on Youth, and the ASEAN YDI, and even all of us here have started to get involved in achieving 1 ASEAN YDI domain or Workplan area, and even more! When we talk about the environment, it will be integrated with education as we are aware of the importance of environmental education in schools. We also will talk about health, employment and opportunity, participation and engagement, and even ASEAN values and identity! Why? Because in this program, we're also exploring how we, the youth leaders and the youth advocates, can strengthen and scale up the partnership between ASEAN and Japan for better community welfare, and of course, a better planet that is free from plastic pollution.

AJYELN has a special place in my heart because I actively participate in the environmental field, working together with fellow youth activists. I know for sure that we, the youth leaders, can impart meaningful contributions and save our environment through various ways, be it through advocacy, community campaigns, or joining an international program like AJYELN to analyze issues, strategize solutions, and exchange ideas with fellow youths.

Lastly, I would like to extend my biggest congratulations to the 33 young environmental leaders in Japan and 8 ASEAN Member States who successfully implemented 63 marine plastic pollution awareness campaigns and activities that involved more than 15,000 individuals. This is truly proof of the beauty of young people's involvement in making changes for the environment to achieve the mission of realizing a healthier planet that is free from plastic pollution.

Thank you again ASEAN Japan Centre for the endless support for the youth leaders. Congrats again to the AJYELN alumni. I am looking forward to seeing your further participation in the AJYELN 2.0—because we believe all of your knowledge and experience will be very beneficial to the next fellows.

Terima kasih, Aw kun, Khowp jai, Jeessuu ba, Salamat po, Kop Khun Khrap, Gam uhn, Arigatou gozaimasu, thank you!

About the AJYELN

The ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) is a product of the years-long initiative of the ASEAN-Japan Centre to reach as many young people as possible and educate them about the perils of the marine plastic debris problem.

Six ASEAN countries (Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Viet Nam, and Thailand) are among the world’s highest ocean plastic polluters in 2021 (Meijer et al. 2021). The recognition of marine plastic debris as a regional issue of great importance was formally recognized in 2019 when the 10 ASEAN countries adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region and the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris. In 2020, the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris (2021-2025) was launched, containing the phased actions that ASEAN countries are expected to conduct during this five-year period.

Japan and the ASEAN-Japan Centre have actively supported environmental initiatives in the ASEAN region. Since 2020, the Centre has brought together young leaders from ASEAN and Japan to address the issue of marine plastic debris. Collaborating with 22 ASEAN and Japanese students, they launched the “Future Leaders’ Declaration on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for International Marine Plastic Waste,” the first student-led statement in the ASEAN and Japan region.

Following the declaration, the “ASEAN-Hiroshima Eco-School for Marine Plastic Waste Education” was initiated as a pilot project in 2021. This project aimed to implement the recommendations from the declaration, specifically focusing on education and awareness, as well as youth engagement. It began the online lecturing on marine plastic waste to more than 1,500 elementary and high school students in Japan and four ASEAN countries.

In 2022, the project has been expanded to 8 ASEAN countries and Japan. The “ASEAN-Japan Eco-School for Marine Plastic Waste Education” has provided online lectures to 6,977 elementary and high school students in ASEAN and Japan on the proper use and disposal of plastics and influenced their behaviour to reduce the volume of plastics in the ocean.

After receiving the feedback from students who participated in the Ecoschool lectures, our Centre realized the importance of empowering youth to become leaders in their local communities. This led to the establishment of the AJYELN, which specifically targeted the youth as young as 15 years old. By instilling proper behaviors towards sustainable environmental practices in this malleable age group, they can effectively influence their peers and families, creating a ripple effect of positive environmental change within their communities.

Recognizing that financial resources are essential for implementing change, the Centre provided a modest seed fund to kickstart the environmental projects of these young leaders. With a focus on addressing the issue of marine plastic debris, the program aimed to curb plastic pollution on land and in the seas.

In 2023, the AJYELN program was officially launched, and 37 young fellows have successfully implemented 39 plastic pollution awareness activities to over 8,000 youth in the region.

This publication chronicles the success and challenges of the current 2024 AJYELN fellows as they implemented their environmental projects, as well as their journeys to becoming young environmental leaders in ASEAN and Japan.

AJYELN 2024 Impact Report

Impact in Numbers

- A total of 33 young environmental leaders (15-18 years old) in Japan and 8 ASEAN member states (except Cambodia and Lao PDR) have been competitively selected from 62 team applicants from the region.
- On August 28-29, the AJYELN fellows received intensive mentoring in a two-day environmental leadership mentorship and project management training in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- The AJYELN program implemented 63 marine plastic pollution awareness campaigns and activities in selected communities in 10 ASEAN member states and Japan.
- A total of 17,877 individuals in the region have been reached and actively participated in the activities implemented by the AJYELN fellows in their respective communities. AJYELN has garnered more than 48,000 followers aged 15-35 years old in ASEAN countries and Japan through its social network pages via Facebook and Instagram.
- An estimated total amount of 700,000JPY has been utilized in the implementation of the 63 student-led activities by the AJYELN fellows.

Country (Province or state)	No. of fellowst	No. of activities	Total no. of people reached	Partner local organizations	Project completion
Brunei (Kuala Belait)	4	12	1520	2	100%
Indonesia (Bali)	4	14	2790	12	100%
Japan (Sapporo)	4	2	90	3	100%
Malaysia (Langkawi)	3	3	677	5	100%
Myanmar (Yangon)	3	4	478	2	100%
Philippines (Cebu)	4	14	6759	16	100%
Singapore (Singapore)	3	9	2108	3	100%
Thailand (Bangkok)	4	2	55	2	100%
Viet Nam (Ho Chi Minh City)	4	3	3400	2	100%
TOTAL	33	63	17877	47	100%

AJYELYN Journey

The AJYELN is a network of young regional champions in combating the plastic pollution crisis selected from the ten ASEAN Member States and Japan. Organized by the ASEAN-Japan Centre, the network promotes youth-led solutions to the plastic pollution issue in the region.

How the Fellows Were Chosen

January-May 2024: Recruitment and selection

The ASEAN-Japan Centre opened recruitment from January to May 31, 2024, receiving over 60 team applications from 8 ASEAN states and Japan. Nine teams (33 fellows) were selected based on motivation (20%), impact (35%), feasibility (20%), and innovation (25%). The selection committee comprised ASEAN-Japan Centre representatives.



Year-round activities

July 26, 2024: Kick-off and Launch Ceremony

The 33 fellows from 8 ASEAN countries and Japan were introduced as the AJYELN 2024 Fellows during the Launch Ceremony on July 26. The launch featured a keynote by Mr. Benedict Wermter of Bule Sampah, along with messages from the Japan Ministry of Environment, ASEAN Secretariat, ERIA-RKCPD, ASEAN Youth Organization, and two AJYELN 2023 alumni



August 28-29, 2024: Leadership and project management training

The 33 fellows joined a 2-day environmental leadership and project management training on August 28-29 in Jakarta, which was co-organized with the ASEAN Youth Organization. They received marine plastic waste training from the ERIA Regional Knowledge Center on Marine Plastic Debris, engaged in dialogues with the ASEAN Secretariat and Ministry of Japan to Indonesia, and gained insights from prominent Indonesian environmental leaders.



August 2024: Disbursement of seed money

In August 2024, each team received 40,000 JPY (40% of seed money) to start their projects, with a maximum budget of 100,000 JPY per team. A total of 700,000 JPY funded 63 marine plastic pollution awareness campaigns across 8 ASEAN states and Japan.

August 2024 - January 2025: Project implementation

From August 2024-January 2025, AJYELN fellows carried out 63 projects across 8 ASEAN states and Japan. Activities included drama performances in Brunei, beach cleanups in Indonesia and Malaysia, plastic alternatives research in Japan, contests in Myanmar, eco-workshops in the Philippines, interviews in Singapore, mangrove planting in Thailand, and upcycling camps in Viet Nam.



March 13, 2025: Capstone symposium

On March 13, 2025, the hybrid 2nd AJYELN Symposium convened the youth in Japan and ASEAN countries. Featuring the 33 AJYELN fellows and young environmental leaders from Indonesia Nala Amirah Putri, and Japan, Gaku Shimamura, they discussed how young individuals can make an impact on their societies through environmental leadership.



International Visibility

July 2024

The accomplishments and contributions to regional cooperation of the AJYELN program have been presented and recognized in the following ASEAN meetings:

- ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Education on their quarterly meeting on July 10, 2024; and
- 18th ASEAN-Japan Dialogue on Environmental Cooperation on July 31, 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

October 2024

AJYELN was an online presenter at a youth-led side event during the Convening of Youth for the Future of Coral Reefs at COP to the CBD on October 29, 2024, in Colombia. The event was organized by the Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR), UNCDF, and ICRI.





School Name
Chung Hua Middle School, Kuala Belait

No Green, No Blue! From Pollution to Solution

“To Protect and Improve the Marine Environment for the Future, A Small Change Can Make A Big Difference, Be the Change That You Want to See in the World”

@a4_awareness_and_action



Angelina Lau Eng Oi



Aaron John Leo Nereparambil



Hridya Anna Panackal



Aiden Paul Leo Nereparambil

Team Brunei A4 Awareness and Action is dedicated to transforming the students' understanding of the marine plastic pollution from a pressing problem into a manageable solution. Our mission is to educate, engage, and empower communities to take action against plastic pollution, fostering sustainable practices and safeguarding our marine environments.

“Pollution to Solution–No Green, No Blue! To Protect and Improve the Marine Environment For the Future” is an essential initiative aimed at combating marine plastic pollution through innovative and community-driven approaches. Using drama as an educational tool, we created compelling narratives that highlight the impact of plastic pollution on marine environments. Storytelling through drama captures the audience's attention and makes the message more relatable and memorable. By combining education, empowerment, and sustainable practices, we are making significant strides toward a healthier planet and a more resilient society.

A small change can make a big difference; be the change that you want to see in the world!



12

Total number of activities implemented

100%

Percent of completion

1520

Total number of students reached

49 kg

Total weight of collected waste

2

Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

- Green Depot Recycling Centre
- Department of Environment, Parks and Recreation Centre Brunei



School Advisor
Sangeetha Sugathan

I am incredibly grateful and privileged to represent our country Brunei in the AJYELN Program. Your encouragement and support have been invaluable! Completing all 12 projects not only deepened my understanding of a critical marine environmental issue but also reinforced my passion for making a difference. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported us on this journey — your encouragement means the world to me!



Mentor
Nurlatifah

It's a job well done for everyone! Congratulations on completing all 12 projects! It's been my honor to work with students with such passion and brilliant minds and, of course, their supportive advisor, Ms. Sangeetha. Although many adjustments needed to be made along the way, you nailed it! Stay passionate about your environment advocacy and keep developing your skills. I wish you all the best for your future endeavors!

Activity #1

Learning Through Challenge: The Power of Competitions



Project Timeline
July 28, 2024-November 27, 2024

Key Takeaways

Promoted active learning

Through a series of competitions, we successfully raised awareness about plastic pollution through a unique and engaging approach. We encouraged students to explore their creativity, expand their knowledge, find solutions, and transform passive knowledge into active engagement.

Several competitions were organized as part of the fellows' month-long series of activities to raise awareness among the students of Chung Hua Middle School in Kuala Belait, Brunei Darussalam.

On July 28, the A4 Awareness and Action team launched several competitions, including an eco-art challenge to recycle plastic waste, poster making, and a drama competition targeting kindergarten to high school students. These competitions aimed to help students digest the problem, build teamwork, encourage creativity and imagination to transform waste into wonder, and communicate complex environmental topics by making the message more relatable and memorable to a broader audience through drama recitation.

Around 80 students participated in these competitions, showing active engagement and enthusiasm among students, as well as highlighting their eagerness to contribute to raising awareness about waste hazards. Participants emphasized innovative solutions and critical thinking in addressing environmental challenges through the proposal of viable solutions in their artworks.



Activity #2

Trash to Tragedy: A Theatrical Awakening on Plastic Pollution

Project Timeline
October 5, 2024

Key Takeaways

Fostered emotional connection on the marine plastic pollution issue

Through storytelling and character development, the drama performance evoked empathy, helping the audience (local citizens of Kuala Belait) connect emotionally with the issue of marine plastic pollution and inspire them to take action. Moreover, this drama performance was done by the winning team of the drama competition that was held previously as an integrated effort to spread awareness for greater impact.



At a local bazaar event at Taman Jubilee, Kuala Belait, the A4 Awareness and Action team, along with the winning team from the previous drama competition, performed an awareness campaign through drama performance in front of 250 local citizens.

The story tells of a fisherfolk family who dispose of their garbage, including plastic trash, to nearby rivers and the sea. This irresponsible littering resulted in the accumulation of plastic pollution. This was later ingested by the aquatic animals and ended up on the fisherfolk's plates. The prolonged exposure to microplastics in the diet caused a health problem for the fisherfolk family; in this case, it affected the father, who developed cancer.

This simple yet strongly relatable story of a fisherfolk community successfully engaged the audience, making the issue easier to understand through storytelling. The people were able to grasp the urgency of the matter as the drama presented behavioral practices reflecting irresponsible disposal of plastic trash in bodies of water, as well as its long-term effect on marine animals, who are then ingested by humans. Seeing this, the audience realized that plastic pollution is toxic not only for aquatic organisms but also to humans. This prompted them to realize the need to reduce the use of plastic products in their life and recycle them in any way possible.

Activity #3

Do We Really Care? A Social Experiment on Plastic Pollution

Project Timeline
November 27, 2024

Key Takeaways

Championed collective environmental responsibility

Through consistent and collaborative environmental activities, the A4 Awareness and Action team successfully raised awareness about the danger of plastic pollution to their school community and local citizens. This was demonstrated by the increase in the number of people actively picking up scattered trash in the school and properly disposing it in the garbage bins. People showed a sense of collective responsibility for maintaining cleanliness in public spaces.



The experiment took place in the heart of Kuala Belait and aimed to observe how people would react to littering in public spaces. A number of hidden cameras were positioned strategically to capture the moments and people's reactions. Then, pieces of trash were tossed around along the sidewalk, and a large trash can was also placed nearby. To our surprise, many people immediately picked up the trash and threw it into the bin, showing a positive change in the people's sense of responsibility and desire to keep the space clean even if it was not their mess.

In another location, as the team scattered more trash, an older man approached the team and, as he was upset seeing the irresponsible littering, scolded them. It took a while to calm him down and explain the experiment to him. This whole incident, though, turned out to be one of the most enlightening moments of the day. It showed us just how seriously people take the issue of littering and how ready they are to stand up against it—even if it means confronting strangers. It was a powerful reminder of how effective campaigns can be when they tap into these shared values.

Indonesia

School Name
SMA Taman Rama Jimbaran



Restore the Shore



Vanessa Lee



Johanna Gracia
Sunarno



Nathania Karina
Anggraini



Ni Wayan Dina
Wiantari

@eco.4shore
Eco4Shore



Indonesia is a known tropical paradise with stunning ocean waters and breathtaking beaches. Yet, there is one odd thing found in between the beauty: plastic trash. The presence of plastic trash threatens the tourism sector, fishing economy, and biodiversity of our country. We can't let plastic further erode our oceans and shores, and that is why Eco4Shore was created! Our vision is for future generations to experience rich biodiversity and plastic-free oceans.

We are committed to achieving that through our four main strategies, which include competitive beach clean-ups, awareness campaigns, research initiatives, and collaborations with like-minded organizations. Our four main strategies operate under the belief that plastic trash has the potential to become treasure. We hope to create a circular economy and foster increased awareness through these initiatives. So, come and support us to restore the clean shores!



Achievements

- 14** Total number of activities implemented
- 100%** Percent of completion
- 2790** Total number of people reached
- 770 kg** Total weight of collected waste
- 12** Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

Organizations

- MPH
- Getplastic.id
- ecoBali Recycling
- Mudfish No Plastic
- TrashHero Sanur
- SobatPantai
- Business
- PT Royal Total International
- Sangkara

Communities

- Kelan
- Schools
- SATAP 7 BAN Junior High School
- 9 Denpasar Junior High School
- Tunas Kasih Elementary School



School Advisor
Made Intan Pradnyamita

This program helped us learn how to build a community that had an impact and preserved the environment. I enjoyed helping my students organize activities and discover new things.



Mentor

Irfan Tsany Rahmawan

Good job on finishing all the proposed activities and going above and beyond on some activities. It was an honor for me to work together with Eco4Shore as they are attentive, full of initiative, and passionate, putting their heart into each of their activities so there is no half-baked activity at all. I wish you all the best in your future endeavors, and I hope you keep sharing the awareness and the good mindset that you have anywhere, anytime. Good luck, everyone!



Activity #1

Educational Campaign

Project Timeline

August 9-13, 2024, September 10, 2024, October 15, 2024, and November 11, 2024

Key Takeaways

Understood marine plastic pollution and its impact

Students learned about the causes and consequences of marine plastic pollution in Indonesia. They saw real-life examples, particularly from Bali, and understood how plastic waste affected marine life, jobs, and human health through microplastics. The use of storytelling with puppet characters (Eco & Jaw) helped highlight the threats to ocean ecosystems.

Learned practical steps to reduce plastic waste

Students were introduced to three simple actions: 1) avoid single-use plastics by using reusable alternatives like tote bags and water bottles, 2) dispose of waste properly by sorting trash into the correct bins, and 3) support environmental efforts through social media, donations, or participation in activities like beach cleanups.

Built sustainable habits for a plastic-free future

Through hands-on activities, students practiced proper waste sorting and learned upcycling ideas. They recognized how plastic pollution originates from land and ends up in the ocean, emphasizing the importance of proper waste disposal, reducing plastic use, and choosing eco-friendly alternatives.

Educational campaign activities, which were held from elementary to senior high schools, were done to cultivate responsibility and awareness about marine plastic pollution. A proper waste management system was also socialized in these campaigns. In total, these activities engaged 678 students aged 6-18.



Activity #2

Beach Cleanup

Project Timeline
August 16, 2024, September 21, 2024,
and December 8, 2024

Key Takeaways

Made a significant impact through team effort

Across multiple cleanups, hundreds of kilograms of trash—over 770 kg were collected by over 180 participants. The majority of collected waste consisted of plastic, styrofoam, and cloth, showing the nature of pollution in Bali's beaches. teamwork proved highly effective, as participants exceeded expectations by continuously filling up more trash bags.

Raised awareness and understanding of waste types

Participants were shocked by the amount of trash on the beach and recognized the importance of keeping Bali's tourist destinations clean. They also learned about different types of waste, with plastic being the heaviest and most common, followed by paper and styrofoam. Sorting the trash helped them understand the complexities of waste management.

Cultivated motivation and community building for lasting impact

The cleanup was not just an environmental effort but also a fun and rewarding experience. Participants felt motivated to protect the environment and appreciated the opportunity to build new friendships and connections with like-minded individuals and organizations. The event also highlighted the physical benefits of cleanups, combining environmental action with exercise and teamwork.

The beach cleanup activities, which are one of the main projects of Eco4Shore, were held at two places, Kelan and Mertasari beach, on three different dates. Unlike regular beach cleanup activities with come-collect-go practice, Eco4Shore's beach cleanup was in the form of a competition. To win, we had several criteria each time. We judged how much the collected trash weighed and assessed whether participants were able to separate residue and plastic, come back on time, and bring their own water bottles.



Activity #3

Collaboration

Project Timeline
August-December 2024

Key Takeaways

Utilized strategic collaboration with experts and organizations

To deepen our understanding of waste management and plastic processing, we partnered with MPH, which helps villages implement waste sorting and Getplastic Indonesia, which converts plastic waste into fuel for fishing communities. Additionally, we worked with Sangkara to promote a circular economy by selling the collected waste to prevent further pollution.

Fostered partnerships for increased participation

Across three beach cleanups, we collaborated with various organizations and communities:

- PT Royal Total International sponsored the food and integrated the event into Taman Rama Jimbaran's Sports Day.
- TrashHero Sanur partnered with us for the second cleanup, bringing their experience in regular cleanups.
- The third cleanup involved SobatPantai (promotion & volunteers), ecoBali recycling (waste management), and the Kelan Community & Sabha Yowana Adilaya youth group for local engagement.

Conducted educational campaigns for all ages

We conducted educational programs in four schools, engaging elementary and high school students to raise awareness about marine plastic pollution. A special mention goes to Mudfish No Plastic, whose fun and engaging teaching methods helped educate students at SMPN 9 Denpasar on environmental issues.

Collaboration with various stakeholders and communities was done to enhance existing efforts in the campaigns and beach cleanup activities. The activities with partners helped with raising awareness, while a collaborative project to transform plastic into something more useful was also initiated. Eco4Shore successfully worked with 13 collaborators, with some of the partnerships extending even after the AJYELN program.



Japan



School Name
Sapporo Keisei High School

To Make A Substitute to Plastic

@team_keisei



Koji Nagahama



Hijiri Yoshikawa



Keita Mori



Yuto Yamahata



Rin Tanabe

Today, there are many problems with plastic waste. We think that mass production and single-use plastics are a serious matter, so we decided to conduct experiments to improve these problems. Therefore, we sought to make plastic substitutions made from casein and research about how to improve the strength casein plastic. We reported our findings to the world by using the internet.



3

Total number of activities implemented

100%

Percent of completion

140

Total number of people reached

3

Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

- Maleny State High School
- MEXT(Japanese ministries)
- JST(Japanese organization)



School Advisor
Yusuke Murata

The students were able to achieve one result through trial and error in their research. In the process of their research and dissemination, they took on the challenge of many initiatives, including consultations with overseas students, dissemination through SNS, and face-to-face presentations. I look forward to a future where they will continue to challenge the plastic problem.



Mentor

Kyoka Umemoto

It was very interesting to see your approach to the plastic problem, in which you made casein plastic as a substitute for original plastic and presented it to people. Good job on how you were able to adapt and respond flexibly even when your experiments or plans did not go as planned. I expect that you will continue to research casein plastic after this project, so I hope that you will keep on contributing to resolve environmental issues by utilizing the experience and knowledge you have gained through this AJYELN project.



Achievements

Activity #1

Making Casein Plastics

Project Timeline
July to December 2024

Key Takeaways

Rose above unexpected challenges

We learned how to make casein plastics, made a hypothesis, and solved challenges when a problem occurred during experiments.

Before the activities, we tried to make original casein plastics and experimented with creating casein plastics that would not crack easily.

At first, we concentrated on making casein plastics like previous research. However, the first 2 months were not going well. We also felt it was difficult to judge whether the experiment was successful. This is because it takes 2 to 3 weeks to dry. It was only after 3 months into the research that we got used to making the casein plastics.

On the other hand, it also took a lot of time to decide how to measure the strength of casein plastics. When we made some mistakes during these experiments, we were able to try again with these experiments because we shared our opinions frequently.



Activity #2

Presentation in Maleny State High School in Australia

Project Timeline
December 3, 2024

Fostered communications skills in English

We improved our communication skills and fostered awareness about plastic problems through discussions with foreign high school students.

The ocean's plastic problem is recognized all over the world. We conducted this project to get various opinions from Maleny State High School students in Australia, where they are developing an advanced solution and take in their ideas. We shared our research by presenting the poster to the students. We also let them touch the casein plastics we made. Finally, we showed the videos we made for the previous AJYELN activities. We got three great questions from students: 1) whether we can process casein plastics, 2) whether we know the disadvantages of spreading casein plastics to the world, and 3) whether casein plastics could withstand a prolonged load. It was a great experience for us because we could share each idea through the discussion.



Activity #3

Making Videos of the Experiment

Project Timeline
November 2024 to January 2025

Key Takeaways

Cultivated interest in casein plastics online
The videos helped the viewers become interested in casein plastics. We were also able to share our activities with the world by using social media.

We took two videos of our experiments and posted them on our YouTube channel. One of the videos was entitled "Making A: 'How to make casein plastics' video". It showed how to make casein plastics. Our goal for this video was to share how to make a casein plastic and to get viewers interested in casein. The other video, "Making B: 'Summary of our activities' video", was intended to show what we had done in AJYELN to the world. We made this video so that it can be a learning material for people who are researching casein plastics. This is because we explained how to make casein plastics and measured the strength of casein plastics in detail. We also promoted the videos on Instagram before we uploaded them on YouTube to let more people be aware of them.

What
is
Casein Plastic



NO MORE
PLASTIC

Malaysia



School Name
MRSM Langkawi

Beach Revival: Plastic Eradication Mission

@aseaneagleslgk



Aina Zulaikha Binti
Azmil



Nur Intessar Izzati
Binti Zamri



Diya Aretha



As the ASEAN Eagles, we're a passionate team of young visionaries from MRSM Langkawi, Malaysia, driven by an unwavering commitment to preserve our island's pristine shores. Our "Beach Revival: Plastic Eradication Mission" aims to revolutionize environmental action against marine plastic pollution. Through innovative approaches like gamified beach cleanups, hands-on workshops, and our environmental podcast series, we're empowering local youth and the community to become eco-warriors. We're not just cleaning beaches; we're fostering a culture of environmental stewardship that will ripple through generations.

By collaborating with local authorities and organizations, we're weaving a tapestry of collective responsibility across our island home. We embody the spirit of possibility, showing that with passion, creativity, and determination, even the most daunting environmental challenges can be overcome.

As we lead the charge for a cleaner Langkawi, we hope to inspire others to believe in the power of youth to shape a more sustainable future for our planet. Join us in our mission to turn the tide on plastic pollution and create a world where pristine shores are a living reality.



Achievements

3

Total number of activities implemented

100%

Percent of completion

677

Total number of people reached

173 kg

Total weight of collected waste

5

Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

- Langkawi Development Authority (LADA)
- Muafakat MRSM Langkawi
- Trash Heroes
- Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Sungai Buloh
- MareCet



School Advisor

Mimi Syadzlina Binti Shabi

The AJYELN program is a great initiative for developing leadership skills, fostering personal growth, and empowering individuals to make a positive impact in their communities. As a supervisor in the AJYELN program, I was truly excited to see how students have gained skills in event planning and community engagement.



Mentor

Khew Ee Hung

Great job on your dedication and hard work in implementing your projects to tackle marine plastic pollution! Despite challenges like stakeholder engagement and time management, I am so grateful and happy that you can remain resilient and creative in overcoming them. Congratulations on successfully driving tangible change in your community and growing tremendously as individuals. Keep developing your leadership, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, and stay passionate about making a difference as environmental leaders. Best wishes to your future endeavors!



Activity #1

Awareness Campaign on Marine Plastic Pollution

Project Timeline
July 26, 2024

The workshop, which was held at MRSM Langkawi, engaged 406 students aged 13 to 16 in marine conservation efforts. Through interactive sessions like the Deep Dive Dialogue and upcycled pouch workshops, students gained insights into marine plastic pollution and practical solutions to combat it. The workshop, organized in collaboration with MareCet and the ASEAN-Japan Centre, emphasized behavioral change and active participation to foster a deeper understanding of Langkawi's marine ecosystem and global conservation initiatives. Post-workshop surveys showed significant improvements in students' knowledge and commitment to reducing single-use plastics, highlighting the event's success in inspiring young environmental leaders.

Key Takeaways

Enhanced understanding of marine plastic pollution

Students gained a better understanding of marine plastic pollution and its harmful effects through the Deep Dive Dialogue conducted by the MareCet representative. The program emphasized awareness about how plastic pollution harms ocean ecosystems, making the students more informed about Langkawi's marine environment.

Displayed positive behavioral changes towards plastic pollution

Students realized that their daily activities, such as creating upcycled pouches from recycled materials, can significantly reduce plastic pollution. The program introduced students to practical ways to tackle plastic pollution, equipping them with valuable solutions.



Activity #2

ASEAN Eagles Beach Revival

The Beach Revival Event, which was held at Taman Lagenda Langkawi, engaged 45 secondary students (aged 13-17) from around Langkawi in hands-on beach cleaning and marine conservation activities. Organized by MRSM Langkawi in collaboration with the ASEAN-Japan Centre, LADA, Muafakat MRSM Langkawi, Trash Heroes, and UiTM Sungai Buloh, the event collected 173 kg of waste, 54.5% of which are plastic. Participants gained practical waste reduction skills and sustainable living as the activity fostered environmental responsibility and teamwork. The initiative strengthened community ties and inspired long-term conservation efforts, empowering students to become active stewards of Langkawi's marine ecosystems.



Project Timeline
September 21, 2024

Key Takeaways

Acquired hands-on experience and fostered environmental responsibility

Participants gained invaluable hands-on experience in addressing marine pollution through direct involvement in beach cleanups, fostering a sense of environmental responsibility. This engagement cultivated a strong sense of environmental responsibility among the students, reinforcing their role as active stewards of the environment.

Gained practical solutions for sustainable living

Throughout the event, students learned practical ways to reduce personal plastic waste and promote sustainable habits in their daily lives and at their respective schools. This knowledge empowered them to make positive changes within their communities, encouraging others to adopt similar practices.

Strengthened community ties

The collaborative nature of the event strengthened ties between educational institutions, environmental organizations, and the local community. This cooperation set a solid foundation for future conservation initiatives, ensuring ongoing efforts to protect Langkawi's natural environment.

Activity #3

ASEAN Eagles: Navigating the Seas of Plastic Pollution Podcast

The podcast is a global initiative addressing marine plastic pollution through expert insights and actionable solutions. Featuring guest speakers like Dr. Abe Woo and Dr. Mya-Rose Craig, prominent environmentalists, the series explores marine biodiversity, youth activism, and sustainable practices. With 110 downloads across 8 countries, the podcast has raised awareness, inspired eco-friendly habits, and fostered global engagement. By combining education with practical solutions, it empowered listeners to drive environmental change, positioning the show as a vital platform for marine conservation and youth leadership in Southeast Asia and beyond.

Project Timeline
August 23, 2024



Key Takeaways

Facilitated the podcast launch

The "ASEAN Eagles: Navigating the Seas of Plastic Pollution" podcast series successfully launched with a trailer, a pilot episode, and its first official episode, sparking meaningful engagement in environmental conservation across Southeast Asia and beyond.

Learned from marine and environmental experts

The trailer introduced the mission to address marine plastic pollution and its global significance. The pilot episode, "Charting New Horizons: The ASEAN Eagles' Journey Begins", outlined the series' goals and emphasized awareness, education, and actionable solutions for a sustainable future. The first official episode, "Custodians of the Sea: Marine Biodiversity, Challenges, and Solutions", featured Dr. Abe Woo from Universiti Sains Malaysia, who shared critical insights into marine ecosystems. These included the balance between living and non-living systems, the essential role of phytoplankton, challenges posed by ocean

acidification and warming, the decline of sea cucumbers in Langkawi and their repopulation efforts, and the threat of microplastics requiring local and global solutions. Another featured guest was Dr. Mya-Rose Craig, a 22-year-old British-Bangladeshi ornithologist, environmentalist, and diversity activist. Dr. Craig shared her journey as a young activist, her passion for birdwatching, and her efforts to promote inclusivity in environmental movements. She emphasized the importance of youth activism and how personal passions can drive global change. Her insights into the intersection of birdwatching, environmental conservation, and youth empowerment left a lasting impression on our listeners.

Achieved increased awareness on the importance of marine ecology

Listeners' feedback revealed increased awareness about Malaysia's marine ecological importance, and how Dr. Woo's message motivated them to adopt eco-friendly practices, such as reducing single-use plastics and joining beach cleanup activities.

Myanmar



School Name
Hinthar International School

SOS – Save Our Seas



Cho Theint Zun



Han Thar Htet



Wai Hnin Pe

@saveourseas_mm
saveourseas_mm



Myanmar is one of the top 20 countries in terms of mismanaged plastic (Jambeck, et.al, 2015). "Marine Heroes" is a dedicated team committed to combating marine plastic pollution through the "SOS – Save Our Seas" project across Myanmar. Our mission is to empower locals, particularly the youth, to take active roles in preserving the marine environment for a greener future!



4

Total number of activities implemented

100%

Percent of completion

478

Total number of people reached

2

Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

- Hinther Education
- EMC conversation Club

School Advisor
Zin Zar Khet Kyaw

AJYELN is a good program for the youth, and it inspired them a lot. I enjoyed having international collaboration among instructors that helped promote the exchange of educational perspectives from each country.



Mentor
Dr. Thant Zin Tun

Great job on your hard work and creative ideas for raising the awareness of marine plastic pollution in the community. I was happy to work with the Save Our Seas team. I hope all of you guys keep up with your endeavors and share the knowledge. Good luck!



Activity #1

Thadingyut Carnival @Booth

Project Timeline
October 10, 2024

"Save Our Seas" had the privilege of participating in the Thadingyut Carnival organized by Hinthar International School on October 10, 2024. The event provided a valuable platform for the Save Our Seas team to engage with students, raise awareness about marine conservation, and gather insights to guide future initiatives. Collaborating with four dedicated student volunteers, the team focused on two main activities: spreading awareness and collecting data through a survey. These activities were designed to educate participants on the urgent issue of marine plastic pollution and to help prepare for an upcoming poster competition.

Key Takeaways

Raised awareness on marine plastic pollution

The first activity involved volunteers manning an informational booth where they engaged directly with students and visitors. The volunteers explained the goals of the "Save Our Seas" project, highlighting the critical issue of marine plastic pollution, its impact on ecosystems, and the importance of immediate action.

Assessed youth awareness and attitudes toward plastic pollution

The second activity focused on gathering valuable feedback through a survey designed to support the planning of an upcoming poster competition that aimed to raise awareness about ocean conservation. The survey, consisting of questions about environmental awareness and attitudes toward plastic pollution, received a total of 54 responses. This pre-project survey helped guide the direction and messaging of the poster competition, ensuring it resonated with the target audience and addressed key concerns identified during the event.



Activity #2

Clean Seas: Creative Minds Poster Challenge 2024

Project Timeline
November 22-December 1, 2024

The "Clean Seas: Creative Minds Poster Challenge" aimed to raise awareness about the devastating effects of marine plastic pollution while encouraging students from Hinthar International School to channel their creativity for environmental advocacy. Through a blend of educational workshops and hands-on poster creation, the challenge empowered participants to explore the issue deeply and translate their knowledge into impactful visual messages. Over the course of the program, 22 students engaged in interactive sessions to understand the causes, impacts, and solutions related to marine plastic pollution. The culmination of their efforts resulted in 17 poster submissions, each reflecting their creativity and passion for inspiring change.

Key Takeaways

Taught new perspectives on plastic waste

The workshops helped students see plastic waste not as a distant problem but as something that impacts their everyday lives. By showing how small actions can add up to global change, whether good or bad, the workshops made the issue more personal. Many students arrived with limited knowledge of the topic, but by the end, they gained a clearer understanding of how plastic pollution impacts marine life, ecosystems, and humans. They also learned about real-world initiatives that are actively tackling the problem through videos, giving them concrete examples of positive change in action.

Instilled practical behaviors to reduce plastic footprint

The workshops provided students with simple, actionable steps to reduce their plastic footprint. These included cutting down on unnecessary single-use plastics, reusing plastics whenever possible, gaining insights into effective recycling, and supporting businesses and organizations committed to sustainable practices. By showing students that they have the power to actively address marine plastic



pollution, the event empowered them with the knowledge and tools needed to make more responsible and mindful choices in their daily lives. This reinforced the importance of taking responsibility for the environment, both as individuals and as a community.

Fostered participants' individual creativity

Through the design workshop, participants discovered how to communicate vital environmental issues through visuals. This creative process allowed them to translate their newly acquired knowledge into impactful action. The posters they created became powerful tools for raising awareness about marine plastic pollution and encouraged the students to share the message and inspire others.

Activity #3

Social Media Engagement

Project Timeline
August 2, 2024 to present

"Save Our Seas" has been dedicated to raising awareness about marine plastic pollution in Myanmar mainly through our Instagram and Facebook pages. We have focused on making the issue of marine plastic pollution more relatable by sharing educational content in a variety of formats. From posts about the harmful effects on marine life to the surprising impacts plastic has on human health, our goal has always been to make the topic approachable.

Key Takeaways

Promoted education and awareness on marine plastic pollution

Our engaging blog posts and reels with visual content primarily focus on educating the audience about the impact of marine plastic pollution on ecosystems, marine life, and human health via Instagram and Facebook. This has led to audiences gain insights into the urgent issue of marine plastic pollution in Myanmar with more awareness.

Taught daily actionable steps to reduce plastic pollution

Audiences may well realize that their daily activities, for example, not using reusable water bottles, can significantly contribute to plastic pollution. The blog posts and entertaining reels introduced audiences to practical ways to combat plastic pollution, encouraging them to take specific actions.

Fostered engagement and community building

We have fostered engagement by posting activity recaps and experiences and creating fun, educational polls and quizzes about the impact of plastic pollution, building a community around marine conservation. We have additionally highlighted the participants' contributions by featuring them in our posts, creating a sense of recognition and community pride.



Philippines



School Name
Philippines Science High School Central
Visayas Campus

SEAlayan Network



Maeve E. Dizon





Rex Angelo T.
Monreal



Jana Sofia E. Hupp



Mark Russell A.
Lagunsad

 @sealayan_network
 SEALayan Network



The SEALayan Network, led by Team CalamanSEA, is making significant strides in combating marine plastic pollution in Cebu's coastal regions in the Philippines. Our transformative project actively engages fisherfolk communities and the youth through hands-on cleanups, art drives, and educational talks and equips them with different equipment donated by the team. By expanding our reach through the Philippine Science High School System, SEALayan effectively raises awareness and inspires youth participation in vital waste reduction initiatives.

This initiative not only empowers communities with essential skills but also cultivates a deep sense of environmental responsibility and champions sustainable practices. Through the connection of coastal residents and young advocates, we are dedicated to driving meaningful environmental change, significantly curtailing plastic waste, and improving perspectives on marine pollution.

**REDUCE
PLASTIC
WASTE**



Achievements

- 14** Total number of activities implemented
- 100%** Percent of completion
- 6759** Total number of people reached
- 630 kg** Total weight of collected waste
- 16** Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations
 - MATAPA
 - SENTRO
 - Barangay Tangke Talisay
 - Alliance of Future Scientists - CVisC
 - CVisC Model United Nations
 - EINSTEIN Philippine Innovators Society
 - Sea Side Sweep
 - Color Me A Future
 - USJR Commission on Environment
 - YACAP Visayas
 - USC Go Care Carolinian
 - UPC Youth Claim
 - Tzu Chi Foundation
 - Dakila
 - PSHS-CVisC
 - UPC Fine Arts

School Advisor
Ruby Cres J. Gayda



It was a good platform to engage the youth in addressing environmental challenges. It empowered them to take action in protecting and preserving our marine resources. I enjoyed the implementation of my group's plans because I can see their enthusiasm and ideas come to fruition. I saw how they collaborated with the community/organization leaders effectively, building the network to preserve our oceans and seas.

Team CalamanSEA demonstrated that environmental justice should not only engage those who are passionate about protecting the environment, but, more importantly, it should also involve individuals who are directly affected by the daily impacts of climate change-related disasters. Additionally, it should include those who have the potential to bring about significant change in their communities.

As the mentor for Team Philippines, I am incredibly proud of these brilliant thinkers and advocates. Despite their busy schedules and the academic demands of attending a state science high school, they have developed outstanding initiatives for the MATAPA fisherfolk community in Cebu. This community represents a marginalized population that remains resilient and eager to participate in protecting the seas that sustain their lives. I hope this network is not the end but the beginning of meaningful collaboration and waves of change for our oceans and seas.

Mentor

Jason Salvador



Activity #1

Series of Outreach

Project Timeline

August 26, 2024-January 25, 2025

Key Takeaways

Learned resilience from local folk
SEAlayan had a specific coastal community, the MATAPA Fisherfolk Community, as our beneficiary. In the short implementation period, we conducted multiple outreaches, each with its own different goals and objectives. The scope of our outreaches included cleanup drives, educational talks, and donation drives, and involved children and adults!

Our biggest takeaway was the fact that no matter how many hardships this community faced, they continued to strive, even with the conditions they were subjected to. However, resilience can only ever be enough if it continues or worsens. This is why the people who reside at Tangke, Talisay had to stand up for themselves and create a needed change within their community. The projects implemented during these outreach activities gave us a chance to interact with the children and the fisherfolk as well, which created a mutual bond of understanding.



Activity #2

SEAlayan Network

Project Timeline

October 11, 2024-January 23, 2025

Key Takeaways

Created relationships with like-minded organizations

The SEAlayan Network reached out to multiple communities and organizations that had the same goals and objectives as SEAlayan. Through this network, we aimed to bridge efforts among various organizations and make collaborative efforts that will make a resounding impact within the community.

Through the establishment of SEAlayan Network's partnerships, we learned the importance of building sustainable connections rooted in shared purpose. By collaborating with fisherfolk communities, environmental organizations, and student-led organizations, we aim to create a lasting, community-driven change. Our focus is not just to expand our reach but also to ensure meaningful engagement and leadership continuity. Moving forward, we hope to empower future leaders to carry and sustain SEAlayan's mission.



Activity #3

Community support: partners for change

Project Timeline

November 10, 2024-January 25, 2025

Key Takeaways

Inspired community-driven action

In the aftermath of Severe Tropical Storm Kristine, the SEAlayan Network visited the MATAPA Fisherfolk Community to deliver crucial aid. The SEAlayan Network also conducted a turnover of donated cleaning materials and protective gear to support the fisherfolk in their ongoing environmental efforts. Furthermore, Color Me A Future focused on the reimagination and professional rendering of children's artworks, turning over 36 artworks back to the children of Tangke, Talisay. Lastly, a fish-shaped bin was placed at a popular local beach in Bogo, Cebu.

The SEAlayan Network recognized the power of community resilience and creative expression in recovery efforts. By providing essential cleaning materials and protective gear to the MATAPA Fisherfolk Community, we aimed to support their livelihood and environmental initiatives. The reimagined children's artworks were turned over to inspire pride and creativity in Barangay Tangke's youth. Additionally, the installation of a fish-shaped bin at a local beach in Bogo symbolizes our commitment to sustainable practices. Through these efforts, we aim to strengthen community-driven environmental action.



Organization	Name of Campus Ambassadors
PSHS-BRC (Bacolod Region Campus)	Ray Luteria
PSHS-EVC (Eastern Visayas Campus)	Charmaine Talano
PSHS-ORC (Orion Region Campus)	Griff Ball
PSHS-WVC (Western Visayas Campus)	Empress Antonino
PSHS-CARC (Caroline Administrative Region Campus)	Lily Chavira
PSHS-MRC (Mindanao Region Campus)	Angelina Fernandez
PSHS-CVC (Cagayan Valley Campus)	Robert Bagan
PSHS-CLC (Central Luzon Campus)	Andrea Manalo
PSHS-ZRC (Zamboanga Peninsula Region Campus)	Ashley Casy
PSHS-MC (Mind Campus)	Coronel Llanos
Our Lady of the Holy Spirit (University of San Carlos)	Ruby Estrada
UPC Youth Choir (University of the Philippines Cebu)	Isabel Ragsdale



Singapore



School Name
Hwa Chong Institution

Project Visualised



Lee Yan Yi Celeste, Radiance Tan, Teo Yi Ting Joy

We are "Project Visualised", a team of three passionate students from Hwa Chong Institution (College) in Singapore. As a group of ambitious and environmentally conscious individuals, we are committed to tackling one of the most pressing pollution challenges of our time: marine plastic waste.

Our goal is to raise awareness by sharing clear and practical knowledge about plastic pollution. We strive to present information in a relatable and accessible way, inspiring a sense of environmental responsibility in youth and encouraging tangible actions to reduce ocean waste.

Guided by this mission, we have organized activities with our community through social media and offline channels. We are excited to share our journey with you and hope to inspire positive change together!



9
100%
2108
972.3kg

Total number of activities implemented

Percent of completion

Total number of people reached

Total weight of collected waste

Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

- SG Beach Warriors
- Hwa Chong Institution (College) - Green Council
- Yishun Innova Junior College
- - Student Council

School Advisor
Fok Ying Lee Fiona

The AJYELN is very meaningful and gives students a golden opportunity to network, learn from one another, and act on their passion for saving the environment. Watching the students go about planning and organizing their activities with passion and enthusiasm for the betterment of the environment and seeing them learn and grow through the program brought me joy.



Mentor
Tran Thuy Tien

I was truly amazed by how much the incredible team at Project Visualised has accomplished in such a short time. They pushed beyond their comfort zones, taking on diverse and impactful activities that were made possible by their dedication and creativity. Their passion for the environment and commitment to making a difference has made them true youth leaders representing Singapore. I do not doubt that their work will continue to inspire others, and I look forward to seeing their future contributions to environmental sustainability.



Achievements

Activity #1

"See_the.seas" – our way of connecting with you about the ocean

Key Takeaways

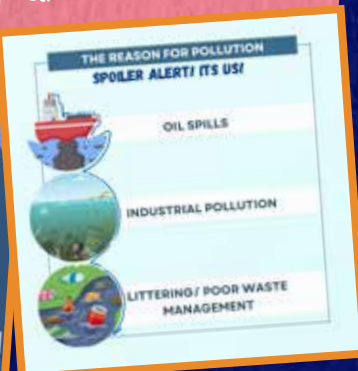
Honed creativity when creating informative social media content for the youth

Creating engaging and educational social media content for youth is a challenge that pushed us out of our comfort zones, helping us hone our teamwork and improve various skills, from research to design. It taught us the importance of coordination, building a solid timeline, and sticking to it. This process required not only a significant time investment but also regular and frequent meetings among our team. As we continue expanding our content, maintaining creativity and avoiding repetition becomes crucial. From video interviews to online giveaways, we need to constantly reinvent our approach to make the channel meaningful and capture the attention of our viewers.

Project Timeline July 2024 - present

We created the Instagram account see_the.seas as our official communication platform to engage with the youth. The content and tone are friendly, inspiring, and designed to encourage active participation through a variety of initiatives, including an interview video series, weekly posts, giveaways, and an online competition. So far, we have published 25 posts and attracted 136 followers. Managing a social media account and keeping it active has been a significant responsibility that required us to research and curate crucial information to share.

Our posts feature diverse themes related to marine plastic pollution. These themes include what Singapore is doing to combat marine plastic pollution, actionable steps the youth can take to protect the environment, and much more. We also conducted interviews with 11 students and teachers from Hwa Chong Institution to gauge their understanding of marine plastic pollution. Each interview video had an average of 300 views, amplifying our outreach and impact.



Activity #2

From "Seen competition" to "Pop-up booth" display - We take action from school to the community

Key Takeaways

Improved time management skills

One of the key moments for us was realizing how simple it can be to take initiative and organize activities that amplify awareness and inspire collective action. As a small team juggling busy study schedules, we faced multiple challenges throughout the project. Over time, we improved our project management skills. We found solutions for unforeseen circumstances and addressed hiccups during implementation. Collaboration as a student startup proved invaluable, as it allowed us to strengthen our skills and leverage the expertise of others.

Understood the plastic problem on a deeper level

We gained a deeper understanding of how integrated plastic consumption is in our systems. Despite our best efforts to reduce waste and plastic usage, we found it unavoidable in areas such as delivery and packaging.

Project Timeline October and December 2024

From October 8-18, 2024, we organized the "Seen Competition" at Hwa Chong Institution (College) to raise awareness about marine plastic pollution, engaging 687 Year 1 students. Our main activity was the Scavenger Hunt, where ducks with marine plastic pollution facts and event details were hidden around the school. This fun, engaging activity was well-received, with nearly all the ducks found. During the Finale Event, we held an informative session and a Kahoot quiz. While the discussions were less engaging, the quiz and pledge activity resonated well with students. A photo booth added a memorable, interactive element, effectively reinforcing the cause. Overall, the Seen Competition was well-received, with over 83% of participants expressing satisfaction with the activities' effectiveness. Late last year, from December 21-23, 2024, we set up an interactive booth at the bustling Haji Lane to highlight the powerful impact that individual actions can have in the fight against marine plastic pollution. Through sharing personal experiences and insights, we sought to connect with people on a deeper level and show how small, everyday decisions can make a big difference. We thoroughly enjoyed interacting with a diverse group of people. In addition, we distributed 1000 flyers to a wide audience, spreading the message further and encouraging others to take meaningful steps toward a cleaner environment. The flyers contained practical, easy-to-follow actions that individuals could incorporate into their daily routines, from reducing single-use plastics to participating in local clean-up efforts.



Thailand



School Name
Wachirathamsatit School

WT Thailand

@wtth_a
@wtth_a



Suchanan
Prengkhuntod



Seattawut
Wattananont



Achiraya Ponrakarn



Satarat Pankliao



Thailand is a country that produces the 6th highest amount of marine plastic waste in the world, amounting to 2 million tons of plastic waste. We, as Thai people, realize the harm that plastic waste has on the environment and marine animals. Therefore, we intend to create awareness among people about the dangers of plastic waste in the sea and encourage more people to use bio-based packaging, which began with a science project. Apart from that, we also saw a need to add green space to nature. We sincerely hope that the Recover Waste Project will create real change for the environment.

2

Total number of activities implemented

100%

Percent of completion

55

Total number of people reached

2

Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

- Suan Luang Rama IX Park
- Baan Mai Thara Resort

We commend your dedication and hard work on your environmental project. It effectively addressed key microplastic challenges, showcasing both creativity and strong problem-solving skills. Your teamwork and leadership in raising awareness and promoting sustainable practices within your school and local community are truly outstanding. Keep up the excellent work! We look forward to seeing your project grow and inspire others.



School Advisor
Jakkrit Kaewlumhud



School Advisor
Waralee Sinthuwa

Mentor

Ratchakith Dhanyajarath-Bhorn



The fellows showcased strong leadership, resilience, and commitment, overcoming challenges and achieving impactful project outcomes. Their participation in AJYELN was a key milestone in becoming proactive environmental leaders. The experience will benefit their communities and future endeavors. My gratitude is also extended to the supervisors for their invaluable support.

Achievements

Activity #1

Papermaking Workshop Using Sugarcane Bagasse

Project Timeline
October 18, 2024 and November 11, 2024

This project aimed to increase awareness of plastic pollution, particularly its impact on the ocean, while presenting biodegradable alternatives as a solution. Participants were encouraged to adopt responsible behaviors, advocate for environmental change, and explore sustainable packaging options.

Key Takeaways

Learned how to plan a sustainable craft session

Through an informative presentation by AJYELN fellows, participants learned about the negative effects of plastic pollution on marine life and ecosystems. The session introduced biodegradable packaging as a viable alternative, and participants engaged in hands-on activities such as designing and crafting items from bagasse paper. This interactive approach fostered creativity, knowledge-sharing, and environmental awareness. A key challenge was ensuring the availability of sufficient bagasse paper for all participants. Additionally, scheduling the workshop at a time convenient for students was necessary to maximize engagement.



Activity #2

Mangrove Planting Activity

Project Timeline
November 30, 2024

This activity focused on raising awareness of plastic waste pollution and its effects on mangrove ecosystems through mangrove seed planting. Mangroves play a vital role in preventing coastal erosion and supporting biodiversity.

Key Takeaways

Facilitated a hands-on planting experience

Participants developed a deeper understanding of how plastic waste affects mangrove forests, which serve as natural filters preventing ocean pollution. They explored the diverse species that depend on mangroves and learned about various conservation methods. A key aspect of the activity was the hands-on experience of planting mangroves, which helped participants connect with nature and gain practical knowledge about environmental restoration. Challenges included selecting only 20 participants from over 100 interested students and coordinating communication with those chosen to ensure smooth participation.



Vietnam



School Name
 Nguyen Chi Thanh High School; Nguyen Thi Minh Khai High School; Nguyen Thuong Hien High School, Minh Duc High School

The Better S



Nguyen San Polang



Duong Gia Bao



Phan Thuy Binh



Nguyen Tan Tri Nguyen



Ahoy, matey! We're The Better S—a team of pirates sailing to the legendary treasure that has been lost to time, to find something shiny, perhaps? Whatever the treasure is, we wish for fair winds and following seas, and may our compass point you toward a future where the sea isn't contaminated with microplastics!

We and our hearties want to educate and shed light on plastic pollution and raise awareness about the menacing threat of microplastics to our health and nature. Furthermore, our crew will hunt down the invasive plastic pieces with the help of other sailing and adventurous crews.

We believe that the world deserves better. It saddens us that very few people perceive the danger of microplastics. Matey, everyone must acknowledge that they are in our bodies! So heave ho, set sail with us on this adventurous journey to tackle the plastic invaders!



3

Total number of activities implemented

100%

Percent of completion

3400

Total number of people reached

2

Total number of collaborating organizations and the name of organizations

- CHOICE
- UPGREEN Viet Nam

The AJYELN program was very interesting and useful for young people to raise awareness about environmental protection and spread their spirit to their respective communities. I found the enthusiasm of the AJYELN fellows from the ASEAN countries and Japan very impressive. I appreciate the benefits that AJYELN brings to communities and the environment and hope that all AJYELN fellows will have a reunion sometime. – Ms. To Thi Hai



School Advisor
 Ha Phan Kim Nguyet



School Advisor
 To Thi Hai

Mentor

Nam Anh (Eric) Tran



Through their collaborations with local environmental organizations, The Better S was able to reach an impressive number of people and educate them on the adverse impact of single-use plastics on the environment and human health. As the team's mentor, I appreciate their steadfast commitment to turning plastic recycling into something enjoyable. I look forward to seeing the team, with their dedication and creativity, continue to positively influence their communities and help alleviate the plastic pollution crisis!

Achievements

Activity #1

Plastic “Rehab” Camp

Project Timeline
November 15-17, 2024

From November 15-17, 2024, The Better S team, together with CHOICE and UPGREEN Viet Nam, organized the Plastic “Rehab” Camp at AEON MALL Tan Phu, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. The three-day event attracted nearly 3200 participants, almost 1000 of whom signed the pledge to quit single-use plastics after taking part in the activities.

Key Takeaways

Gained a better understanding of the plastic pollution problem

Participants gained a better understanding of microplastics and their harmful effects through information boards prepared by CHOICE, UPGREEN Viet Nam, and AJYELN fellows. The program emphasized awareness about how plastic pollution harms humans and the environment.

Learned practical tips to lessen plastic pollution

Participants were also encouraged to change behaviors and learn alternative solutions to the use of plastic products. Participants, especially children, also realized that their common plastic products could contribute significantly to plastic pollution. Thus, they learned that they could reuse the plastic waste being thrown away every day by crafting and repurposing them as useful and fun products. The program introduced participants to practical ways to tackle plastic pollution, equipping them with valuable alternative solutions.



Activity #2

A Healing XMas Workshop

Project Timeline
November 15-17, 2024

“A Healing XMas Workshop” is a one-day mass workshop event that took place at Nguyen Chi Thanh High School, Ho Chi Minh City, on December 28, 2024. The event was a collaboration between The Better S and NCT English Club, and was Christmas and Harry Potter-themed to attract high schoolers. Over 80 students participated in the 4-hour event.

There were four workshop stations in total and The Better S was in charge of two workshops: Transfiguration and Owlery. Transfiguration involved repurposing plastics from water bottles into customizable keychains or bracelets, while the Owlery workshop taught students how to use old unused papers collected around the area to make DIY cards for gifting.

Key Takeaways

Learned upcycling and repurposing skills

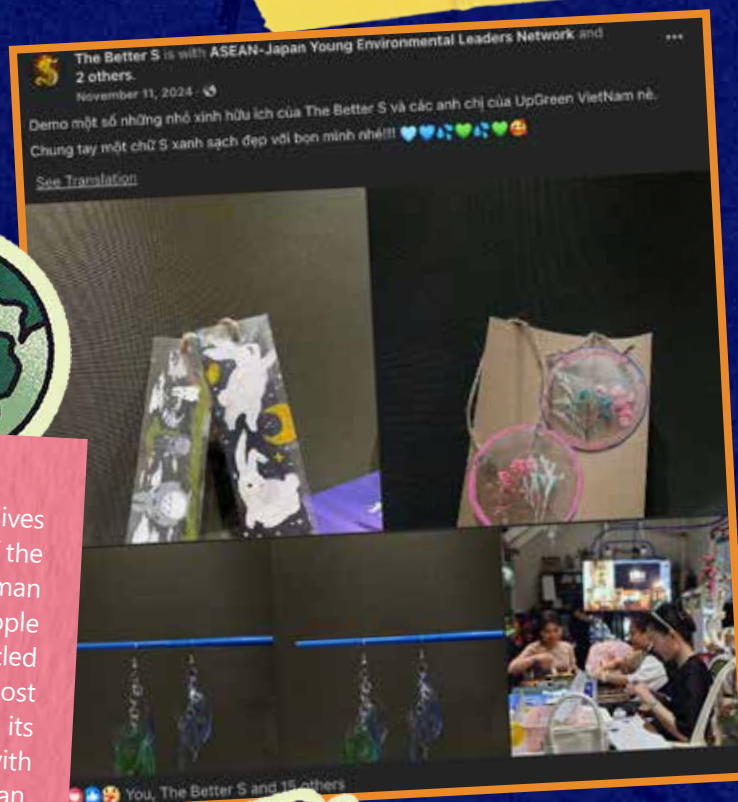
Participants gained a better understanding of microplastics and their harmful effects through information boards prepared by AJYELN fellows. The workshop introduced participants to practical ways to tackle plastic pollution, equipping them with valuable alternative solutions such as upcycling and repurposing.



Activity #3

'The Better S' Facebook Page

Project Timeline
November 15-17, 2024



'The Better S' Facebook page gives people a better understanding of the impact of microplastics on human life. It is aimed at helping people understand more about recycled plastic products, bringing the most useful knowledge of plastics to its audience. The AJYELN fellows, with the help of a volunteer, Thai Gia Han, created original hand-drawn visuals to appeal to younger audiences.

The page was able to reach people and make the project events visible to the public. Through the page, the team was able to receive feedback from participants to make improvements to subsequent events.



We also give special thanks to:

- ASEAN Secretariat
- Japan Ministry of Environment
- Brunei Ministry of Education STEP Centre
- Cambodia Ministry of Environment
- Indonesia The Ministry of Environment and Forestry
- Lao PDR Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
- Malaysia Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change
- Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Environment Management Bureau
- East Asia Research Institute – Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris (ERIA-RKCPD)
- ASEAN-Youth Organization (AYO)



Reflections



Brunei Darussalam

**Overcoming challenges:
Time management, multitasking,
and public speaking**

While planning the project and managing all the factors accounting toward the project, it was natural for us to want to attain as much as we could with the few resources we had. But once we had the whole plan mapped out, it was our responsibility to learn how to manage it in a way where some projects had to be compromised for the best impact. Some projects also needed adjustments due to their low feasibility for the time being. This required us to be flexible and adaptable to the change, brainstorming for alternatives to fix the issue but still reach the goal. In the end, we decided to reduce the scale of our project and decided to go for many smaller projects that we could manage with the limited time we had.

Communicating our project to stakeholders and peers is another thing. A large audience can sometimes be intimidating, but AJYELN has given us the opportunity to level up our public speaking skills, starting with sharing ideas and thoughts during the Leadership and Project Management training in Jakarta. From there, we tried to bravely share our opinions at any opportunity.



Reflections



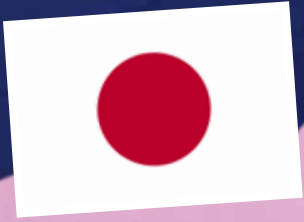
Indonesia

**Adapting to challenges
through open communication**

The Indonesia AJYELN fellows encountered various challenges throughout their projects, ranging from miscommunication and poor time management to project setbacks because of the complexity of environmental issues. Balancing fellowship responsibilities with academic commitments proved to be particularly difficult for some members. Within Eco4Shore, although structured to-do lists had been in place, unforeseen circumstances, such as scheduling conflicts or the unavailability of collaborators, often led to delays. These setbacks affected motivation and productivity, while the extensive planning and physical work required for project implementation left members feeling drained. To address these challenges, the team prioritized adaptability, adjusting their plans as needed to maintain productivity. For instance, when a scheduled socialization event was postponed, they utilized the extra time to engage with potential collaborators, which later facilitated a smoother execution of activities. Open communication and teamwork were essential in overcoming these difficulties. Regular evaluations enabled the team to reflect on their progress, identify areas for improvement, and devise strategies for future challenges. Additionally, support from mentors provided valuable guidance and motivation. To manage exhaustion and prevent burnout, members ensured that they encouraged one another and took necessary breaks before resuming their work. By fostering a supportive environment and maintaining a positive mindset, the team was able to navigate obstacles effectively. Through these experiences, the fellows gained valuable insights into the importance of adaptability, collaboration, and well-being, ultimately enhancing the impact of their projects.



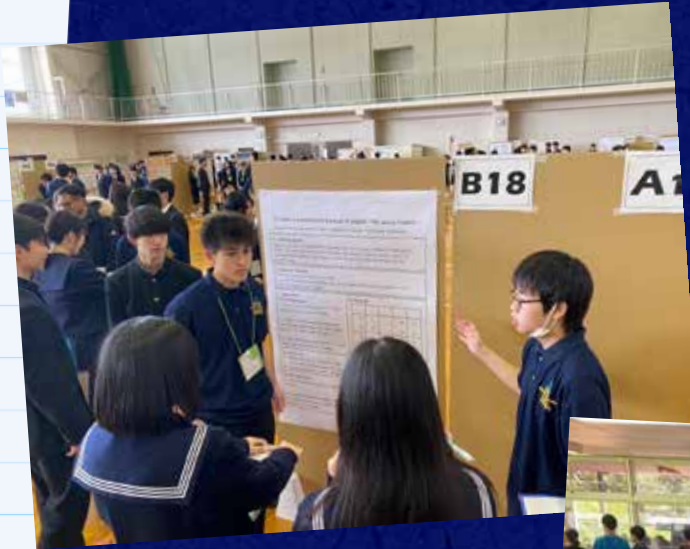
Reflections



Japan

Overcoming communication barriers through teamwork

There were challenges, such as delays in the experimental plan to make casein plastic, not being able to balance our school and AJYELN activities, and having to communicate in unfamiliar English with foreign people. We were able to overcome these challenges by discussing and cooperating with my supervisor and teammates. It was very difficult, but it was a good learning experience for us.



Reflections



Malaysia

Managing responsibilities through well-planned project strategies



One of our biggest challenges during the AJYELN program was managing time effectively while balancing multiple responsibilities. The demanding workload, coupled with academic commitments, created significant pressure, especially because of overlapping deadlines. Program management, participant coordination, and the compilation of comprehensive reports—such as financial, activity, and impact reports—added to the complexity.

To address these challenges, we adopted a structured approach centered on teamwork, strategic planning, and effective delegation. Collaborating with a dedicated team allowed us to distribute tasks efficiently, leveraging each member's strengths under the guidance of our mentor and teacher. We also engaged student volunteers to support key activities like workshops and beach clean-ups, expanding our capacity. Regular meetings ensured clear communication, progress tracking, and issue resolution, helping us stay aligned and responsive.

Recognizing the constraints of time and resources, we embraced a realistic approach by simplifying our initial goals and focusing on the most impactful aspects of our program. This 'simplicity is best' mindset enabled us to deliver meaningful outcomes despite the challenges. Additionally, balancing AJYELN responsibilities with our final-year studies was particularly demanding as we prepared for national exams in December. To manage this, we created a well-structured timetable, allowing us to allocate time for both AJYELN activities and academic commitments. Our teachers were supportive, and we took the initiative to catch up on missed lessons independently.

Ultimately, this experience honed our project management, time management, and teamwork skills, demonstrating the importance of strategic planning, adaptability, and collaboration in overcoming challenges.

Reflections

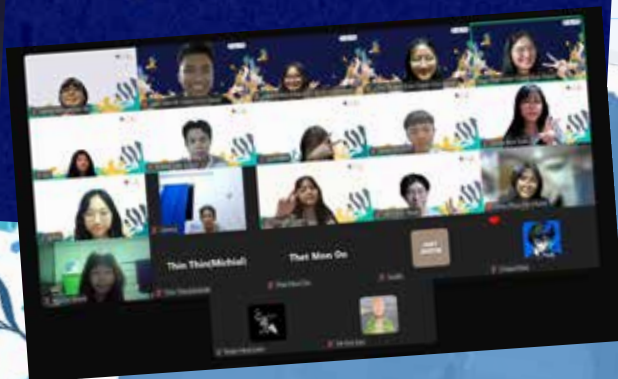


Myanmar

**Mastering collaboration
to foster project success**

As Myanmar delegates, we faced many challenges during the project's implementation. One major challenge we personally encountered was the limited pre-seed funding, which was insufficient for the overall project execution. In addition, balancing schoolwork and project implementation was one of the challenges we faced as AJYELN fellows. Additionally, our team members were not from the same school and place, hence, it was quite challenging to implement on-ground activities. During the project, we had difficulty figuring out how to express our ideas clearly and actually bring them to life. Since it was our first time having experienced such a kind of project management, we often found ourselves second-guessing if our ideas would work or connect with others. There were times when we weren't sure if we were doing enough or contributing the right way. Even though we didn't always feel confident, learning more about the issues we were working on and having our teammates with us helped a lot.

To overcome these challenges, we tried to keep ourselves educated both on the issue and on managing a project, which helped us feel more confident in our decisions. We managed to communicate well with our team and completed the activities successfully with the help of volunteers. We also mastered managing and leveraging time well so that the project would have little effect on our schoolwork. We successfully overcame the financial challenge through the generous venue and additional material sponsorship from our school Hinthar Education.



Reflections



Philippines

**No one was left to figure
things out alone**



As Philippine Science High School scholars, the biggest challenge we faced was implementing projects and achieving goals on time due to everyone's responsibilities and time-management issues. As student leaders, balancing academic demands, extracurricular activities, and project work was difficult. Organizing with numerous stakeholders and partner organizations was challenging due to differing priorities, requiring patience, clarity, and a steady hand. Adaptability was crucial, as we constantly changed plans to find the best outcomes. We tackled challenges head-on, fulfilling all requirements. Effective time management, breaking tasks into manageable steps, and open communication with our team were key strategies. This approach helped us stay organized and avoid burnout. The process became smoother once roles were clearly defined, tasks were prioritized, and unnecessary steps were eliminated. Instead of getting lost in chaos, we focused on what moved the work forward. The bigger picture kept us grounded, and quick but thoughtful decisions kept things moving, ensuring no one was left to figure things out alone.

Reflections



Singapore

Overcoming time constraints in team collaboration

One of the biggest challenges our team faced was a lack of time for meetings and discussions. Throughout the school year, we all had busy schedules, and frequent clashes made it difficult to coordinate a fixed time for planning. Balancing our academic workload with project responsibilities proved to be a struggle, often delaying decision-making and activity implementation. Without regular face-to-face discussions, ensuring smooth communication and alignment on our goals became increasingly challenging.

To address this issue, we adopted a more flexible approach. Recognizing the difficulty of in-person meetings, we committed to setting aside time each week for discussions, even if they had to be held virtually. When schedules prevented us from meeting together, we utilized online platforms to communicate, keeping our discussions active over a few days until we reached a consensus. While this required more time and effort, it allowed us to collaborate effectively despite our conflicting schedules. Additionally, we improved our planning process by setting clearer timelines and responsibilities, ensuring that each team member stayed informed and engaged.

Despite these challenges, we are proud of our accomplishments. Our ability to adapt and find alternative solutions enabled us to successfully implement activities that benefited both our school and the public. This experience reinforced the importance of flexibility, time management, and teamwork, showing us that even with constraints, a dedicated and well-coordinated team can achieve great results.



Reflections



Thailand

Navigating project obstacles through team support

As AJYELN fellows, we faced several challenges throughout the program. Many found teamwork and communication to be a significant adjustment, as they had to collaborate with new people and work effectively in a group setting. The necessity of using English for communication was another common challenge, as it required them to step out of their comfort zones and interact with diverse individuals. Additionally, financial management was a concern for some of us, as we needed to allocate their budgets wisely to organize their activities. Despite these difficulties, we embraced the challenges and sought ways to overcome them.

Support from teammates played a crucial role in helping fellows navigate obstacles. Having a strong and encouraging group made it easier to solve problems and adapt to the program's requirements. We also gained confidence in using English through the encouragement and appreciation of their peers, which motivated them to communicate more confidently. To manage financial challenges, the fellows chose to cut down on unnecessary expenses to ensure they organize all proposed activities. Time management was another strategy used to stay organized, with some prioritizing their tasks in the morning to avoid being late. These solutions helped them overcome their struggles and maximize their experience in AJYELN.



Reflections



Vietnam

Curbing project challenges with interpersonal skills

I struggled with juggling project activities and schoolwork. The challenges that AJYELN brought, however, helped me improve myself, especially my time management skills. I was also able to boost my teamwork skills and learn how to communicate effectively, which will definitely be useful in the future.



Fellow's Testimonials



Brunei Darussalam

I really liked the fact that we were all able to connect with each other through a common problem in our countries. I especially enjoyed the visit to the ASEAN Secretariat as it was really insightful on how policies are to be implemented in a country effectively. I also learnt more about how to make projects more realistic and achievable, rather than just going for the biggest goal and later realizing we don't have the resources to achieve it.

Hridya Anna Panackal

I enjoyed spending time with friends trying to implement our projects. This program also helped me realize a lot of new things I didn't previously know and helped me understand how to tackle them.

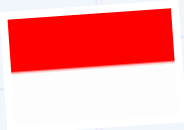
Aaron John Leo Nereparambil

I particularly enjoyed the parts where we faced difficulties in implementing our proposed projects because this made us work together and brainstorm in order to overcome the issue. This program also helped me realize that becoming proactive in the conservation of the environment is not only reserved for the leaders of society but also the key members like the youth.

Aiden Paul Leo Nereparambil

I loved and appreciated that in the AJYELN program, no question is unacceptable to ask, and no answer is wrong or right. This provided a free space for me and the fellows to share our thoughts and opinions. It felt comfortable and accepting, inducing our participation in finding a solution. I also loved how passionate the other fellows are in this journey and project, as well as just how friendly they are. I can say the same for the organizers and managers who were absolutely hospitable.

Angelina Lau Eng Oi



Indonesia

Through the AJYELN program, I have become someone who not only observes others who care for the environment and makes individual efforts but also someone who actively takes part in making a better future. I enhanced my leadership and critical thinking skills during this program because of various kinds of situations.

Nathania Karina Anggraini

I learned so many things about the environment. This program made me realize that the youth can make a big outcome for our environment.

Ni Wayan Dina Wiantari

This program showed me that young people can start and run an organization with effort and dedication. I felt this myself as part of our organization, learning to manage projects and help reduce waste and be more aware of marine plastic pollution.

Johanna Gracia Sunarno

AJYELN has provided me with valuable hands-on experience in tackling environmental issues, especially plastic pollution. It has widened my perspective and provided a strong foundation for my future endeavors in sustainability. I am grateful for the mentorship and guidance I have received from this program, which has been influential in how I learned how to run an environmental organization effectively.

Vanessa Lee

Fellow's Testimonials



Japan

I had the experience of making a step-by-step plan by the deadline. Also, talking with foreign people was fun. These experiences can be useful in my life.

Koji Nagahama

AJYELN surprised me because I had not been aware of how overseas countries acted to solve marine plastic problems. I enjoyed finding out about the activities of overseas countries.

Yuto Yamahata



Malaysia

The program's comprehensive structure greatly enhanced my project management skills and fostered my growth into a responsible leader. Its commitment to a noble cause was truly inspiring. I had the opportunity to engage with youths from various countries and network with esteemed professionals in the environmental industry. This experience boosted my confidence, enabling me to advocate passionately for my beliefs while refining my attention to detail.

Nur Intessar

I loved the leadership training in Jakarta because I got to meet many new people, the delegates from other countries, as well as gain insights from professionals. AJYELN expanded my network, boosted my leadership skills, and strengthened my passion for environmental advocacy. Organizing the ASEAN Eagles Beach Revival 2024 was a major milestone, and the Jakarta trip deepened my understanding of regional policies. It also enhanced my public speaking and project management skills, which will benefit my podcast and future goals.

Diya Aretha

The AJYELN program has been a transformative journey, strengthening my dedication to environmental advocacy and global citizenship. The shared enthusiasm and unwavering support among participants, especially during training in Jakarta, were truly inspiring. I gained valuable skills in project execution, integrity, and time management while connecting with a passionate, diverse community. This experience has reshaped my perspectives, deepened my commitment to ocean conservation, and opened new opportunities to make a meaningful impact. The friendships and mentorships formed are invaluable treasures that will continue to inspire me on this journey.

Aina Zulaikha

Fellow's Testimonials



Myanmar

There are numerous aspects of the AJYELN program that I found enjoyable. For example, having attended the leadership training in person in Jakarta, Indonesia. The experience has allowed me to connect with fellows from other countries, cultivating a sense of community in tackling the urgent issue of marine plastic pollution. This program has benefited me profoundly; not only did it widen my knowledge and perspectives on marine plastic pollution, but it also enhanced my personal qualities, such as communication and collaborative skills.

Cho Theint Zun

I truly appreciated how the ASEAN-Japan Centre cared for each fellow, supervisor, and mentor, which motivated us to work even harder on our respective projects. It was truly a great experience. AJYELN provided us with hands-on experience to observe the marine plastic problem in our community and gave us the opportunity to take action as youth.

Wai Hin Pe

One of the things I enjoyed most as an AJYELN fellow was the autonomy to take on new responsibilities and explore creative approaches in a supportive and flexible environment. I had the freedom to experiment, apply my skills, and push myself to learn more while working on an important issue. Being part of this program also made me feel like I was invited to be part of a larger movement. Connecting with fellows from other countries helped me see how we are all working toward a shared vision, yet each of us has our own approach to fit the different conditions of our communities. AJYELN gave me the push I needed to step out of my comfort zone and try things I didn't have the confidence to do before. While working on the project with my team, I learned how to collaborate and understand different work styles, and the experiences I gained along the way have made me more confident in taking initiative. I feel better prepared now to work on future projects and more motivated to connect with people to continue the momentum.

Han Thar Htet



Philippines

I really enjoyed the training in Jakarta, particularly listening to the speakers and interacting with fellows who have the same goals and aspirations for a better world. This program helped me become more immersed in real-life situations that I used to only see in shows and the news. Most especially in our project implementation, I was able to get in touch with the fisherfolks and see how they live and how plastic pollution has impacted them throughout the years.

Rex Angelo T. Monreal

I enjoyed having to engage with the communities we reached out to. It impacted me as I learned to be more patient.

Maeve Dizon

I particularly enjoyed engaging with fisherfolk communities and witnessing the real-world impact of our advocacy. Collaborating with youth from different regions deepened my passion for environmental action. AJYELN expanded my leadership and advocacy skills, strengthened my commitment to environmental causes, and built my confidence to engage with diverse communities and stakeholders.

Mark Russell Lagunsad

I greatly appreciate how my community work and friends from AJYELN have made environmental advocacy feel tangible. My future as an environmental defender will be deeply shaped by my experiences as an AJYELN fellow. This program provided me with knowledge, a supportive network, confidence, and a critical perspective on sustainability and environmental justice. It has connected me with passionate individuals, reminding me that this fight is never one we take on alone.

Jana Sofia Hupp

Fellow's Testimonials



Singapore

I really enjoyed learning about the projects led by fellows from other countries. It was inspiring to see how different communities tackled environmental challenges in their own ways. Through these discussions, I also learned valuable strategies for combating marine plastic pollution.

Lee Yan Yi Celeste

The AJYELN program empowered me to turn my passion for sustainability into action. Instead of focusing solely on personal efforts, I collaborated with my team to educate the public on marine plastic pollution. This experience taught me the importance of taking initiative and using available resources to create real impact. Without AJYELN, my ideas would have remained just that—ideas.

Teo Yi Ting Joy

Being able to give back to the Singapore community and the environment was a really fulfilling experience. Along the way, I also learned the importance of having backup plans. This experience taught me to stay flexible and think ahead, which will help me in future projects and initiatives.

Radiance Tan



Vietnam

I particularly liked the Leadership & Project Management training in Jakarta, which gave me the opportunity to meet new friends from other countries. After participating in the training, I found that my peers were very talented and that there was a lot I could learn from them. I've tried to improve myself day by day since then. This is the most significant impact AJYELN has left on me.

Phan Thuy Binh



Thailand

I enjoyed participating in activities with friends and exploring new places. I also learned good speaking skills and gained knowledge about global environmental issues and solutions.

Achiraya Ponrakarn

I enjoyed making new friends. I learned about various environmental problems and solutions based on the examples presented in the project.

Satarat Pankliao

I enjoyed leadership training activities, which helped me in meeting people, managing activities, and practicing leadership and teamwork skills.

Seattawut Wattananont

I enjoyed meeting new people, experiencing different communities, and trying delicious food. I also learned about the folk culture of other countries and improved my English skills.

Suchanan Prengkhuntod

2025 AJYELN2.0 Applications Now Open!

Are you ready to embark on a journey with us?

We are on the lookout for young individuals
to champion this year's project theme:

"Innovative Actions, Sustainable Progress".

Who we're seeking:

- Self-driven youth aged 18-25 y/o.
- Team of 2-4
- Citizen of ASEAN member states or Japan.
- Proficient in conversational English.
- Exhibit a strong interest or background in environmental and social engagement work.

Thematic focus

1. Marine plastic waste
2. Plastic pollution
3. Waste & wastewater management
4. Circular economy

Project Scope

1. Community engagement
2. Awareness initiatives
3. Building environmental capacity of the youth collaborative projects

Why Join Us?

- Receive seed money to implement your environmental projects that relate to the proposed themes!
- Connect with young environmental leaders in ASEAN and Japan.
- Receive guidance on implementing your environmental projects.
- Enhance your leadership and management skills through professional training.

Key Application Dates:

Application Start: **1 April 2025**
Application Deadline: **15 May 2025**
Announcement of shortlisted candidates: **30 May 2025**
Interviews: **June 2025**
Announcement of selection: **30 June 2025**

Project Timeline

Online training (self-paced): **July - August 2025**
In-person training and launch of the fellows (in an ASEAN country)*: **1st or 2nd week of August 2025**
Receipt of seed money and project implementation: **September 2025 to January 2026**
Capstone Symposium: **March 2026**

*Note: Selected applicants must be eligible to travel within ASEAN.

How to Apply:



Register via link: https://bit.ly/join_AJYELN

Complete your application and don't forget to submit all required documents!

Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity!
Apply now and let your journey with AJYELN2.0 begin. #JoinUs
#ApplyNow #AJC #AJYELN

Follow us on social media for real-time updates.

@ajyeln

ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network



ASEAN-JAPAN
CENTRE

ASEAN Promotion Centre on Trade, Investment and Tourism

