



ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network 2.0

"Innovative Actions, Sustainable Progress"

2025

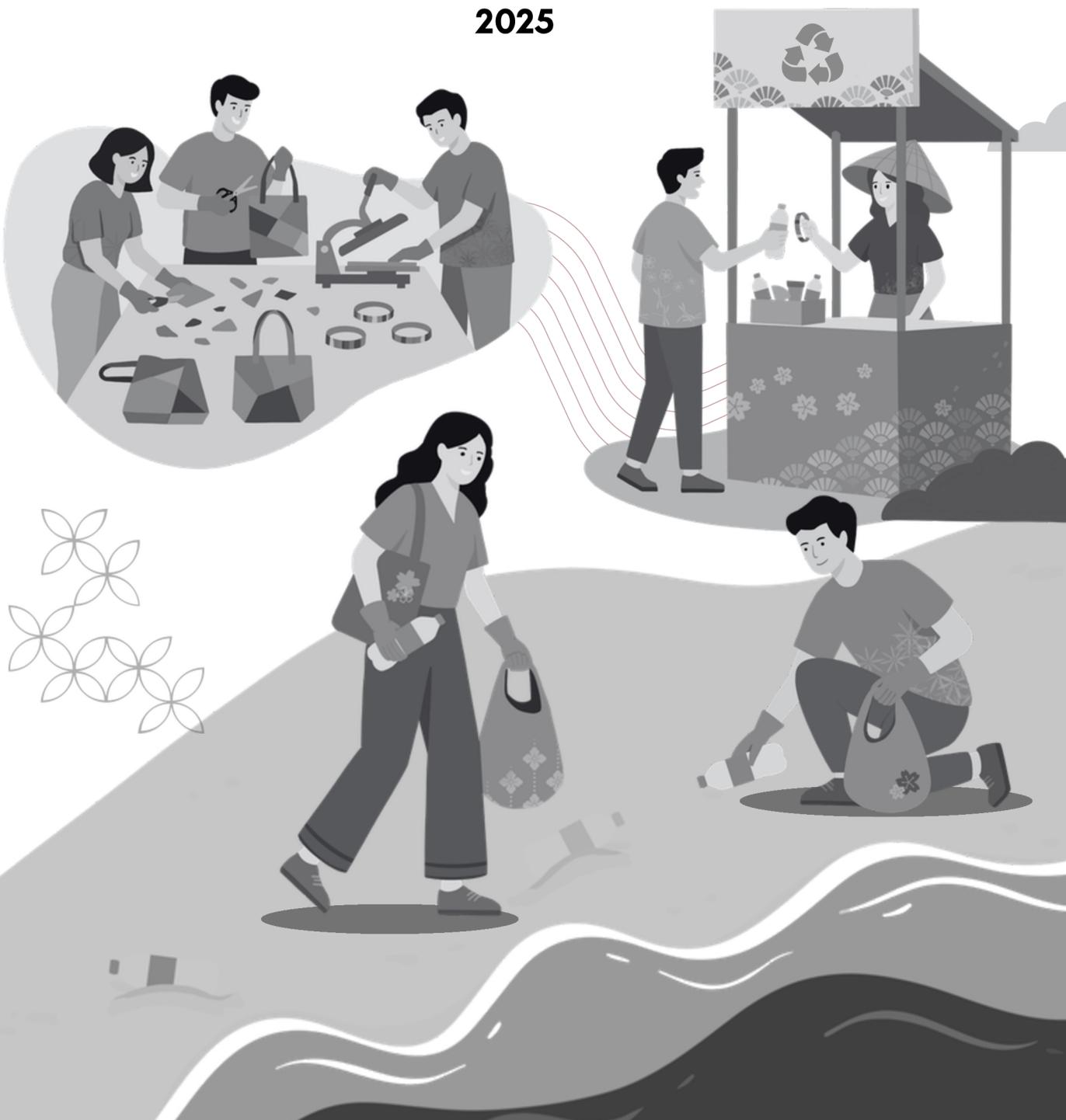




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"Innovative Actions, Sustainable Progress"

2025



Edited by Katrina Navallo, Programme Manager, ASEAN-Japan Centre
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Acknowledgments:

ASEAN-Japan Centre Research & Policy Advocacy Cluster

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- Lao PDR Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
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Foreword

Dr. Kunihiro Hirabayashi
Secretary General, ASEAN-Japan Centre



It is with deep appreciation and renewed optimism that I introduce the 2025 ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders' Network (AJYELN) Storybook. This publication captures the journeys, insights, and actions of a new generation of youth leaders who are translating environmental awareness into tangible community impact across ASEAN and Japan.

In 2025, AJYELN brought together 34 exceptional young leaders from the ten ASEAN Member States and Japan, selected through a competitive process to design and implement community-based initiatives addressing plastic pollution. Equipped with leadership training, mentoring, and seed funding, these fellows carried out 57 activities across the region, reaching more than 12,000 people and engaging 64 local partner organizations. Their initiatives ranged from school workshops and community clean-ups to inclusive upcycling programmes, brand audits, and innovative awareness campaigns tailored to local contexts. Together, they mobilized youth, strengthened community participation, and collected over three tonnes of plastic waste—demonstrating that youth-led action can generate measurable environmental outcomes.

Beyond numbers, AJYELN is fundamentally about empowering young people as agents of change today. The fellows' stories in this book illustrate how cross-border collaboration, mentorship, and grassroots action can foster environmental stewardship and deepen ASEAN-Japan cooperation. Their growing network—now reaching more than 65,000 people through digital platforms—reflects the expanding influence of youth voices in shaping sustainable practices and policy conversations in our region.

I am reminded once again that meaningful progress is achieved not through declarations alone, but through consistent and collective action. The AJYELN fellows have shown that when young people are trusted, supported, and connected, they can lead with creativity, inclusivity, and purpose. Their experiences and reflections in this storybook stand as a testament to the power of youth diplomacy, innovation, and community engagement in addressing the plastic pollution challenge. As we move forward, I hope this storybook will inspire more young people, institutions, and communities to join this journey toward a cleaner, more sustainable future. Let us continue to empower youth leaders, strengthen ASEAN-Japan partnerships, and translate our shared commitments into concrete actions that benefit both people and the planet.

Special Message

H. E. San Lwin

Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN
for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community



On behalf of the Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, I warmly welcome you to the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) Storybook 2025. Congratulations to all 2025 AJYELN fellows for your dedication, creativity, and leadership in addressing environmental challenges across the region. Your efforts in responsible waste management, raising awareness of plastic pollution, and mobilising local communities demonstrate the shared commitment of ASEAN and Japan to a cleaner, more sustainable future.

The strategic partnership between ASEAN and Japan, established in 1973, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2023. The Joint Statement on the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP), adopted at the 26th ASEAN-Japan Summit, and the Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation “Trusted Partners” both recognize the important role of youth in ASEAN-Japan relations and in addressing challenges such as environmental protection and climate change.

Youth comprise about one-third of ASEAN’s population, forming the largest generation in the region’s history, with numbers projected to exceed 220 million by 2038. As future leaders, change-makers, and innovators, ASEAN youth are a vital asset and a source of hope. It is essential to offer meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute ideas, develop solutions, and influence policies that shape their lives.

AJYELN has supported the shared commitments of ASEAN and Japan under the Joint Statement on the ASEAN-Japan Mutually Beneficial Partnership on Environment and Climate Change for Materializing New Growth, as well as the updated Strategic Program for ASEAN Climate and Environment (SPACE), adopted at the 3rd ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Dialogue on Environment and Climate Change on 4 September 2025 in Langkawi, Malaysia. Youth-led initiatives under AJYELN help translate these regional commitments into community-based action and raise public awareness across ASEAN and Japan.

I commend the ASEAN-Japan Centre for its outstanding efforts to engage and empower the youth of ASEAN and Japan in addressing environmental challenges, including waste, plastic pollution, and climate change. I sincerely thank the Ministry of Environment Japan, ERIA, other partners, and the mentors for your valuable support and guidance. I also request that the ASEAN-Japan Centre and its partners extend their support to Timor-Leste, particularly its youth, as Timor-Leste became the 11th ASEAN member on 26 October 2025 at the 47th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The achievements highlighted in Storybook 2025 show that sustained investment in youth empowerment delivers meaningful benefits for communities and ecosystems throughout the region. I wish the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network 2025 continued success in inspiring young leaders to address environmental challenges across ASEAN. The ASEAN Secretariat remains committed to supporting your efforts as champions of environmental sustainability. Thank you.

Supporting Message

Ms. Keiko OMORI

Director General,
Environment Management Bureau,
Ministry of the Environment Japan



First of all, I would like to express my sincere respect and appreciation to the ASEAN-Japan Centre for its tremendous efforts in bringing this Storybook to publication. Your continued commitment to promote educational awareness and youth empowerment is essential to make a better future. I am deeply encouraged by the steady growth and development of this network.

I would also like to celebrate the achievement of young environmental leaders for turning your creative ideas into actions for addressing plastic pollution. The fact that 34 Fellows selected from the 10 ASEAN Member States and Japan implemented 57 activities and impacted approximately 12,300 people represents an achievement of great significance.

The diverse initiatives—ranging from workshops and clean-up activities to upcycling projects or community awareness campaigns among others—are not merely a collection of individual efforts, but rather the result of accumulated learning and collaboration among the Fellows. While addressing the specific challenges of their respective communities, they also strengthened the quality and reach of their activities by sharing knowledge and insights across the network.

Plastic pollution, particularly marine plastic pollution, remains one of the most serious global environmental issues today. It is crucial that action be taken now to avoid irreversible consequences. ASEAN and Japan are both seriously affected by marine plastic pollution so that we have discussed this issue in various opportunities. Its resolution requires precisely the kind of cross-border collaboration demonstrated by this network. Addressing the issue comprehensively across the entire life cycle of plastics demands coordinated action among diverse stakeholders. The outcomes embodied by the youth within this network serve as a powerful instrument of such cooperation. I am confident that the cross-border trust and solidarity fostered through this network in this region will carry lasting significance into the future.

I would like to express my deepest respect to all the Fellows who engaged in dialogue under challenging circumstances, took on shared challenges, and produced meaningful results. I sincerely hope that these experiences will further develop into leadership that contributes not only to their local communities but also to the broader international community. I wish you all continued success in your important endeavors.

Supporting Message

Mr. Reo Kawamura

Director, ERIA Regional Knowledge Center for Marine Plastic Debris



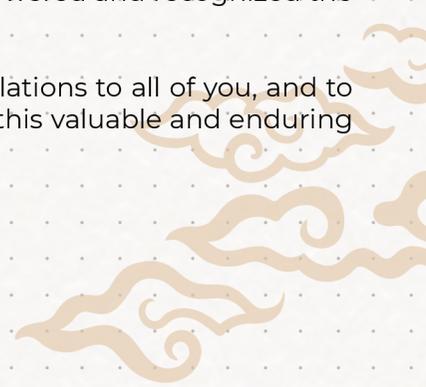
On behalf of the Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris team of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the youth cohort of the ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders' Network (AJYELN) 2025.

In 2025, the collaboration between the ASEAN Japan Centre (AJC) and ERIA marked its third consecutive year. We have witnessed the journey from the 2023 Eco School Programme to the 2024–2025 AJYELN Programme, which has grown into a platform characterized by active youth leadership, meaningful engagement, and impactful initiatives. We are truly honored to serve as one of the supporting organizations in this important endeavor.

Following the successful Environmental Leadership and Project Management Training Programme conducted for ASEAN and Japanese youth in 2024, last year's training was designed to be more technically rigorous—reflecting the growing experience, confidence, and maturity of the new cohort. Throughout the sessions, participants demonstrated strong enthusiasm and a deep commitment to combating plastic pollution, as seen in their active engagement and thoughtful contributions. Their passion renewed our hope that the younger generation will continue to lead coordinated and innovative solutions to address plastic waste challenges in the years ahead.

After the three-day training session in Jakarta, Indonesia, the 34 fellows of the AJYELN 2025 Programme organized an impressive 57 activities, reaching 12,305 people across the region. We hope that through these initiatives, alongside the meaningful friendships forged with fellow young leaders from different countries, you have felt empowered and recognized the influence you possess to shape a more sustainable future.

In closing, I would like once again to offer my heartfelt congratulations to all of you, and to express our sincere appreciation to the ASEAN Japan Centre for this valuable and enduring collaboration.



Supporting Message

Ms. Sarah Rauzana

Chairperson, ASEAN Youth Organization



Plastic pollution is one of the defining challenges of our generation. Across Southeast Asia, millions of tonnes of plastic waste continue to threaten our oceans, communities, and future. Addressing this crisis requires more than isolated projects—it demands systemic change in how we produce, consume, and manage materials. Such transformation cannot happen without young people. Youth are essential drivers of this shift, pushing institutions to be more accountable, accelerating innovation, and ensuring that sustainability becomes embedded in systems.

The ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) stands as a strong example of meaningful youth participation in tackling plastic pollution. Through this program, young people are not positioned as beneficiaries, but as problem solvers—leading change at multiple levels.

Each youth brings a unique role to the movement. Some are actively engaged in international dialogues on the Global Plastic Treaty through processes such as the INC on Global Plastic Treaty, ensuring that grassroots realities are reflected in global discussions. Others are involved in national-level advocacy, influencing policies and strengthening accountability in their respective countries. Some harness technology and innovation to design practical solutions for reducing plastic waste, while others focus on community-based approaches.

AJYELN also reminds us that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Each ASEAN Member State and Japan faces distinct local challenges shaped by culture, geography, and socio-economic contexts. Local problems require local solutions. Yet through collaboration, we can share lessons learned, exchange best practices, and adapt successful approaches to fit our own communities. Our diversity becomes a source of strength, innovation, and collective learning.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the ASEAN-Japan Centre for being a long-time partner of the ASEAN Youth Organization and for consistently investing in young leaders across the region. Your continued support reflects the strength of the partnership between Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Japan—a partnership rooted not only in diplomacy, but in people-to-people collaboration and shared commitment to a more sustainable future.

Together, we reaffirm that when youth are meaningfully empowered, equipped with diverse roles, and connected across borders, transformative change is not only possible—it is already happening.

Supporting Message

Ms. Ashimine Yoriko

Vice President, Climate Youth Japan



It was truly an honor to serve as a mentor in this year's program. First, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the entire AJYELN community — the organizers, facilitators, and especially the students from across ASEAN and Japan. Your dedication, openness, and collaborative spirit made this program not only meaningful, but genuinely inspiring.

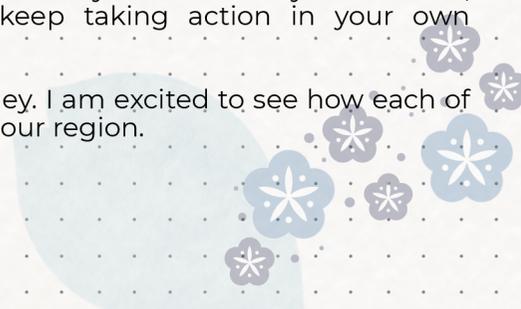
Throughout the sessions, I was impressed by how seriously you engaged with the complexity of marine environmental challenges. You did not treat these issues as abstract global problems, but as real and urgent matters connected to your own communities. The way you combined local knowledge with regional perspectives showed exactly why youth leadership is essential in addressing ocean sustainability.

What stood out most to me was your willingness to learn from one another. AJYELN is not only about building solutions, but about building relationships — across countries, cultures, and disciplines. The thoughtful discussions, the curiosity you showed toward different approaches, and your readiness to refine ideas based on feedback all demonstrated strong leadership potential.

I would also like to share a special word for the Japan team, whom I had the pleasure of supporting more closely. I was deeply encouraged by your approach throughout the program: You consistently asked how your ideas could be implemented in real contexts, while valuing the responsibilities and resources within your own communities. I strongly believe that this attitude — focusing first on the problems in front of you and the resources already in your hands — is the most important starting point for driving wider regional transformation toward a more sustainable world. This is exactly the mindset future environmental leaders need. I hope you continue to grow in confidence, trust your voice, and keep contributing actively to regional conversations.

To all participants, I encourage you to view this program not as a conclusion, but as a starting point. The most important outcome of AJYELN is not only the projects you developed, but the network and perspective you now carry forward. Stay connected, continue exchanging ideas, and most importantly, keep taking action in your own communities.

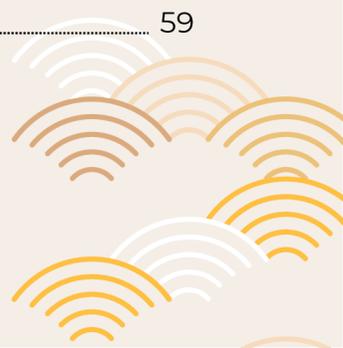
Thank you again for allowing me to be part of this journey. I am excited to see how each of you will shape the future of environmental leadership in our region.





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ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN)

AJYELN2.0: Empowering Youth Innovation for Sustainable Action across ASEAN and Japan.

The ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) is the ASEAN-Japan Centre's flagship youth leadership initiative, designed to empower young people as drivers of environmental action and regional cooperation. It builds on years of outreach and education programmes that sought to raise awareness of marine plastic pollution and foster sustainable behaviors among youth in ASEAN and Japan.

Marine plastic debris has been recognized as a critical regional challenge, prompting ASEAN Member States to adopt key policy frameworks, including the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region (2019) and the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Combating Marine Debris (2021–2025). In response, the Centre initiated youth-focused engagement through the Future Leaders' Declaration on ASEAN-Japan Cooperation for International Marine Plastic Waste in 2020, followed by the ASEAN-Hiroshima Eco-School pilot in 2021 and its regional expansion in 2022, which reached thousands of students with environmental education programmes.

Recognizing the need to move beyond awareness toward youth-led action, AJYELN was launched in 2023 to equip motivated youth with leadership training, mentoring, and seed funding to implement community-based environmental initiatives. Since then, AJYELN fellows have carried out diverse activities across ASEAN and Japan, ranging from education campaigns and clean-ups to innovative upcycling and stakeholder engagement projects.

The 2025 programme theme, "ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network 2.0: Innovative Actions, Sustainable Progress," reflects the programme's evolution from awareness-raising to action-oriented, innovation-driven impact. It highlights the importance of creative, youth-led solutions and sustained community engagement in advancing environmental sustainability.

Looking ahead, AJYELN will deepen its investment in current and former fellows by integrating alumni as mentors, trainers, and advocates, and by providing structured opportunities for their continued leadership development. Over the next three years, the programme will strengthen alumni engagement and expand pathways for youth to contribute to regional environmental initiatives and policy dialogue—positioning AJYELN as a long-term leadership pipeline for ASEAN-Japan environmental cooperation.

This storybook documents the journeys and reflections of the 2025 fellows and marks a key milestone in AJYELN's evolution toward a sustained, intergenerational network of environmental leaders.



2025

accomplishments

34 fellows from Japan & 10 ASEAN Member States

850,000 JPY worth of seed fund

57 marine plastic pollution awareness campaigns and activities

12,305 individuals in the region reached

3,097 kilogram of collected plastic waste

65,300 followers aged 15-35 years old

Country (Province or State)	No. of Fellows	No. of Activity	Total No. of People Reached	No. of Local Partner Organization	Project Completion
Brunei Darussalam (Tutong District)	3	7	153	6	100%
Cambodia (Phnom Penh)	3	3	413	1	100%
Indonesia (Sangsit, Bali)	2	9	1,363	2	100%
Japan (Akita)	4	7	676	5	100%
Lao PDR (Vientiane)	4	3	1,796	1	100%
Malaysia (Bandar Seri Iskandar)	3	5	1,058	14	100%
Myanmar (Yangon)	4	4	425	3	100%
Philippines (Sarangani)	2	16	6,358	31	100%
Singapore (Singapore)	3	2	63	1	100%
Thailand (Bangkok)	4	1	3,000	1	100%
Viet Nam (Ho Chi Minh City)	2	7	2,922	16	100%
TOTAL	34	57	12,305	64	99%

AJYELN 2.0 Journey

The ASEAN–Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN) brings together selected young leaders from all 10 ASEAN Member States and Japan who are committed to tackling the plastic pollution crisis. Initiated and coordinated by the ASEAN–Japan Centre, AJYELN serves as a platform that advances youth-driven initiatives and collaborative solutions to address plastic pollution across the region.



Open Recruitment

March - 31 May 2025

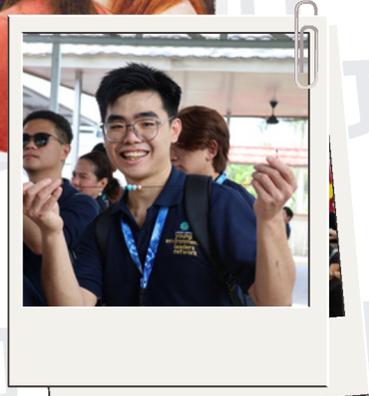
Applicants were assessed on: motivation (20%); scope, outcomes and project impact (30%); project feasibility (30%); and creativity and innovation (20%).

Result: 11 teams (34 fellows) were competitively selected from 50 team applications across the 10 ASEAN Member States and Japan.

Leadership and Project Management Training

11 - 13 August 2025

All 34 fellows completed a three-day, in-person training on environmental leadership and project management in Jakarta, Indonesia. Co-organized with the ASEAN Youth Organization, the training featured marine plastic awareness sessions by the ERIA Regional Knowledge Center on Marine Plastic Debris, dialogues with Permanent Mission of Japan to ASEAN Ambassador Kiya Masahiko, and ASEAN Secretariat Environment Division, as well as a site visit to Kertabumi Recycling Center.



Seed Money

August 2025

In August 2025, each team received their seed funds. A total of JPY 850,000 was utilized to implement 57 fellow-led activities across the region.



Project Implementation

August - December 2025

A total of 57 initiatives were implemented across all 10 ASEAN Member States and Japan. These included leadership workshops and exhibition, river and beach clean-ups, upcycling workshops engaging local communities—including persons with disabilities, a plastic collection hub, among others.



Capstone Summit

7 March 2026

The AJYELN Fellows presented their outcomes in the ASEAN Youth Environmental Diplomacy Summit: Championing Plastic-Free Action in the Philippines in Manila, Philippines. Co-organized with the ASEAN Youth Organization and Break Free From Plastic, the summit served as the culminating platform for youth-led policy dialogue on plastic pollution.



International Visibility



The accomplishments and contributions to regional cooperation of the AJYELN program have been reported as a capacity building activity under the ASEAN-Japan Action Agenda on Plastic Pollution in the following regional working group and environmental meetings:

- **ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Education** on July 2, 2025;
- **19th ASEAN-Japan Dialogue on Environmental Cooperation** on July 30, 2025 in Langkawi, Malaysia;
- **22nd ASEAN+3 Senior Officials Meeting on the Environment** on July 31, 2025 in Langkawi, Malaysia.



Media Coverage

1. AJYELN Brunei Darussalam team was featured on **Borneo Bulletin**: “Youth Leaders join network training in Indonesia” on September 1, 2025
2. AJYELN Philippines team was featured on local news **12 Beat**: “Sarangani Leaders Lead Philippine Delegation at ASEAN-Japan Environmental Leadership Training” on September 1, 2025
3. AJYELN Viet Nam fellow was featured in local news **Giao Duc Thoi Dai**: titled “The mark of integration of Gen Z female students passionate about diplomacy” on September 12, 2025
4. AJYELN Viet Nam fellow was featured in local news **Tuoi Tre**: “Thanh Tú tells the story of her green initiative” on November 20, 2025
5. AJYELN Japan team was featured in local television **Akita TV**: “海と日本 PROJECT in 秋田県: Introducing the Activities of the Akita International University Environmental Club Beach Clean-up Team” on November 23, 2025

Scan for AJYELN
Brunei Darussalam
team's news



Scan for
AJYELN Philippines
team's news



Scan for
AJYELN Viet Nam fellow's news



Scan for
AJYELN Japan
team's news





Brunei Darussalam

Ripple Effect



Muhammad Izzuddin Bin Haji Nor Hisham



Mohammad Nurdhiyuddin Bin Haji Nudin



Mohammad Wafiq Mustaqim Bin Bahrin

DinDin and Friends

@bpy48.satriakesuma

As Bruneians and collaborators from diverse organizations, we are united by a shared concern: plastic pollution is affecting our communities—from our homes to our cities. This growing crisis demands urgent and sustained action. We aim to spark a movement that creates lasting ripples of awareness and responsibility. Our mission is to empower the next generation of Bruneian youth leaders to confront environmental challenges with confidence, creativity, and resolve. By stepping forward today, we seek not only to address the plastic pollution crisis, but to safeguard Brunei’s future—building upon the foundation laid by those who have led before us.

7

Activities implemented

100%

Project completion

153

People reached

6

Local partner organizations

- Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports
- Ministry of Education
- ASEAN Youth Advocates Network (AYAN) Brunei Youth Chapter
- ASEAN Youth Organization (AYO) Brunei Youth Chapter
- Brunei Participating Youth (BPY48) for the 48th Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP)
- Usaha Sitty Delima

Achievements



DinDin and Friends demonstrated strong teamwork and maintained timely, effective communication with various stakeholders throughout the programme. They executed their plan successfully while remaining flexible and adaptable in response to changes or unforeseen challenges. It was a truly rewarding experience working with them. I hope they continue to grow both as individuals and as environmental agents of change, wherever their journey leads them.

Irfan Tsany Rahmawan
Facilitator

#1 Phase 1: Training the Volunteers

5, 12, 19, 26 October 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened youth leadership, advocacy, and sustainability competencies through a four-part masterclass series on Leadership, Advocacy, Sustainability, and Environmental Action. The structured programme guided participants from developing self-awareness and communication skills to crafting advocacy strategies and designing practical solutions to address plastic pollution in Brunei Darussalam.

The workshop series strengthened youth leadership and environmental advocacy through four progressive sessions. The **Leadership Workshop** (BPY48, 48th SSEAYP Brunei team) built confidence and core skills in communication, empathy, and teamwork. The **Advocacy Workshop** (AYAN Brunei Youth Chapter) helped participants translate personal values into social impact through facilitation and public speaking. The **Sustainability Forum** expanded perspectives on entrepreneurship, research, and youth advocacy. The programme culminated in the **"Ideas2Impact EcoLab" Masterclass** (AYO Brunei Youth Chapter and AJYELN 2.0 Fellows), applying Design Thinking and waste audits to develop practical solutions to plastic pollution. Engaging around 17–19 youth participants per session, the series achieved strong participation and high feedback ratings (4.0–4.67/5).



#2 Phase 2: Volunteer-led Workshops

8, 22, 29 November 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened environmental literacy and youth-led action across primary, secondary, and sixth form levels through structured, age-appropriate workshops. Conducted at Keriam Primary School, Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam Secondary School, and Sengkurong Sixth Form Centre, the sessions enhanced students' understanding of plastic pollution, recycling systems, and sustainability, while cultivating critical thinking and solution-oriented leadership among learners aged 8–18.

The workshop series was tailored to each student level, combining age-appropriate learning with action-oriented engagement. Primary students explored plastic pollution and the 3Rs through interactive games and quizzes. Secondary students took part in waste-sorting challenges and upcycling activities to strengthen teamwork and practical skills. Sixth form sessions emphasized systems thinking and solution design through facilitated discussions and a design-thinking sprint. Overall, feedback indicated increased engagement, confidence, and interest in student-led sustainability initiatives.





Reflection

DinDin and Friends

“

Consistency as Commitment: Leadership Through Steady Engagement

Rather than facing major structural or logistical obstacles, my experience in the AJYELN programme was defined by the discipline of sustained commitment. The core challenge was not about overcoming setbacks, but about maintaining consistent engagement—remaining present, responsive, and proactive throughout the programme cycle. This required intentional time management, steady communication with peers, and a continuous willingness to contribute meaningfully to discussions and activities.

At times, adapting to different working styles, schedules, and programme dynamics required flexibility. Instead of resisting these shifts, I chose to “go with the flow,” approaching each situation with openness and trust in the collaborative process. This mindset reduced unnecessary pressure and allowed me to focus on learning and contributing, rather than overanalyzing minor challenges.

Ultimately, the experience reinforced an important leadership principle: not all challenges are dramatic or visible. Leadership is often demonstrated through reliability, steady participation, and sustained commitment. By embracing consistency as a deliberate practice, I grew both personally and professionally while contributing constructively to the AJYELN community.

”



Cambodia

Re-Plastic



Menghorng Kao



Sodalis Sophea



Somnang Chhum



Angkor Warriors



@replastickh

As Cambodians, we witnessed firsthand the growing crisis of plastic pollution, particularly from single-use plastics that endanger our environment, health, and communities. Through our project, “Re-Plastic,” we raise awareness among children in rural areas about these dangers, including the harmful practice of plastic burning. By combining education, community engagement, and creative activities, we aim to nurture informed, responsible youth who will lead lasting environmental change.

3 Activities implemented

100% Project completion

413 People reached

1 Local partner organization

- CamASEAN

Achievements

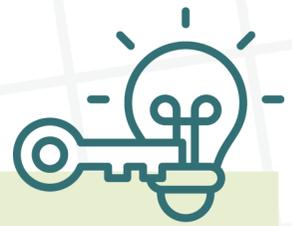
Creativity is a powerful catalyst for inspiring action, and the Angkor Warriors embodied this through their “Re-Plastic” project. Their ability to combine creative thinking with critical analysis has nurtured young minds that will meaningfully contribute to the environmental movement. They demonstrated that challenges are not obstacles, but opportunities to grow, adapt, and return stronger. I am confident that the lessons and skills they gained through this experience will guide them in their future endeavors and continued advocacy.

Jason Orolfo Salvadora
Facilitator



#1 Phase 1: Re-Plastic Workshop

23 November 2025



Key Takeaway

Unlocked youth leadership potential through hands-on, experiential learning: When given space, guidance, and trust, first-time volunteers quickly stepped into leadership roles with confidence and initiative. The experience reinforced that awareness alone is insufficient—sustained engagement and follow-up are essential. Sustainability education proved most impactful when it was practical, collaborative, and engaging, creating genuine learning and lasting inspiration.

The Re-Plastic Workshop was a full-day interactive program that brought together 30 high school and university students in Phnom Penh to explore plastic pollution and practical solutions. Through expert sessions and hands-on activities, participants learned about plastic's environmental impact, experimented with upcycling in fashion and DIY products, and explored social media as a tool for advocacy. Divided into Fashion, DIY, and Digital Campaign teams, they transformed ideas into tangible outputs using recycled materials and storytelling. More than a workshop, the program fostered creativity, leadership, and community, empowering youth to become active changemakers.



#2 Phase 2: Re-Plastic Social Media Campaign

13 November - 31 December 2025



Key Takeaway

Leveraged digital storytelling and marketing to drive environmental action: The experience highlighted that social media, when used strategically, is a powerful tool for education and mobilization—not just entertainment. Youth-led storytelling made environmental messages more authentic, relatable, and impactful, demonstrating how small online actions can trigger meaningful offline change. The campaign also underscored the value of digital marketing in expanding outreach and attracting targeted volunteers and participants.

The Re-Plastic Social Media Campaign ran from 13 November to 31 December 2025, utilizing Facebook and Instagram to raise awareness about single-use plastic pollution. The campaign featured 23 posts, including a four-episode youth-produced storytelling series that followed a character's journey toward understanding plastic waste and adopting sustainable habits.

Through relatable narratives, creative visuals, and youth-driven content, the campaign generated 50,187 total Facebook views. It effectively converted online engagement into offline action, resulting in 70 volunteer applications and strong participation in subsequent Re-Plastic events.



#3 Phase 3: Re-Plastic Exhibition

27 December 2025

Key Takeaway

Demonstrated the impact of youth-led, hands-on solutions in advancing environmental action: The Re-Plastic Exhibition showed that when young people are given a platform—through digital campaigns, DIY creations, or fashion upcycling—their creativity inspires others to act. It reinforced that sustainability education is most effective through practical engagement and peer learning, and that small, everyday actions can collectively drive meaningful change.

The Re-Plastic Exhibition was a half-day event that gathered 100 participants to explore plastic issues through the panel discussion, **“From Waste to Worth: Why the Environment Matters and What Young People Can Do About It”**. Beyond the discussion, the exhibition showcased products and creative works developed by volunteers throughout the project, including DIY products, fashion designs, and a digital campaign. Through both the panel session and interactive showcases, the event created a platform for young people to present their ideas, exchange perspectives, and inspire more sustainable practices within the community.





Reflection

Angkor Warriors

“

Environmental Leadership: Leading Beyond Limits

Coordinating in-person activities remotely made communication and decision-making more complex, while balancing academic, personal, and program responsibilities across varied contexts required constant adjustment. These circumstances tested our engagement, accountability, and commitment.

To navigate these challenges, communication became more proactive and intentional. Regular online check-ins, clearer prioritization, flexible scheduling, and deliberate time management helped sustain collaboration. Tasks were divided strategically, facilitator guidance was sought when needed, and the project scope was refined to align with available time and resources.

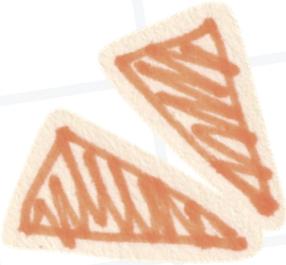
Despite limited budgets and competing responsibilities, we maximized social media outreach, built partnerships with schools, secured venue support, and maintained participant engagement. The experience reinforced a powerful lesson: consistent effort, adaptability, and simply showing up—even in small ways—are often what transform constraints into meaningful outcomes.

”



Indonesia

Talk Sustainable



Ni Putu Mas Swandewi



Luh Anggreni

Talk Sustainable

@talk.sustainable

Talk Sustainable is a youth-led community under the AVIRAMA Foundation that has been active since 2021, working to cultivate a more environmentally conscious generation. Our mission focuses on advancing literacy as a foundation for sustainable living and a greener future. We run four core programs, one of which is Community Development. As part of this program, our team is launching the Sustainable Sangsit Initiative, a project set to be implemented during the 2025-2026 period.

9

Activities implemented

100%

Project completion

1,363

People reached

1,153.6

Kilogram of waste collected

2

Local partner organizations

- Local government at Sangsit Village
- Sungai Watch

Achievements



The Talk Sustainable team, whose members are already engaged in established environmental and social organizations, demonstrated strong capability and executed their project effectively. Their work shows that a comprehensive, long-term approach to community engagement can generate meaningful impact in raising environmental awareness and shaping sustainable habits. It was a pleasure to work with them and witness their growth throughout the process. I look forward to seeing how they and their organization continue to contribute in the future.

Irfan Tsany Rahmawan
Facilitator

#1 Capacity Building

26 October & 14 December 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened community capacity for sustainable waste management through hands-on engagement with key local groups in Sangsit Village, including fishermen, market vendors, youth organizations, riverbank residents, KWT, and PKK. By focusing on practical skills and everyday habits, the initiative promoted long-term behavioral change at the household and community levels.

The activity focused on sustainable practices in both coastal and terrestrial areas, introducing practical 3R (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) strategies and guiding participants in creating functional storage solutions for improved waste management. Emphasizing hands-on application, the sessions enabled participants to integrate sustainable practices into their daily routines and livelihoods. By building practical skills and local relevance, the program strengthened community self-reliance and supported a cleaner, more resilient Sangsit Village, promoting both environmental sustainability and long-term socio-economic well-being.



#2 Focus Group Discussion & “Green Lens” Webinar

18 October & 22 November 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened local commitment and digital environmental leadership by integrating grassroots consultation with online education. Through a structured Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and the “Green Lens” Webinar, the initiative addressed plastic waste challenges from both community-based and youth-driven perspectives.

Following a community survey, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) brought together government, educators, and community representatives to identify root causes of waste issues in Sangsit Village. The discussion highlighted gaps between regulations and practice, with key challenges including limited waste collection, inadequate transport, insufficient landfill capacity, and damaged incinerators. Participants proposed forming a permanent waste task force and introducing customary regulations to strengthen accountability.

Complementing this, the “Green Lens” webinar engaged 125 youth in exploring Bali’s plastic pollution crisis, covering environmental impacts, digital literacy, and advocacy. Together, these initiatives strengthened collaboration and equipped communities and youth with practical tools for sustainable waste management.



#3 Beach and River Cleanup

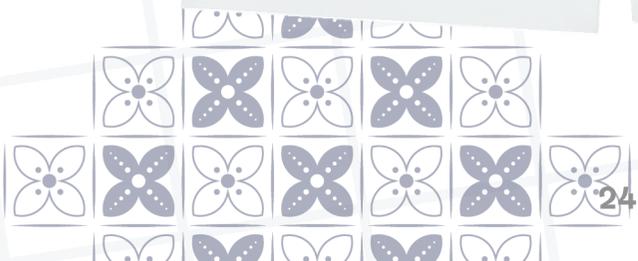
2 & 21 November 2025, 12 - 13 December 2025

Key Takeaway

Strengthened coastal and river stewardship through collective community action: Clean-up activities at Dermaga and Segara Beaches in Sangsit Village mobilized diverse local groups to protect both tourism assets and the livelihoods of 57 fishing families, reinforcing the link between environmental care, economic resilience, and community well-being.

Across a 350-meter coastline, 105–137 participants—including the Indonesian National Army and Navy, local police and district officials, village leaders, youth groups (Karang Taruna), fishermen, coastal vendors, Sungai Watch, and student volunteers—joined forces to remove over 300 kg of mixed waste. Beyond cleanup, the activity fostered dialogue on sustainable waste management. All inorganic waste was transferred to Sungai Watch for proper processing.

The initiative continued with a river clean-up along the Sangsit River to reduce inorganic waste affecting irrigation and increasing flood risks. In collaboration with the Talk Sustainable and Avirama teams, Sungai Watch, and local residents, more than 800 kg of waste was collected, sorted (plastic, metal, glass), and documented. Together, these efforts strengthened cross-sector collaboration, raised awareness of responsible waste practices, and demonstrated the tangible impact of collective action in protecting coastal and river ecosystems.





Reflection

Talk Sustainable

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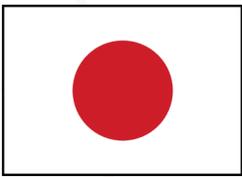
Balancing Responsibilities: Discipline and Strategic Time Management

The AJYELN journey underscored the practical challenge of balancing program responsibilities alongside ongoing academic and professional commitments. Managing assignments, meetings, and collaborative tasks while maintaining performance in my studies and work required careful coordination and mental discipline. Overlapping deadlines and competing priorities demanded not only efficiency but also sustained focus.

To navigate this, I adopted a structured approach to time management. I developed a priority-based schedule, breaking larger tasks into manageable components and setting clear weekly goals to track progress. This system allowed me to anticipate peak workload periods, allocate dedicated time blocks for AJYELN responsibilities, and minimize last-minute pressure. Regularly reviewing weekly objectives ensured accountability and steady momentum.

Ultimately, this experience reinforced that effective leadership is closely tied to self-management. Balancing multiple commitments is not merely about staying busy—it is about planning strategically, prioritizing deliberately, and maintaining consistency under pressure. Through disciplined scheduling and goal-setting, I remained fully engaged in the program while upholding my academic and professional responsibilities.

”



Japan

Be a Global Leader for Sustainable Ocean



Hajime KANETO



Sakura SUZUKI



Noa TATSUNO



Hazuki MORIYAMA

Global Ocean Reformer

aiu_beachclean

We are a team of students from Akita International University (AIU), based in the beautiful coastal prefecture of Akita, Japan. While Akita is known for its nature and strong community spirit, it is also facing two big challenges: marine plastic pollution and a rapidly aging population. To take action, we will organize beach clean-ups and transform collected marine plastic into handmade accessories. We will also host fun workshops at schools and near Akita Station to involve people of all ages. Through these activities, we aim to tackle plastic waste while bringing new energy and creativity to our local community.

7 Activities implemented

100% Project completion

676 People reached

5 Collaborated local organizations

- Environmental club in AIU
- AIU Student Committee
- Minna-no-osoujima organizing committee
- Yuge junior high school
- Akita City Cultural Exchange Plaza

Achievements

“

Well done, everyone! It has been an honor to work with such passionate, creative, and brilliant students—especially while you balanced this project alongside your busy club commitments. Despite various challenges and limitations, you consistently found solutions, even organizing a remote beach clean-up with local community members. Your dedication and adaptability truly reflect strong leadership potential. Keep nurturing your passion for environmental advocacy and continue sharpening your skills. I wish you every success in your future endeavors!

Nurlatifah
Project Coordinator

”



#1 Beach Cleanup

26 September & 13 December 2025



Key Takeaway

Through hands-on beach cleanups and creative upcycling activities, the initiative not only reduced marine plastic waste but also deepened environmental awareness, strengthened community connection, and amplified its impact through cross-regional solidarity and media outreach—**transforming local action into a broader movement for marine conservation.**

On 26 September 2025, six students from the Environmental Club of Akita International University conducted a beach clean-up at Katsurahama Beach, collecting litter and sorting reusable plastics for upcycling into handmade accessories. On 13 December 2025, a joint clean-up and exchange program was held with participants on Yuge Island, Ehime Prefecture, featuring microplastics collection, a mini lecture, reflection discussions, and an online exchange session. Together, these initiatives reduced marine waste while strengthening environmental awareness, community connection, and cross-regional collaboration for ocean conservation.



#2 Accessory Making Workshop in Akita City

28 November & 14 December 2025



Key Takeaway

Through interactive dialogue and hands-on upcycling, the workshops transformed awareness into action—engaging both environmentally conscious participants and new community members, strengthening trust through sustained outreach, and inspiring concrete commitments to reduce plastic pollution in daily life.

Two participatory workshops were held at Akita International University and in Akita City to raise awareness of marine plastic pollution and encourage practical action. The first combined discussions on local plastic challenges with a hands-on upcycling session, where participants created earrings from recycled plastics. The second emphasized proactive outreach, engaging passersby through direct dialogue and strengthening local connections. Together, these workshops demonstrated how consistent grassroots engagement can build trust, expand participation, and sustain environmental advocacy.



#3 Promoting Circular Economy: Selling Upcycled Accessories at University Marché

26 October & 7 December 2025

Key Takeaway

By transforming marine plastic waste into popular handmade accessories and promoting them through engaging, youth-centered social media content, the initiative effectively **combined creative upcycling, public outreach, and strong market response to expand awareness and support for marine conservation.**

Glocal Ocean Reformer participated in the AIU Marché on 26 October and 7 December 2025 to raise awareness of marine plastic pollution under the theme “Turning Trash into Treasure.” The team showcased and sold handmade accessories created from marine plastic waste collected during a beach clean-up at Katsurahama Beach.

Prior to the event, collected plastics were carefully washed, dried, and cut into small 2–3 mm pieces, then melted using a clothes iron and reshaped into colorful, gemstone-like fragments. After polishing the edges for safety and comfort, the pieces were assembled into earrings, necklaces, and hair ties.

During the Marché, these upcycled products attracted strong interest from visitors. By sharing the story behind each item and their firsthand clean-up experiences, the team effectively demonstrated how discarded plastic can be transformed into meaningful, beautiful products while promoting marine conservation awareness.





Reflection

Global Ocean Reformer

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Beyond Visibility — Turning Outreach into Meaningful Engagement

Throughout the AJYELN journey, one of the main challenges was moving beyond simple visibility to creating meaningful engagement. Although social media platforms such as Instagram were used to promote activities, reaching a wider audience and truly inspiring people proved difficult. There was a concern that selling upcycled accessories risked becoming mere consumption, without deeply shifting participants' perspectives on marine plastic issues. Event participation was also lower than expected, partly due to late announcements, overlapping university schedules, and limited promotional strategies. Balancing academic responsibilities with program commitments further added pressure, occasionally affecting time management and deadlines.

While not all challenges were fully resolved, important lessons were gained. Proactive scheduling, more efficient time use, and early planning helped improve coordination. The experience highlighted the need for stronger, more diverse outreach strategies and more intentional messaging to move people's hearts—not just attract attendance. Lastly, recognizing limitations and identifying concrete improvements are important for planning future initiatives.

”



Lao PDR

SalaSara Project



**Padaphone
Atvally**



**Xaiyadeth
Ounniyom**



**Phouthavong
Phoumivong**



**Prasone
Khaosaath**

SalaSara Team

f @ສາລາສາລະ - Salasara

Our project, SalaSara—meaning “a temple full of knowledge”—turns local temples into green hubs where environmental action meets everyday life. Since temples are central gathering places, especially during Buddhist holidays, we installed plastic collection cages for items like bags and bottles. To keep things exciting, we created a reward system: donate plastic, earn stamps based on weight, and redeem household essentials once you reach 2–3 kilograms. Every two weeks, the collected plastic is sent to our recycling partner and transformed into creative products like keychains and storage boxes.

- 9** Activities implemented
- 100%** Project completion
- 1,796** People reached
- 11** Kilogram of waste collected
- 1** Collaborated local organizations
 - Patihoub

Achievements

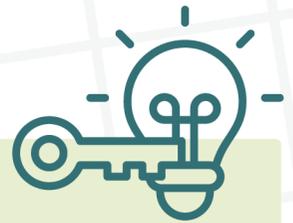
I am very happy with how the project turned out for the SalaSara team. They have bridged spiritual and religious advocacies in the cause through the temple they have partnered with. This is what made their project unique from the previous cohorts. They have also proven that the youth can really bridge intergenerational cooperation for advocacies such as combating plastic pollution. I am looking forward to the next journey the group will work on in the future.

Jason Orolfo Salvadora
Facilitator



#1 Making Plastic Waste Bin

19 October 2025



Key Takeaway

Collaborative, hands-on innovation using simple and accessible materials can generate practical waste solutions while equipping communities with replicable sustainability skills.



The SalaSara team worked together to design and build lightweight, portable plastic waste sorting bins that are easy to produce and transport. Through this hands-on workshop, volunteers learned the step-by-step process of creating DIY bins and gained practical skills they can replicate in their own homes or communities. Using only three materials—plastic netting, steel wire, and wire cutters—the team successfully produced six bins. The completed bins were later donated to Sok Kham Temple, demonstrating how small-scale, resourceful action can create meaningful and lasting community impact.

#2 Waste Collection Day

1 November 2025



Key Takeaway

Hands-on waste sorting turns awareness into action:

By directly handling and categorizing waste, participants better understand consumption patterns and the scale of plastic pollution, encouraging more responsible daily habits. At the same time, the activity generates useful data on waste types and volumes, helping strengthen community-based strategies and long-term sustainable waste management.

The SalaSara team organized a “Waste Sorting Day” at Sokkham Mai Temple, engaging monks, novices, and community members in proper waste separation. Participants learned to sort organic, recyclable, non-recyclable, and plastic waste, collecting 10 kg of water bottles, 5 kg of cups and straws, and 3 kg of single-use plastics.

From 6 a.m. to 12 p.m., the team guided visitors on correct disposal practices, conducted sorting and clean-up activities, and ensured all collected plastic was washed and stored for recycling. Beyond improving cleanliness, the initiative strengthened temple–community collaboration and generated useful data for future waste management planning.



#3 Plastic Waste Collection and Recycling

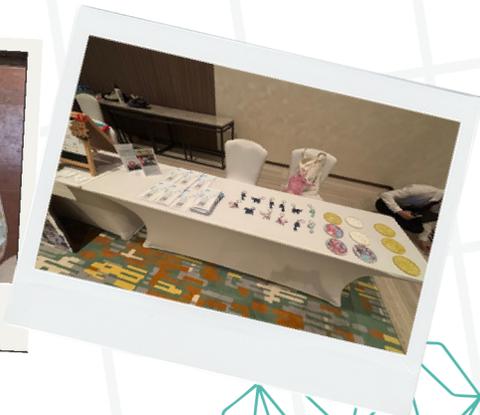
9 October - 20 December 2025

Key Takeaway

Mobilizing community participation in plastic collection and promoting recycled products shows how **grassroots engagement can strengthen recycling systems**, improve waste sorting awareness, and support the circular economy.

The SalaSara team recruited individuals who are interested in donating plastic, engaging 1,531 participants and collecting 11 kg of plastic bottles and 600 grams of bottle caps. To further promote recycling, we featured recycled plastic products from a local manufacturer—including 20 keychains, 5 classic coasters, and 5 customized coasters—and displayed them at a booth during the Climate Champion event on 15 December 2025.

This initiative demonstrated how active community participation can significantly enhance waste collection efforts and raise environmental awareness. It also underscored the importance of proper waste sorting to ensure effective recycling processes, while highlighting that supporting recycled products is a practical way to strengthen and sustain the recycling value chain, particularly when direct processing capacity is limited.





Reflection

SalaSara Team

“

From Paper to Practice: Pivoting Toward Progress

Time management and prioritization were strengthened through clear scheduling, weekly goal-setting, and proactive communication with the team. Strong guidance from the facilitator provided consistent support and direction throughout the process.

Although not directly responsible for resolving every challenge, responsibilities were adjusted to remain informed and contribute where needed. This adaptability helped maintain team cohesion and ensured continued progress despite shifting circumstances.

The project was reframed as a work in progress rather than a fixed outcome. When certain strategies proved ineffective, alternative approaches were explored. Consistent effort, flexibility, and ongoing problem-solving ultimately carried the project through to completion.

”



Malaysia

Catchy Waste Management



**Samuel Ling How
Zhuon**



**Michelle Lau Ling
Ling**



**James Ling Lee
Sheng**

Sustainability Sass-Masters



@ssmasterearth

We are a group of Malaysian youth passionate about environmental sustainability who believe meaningful change begins with us. In response to the rising plastic pollution in our rivers and coastlines, our team from Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS launched the “Catchy Waste Management” project to drive long-term impact. Supported by WWF Malaysia and SOA Malaysia, our two-phase campaign combines awareness, education, and hands-on action to empower students and communities to address marine plastic pollution. Through clean-ups, creative upcycling workshops, and interactive eco-exhibitions, we aim to build a culture of sustainability and youth leadership that extends beyond the classroom—creating real, lasting impact for our oceans and future generations.

5 Activities implemented

100% Project completion

1,058 People reached

11 Big bags of waste collected

14 Collaborated local organizations

- Malaysian Relief Agency (MRA)
- National Cancer Society Malaysia (NCSM)
- myHarapan
- WWF Malaysia
- Lions Club of Gelugor Central
- Electrical & Electronics Engineering Student Society (E3S2, UTP)
- UTP SMASH
- Student Representative Council (SRC, UTP)
- Department of Fisheries Malaysia (Jabatan Perikanan Malaysia)
- Pangkor Turtle Conservation and Information Centre (TCIC)
- Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA) Malaysia
- Marine Mammal Conservation (MareCet)
- Interact Club of SMK St Anthony Sarikei
- SMK St Anthony Sarikei

Achievements

I have been encouraged by the growth you have demonstrated over the past year. You transitioned from organizing standalone activities to developing a more integrated approach that connects awareness, action, and community engagement. Your willingness to reassess scale and retention challenges, and to refine your structure accordingly, reflects strong leadership maturity. Moving forward, further strengthening follow-up pathways for committed volunteers could significantly deepen engagement and expand your long-term impact.

Khew Ee Hung
Facilitator



#1 EquiLife Insights: Bridging Paths to Impact

12 July 2025



Key Takeaway

Strategically integrated volunteerism awareness, practical community engagement tools, and cross-sector networking into a cohesive platform that **converted student interest into structured, actionable, and sustainable youth-led impact pathways.**

EquiLife Insights: Bridging Paths to Impact engaged 289 Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS students through a well-structured program featuring NGO sharing sessions, interactive discussions, and direct partner engagement. Participants gained insights into volunteerism from WWF Malaysia, MRA, myHarapan, and NCSM while developing practical strategies to launch and sustain community initiatives. The event also fostered meaningful connections with NGO representatives and mentors. Overall, the initiative showcased strong program design, leadership coordination, and the fellows' ability to turn awareness into community-driven action.

#2 Waves of Change 2025: Youth Leading the Tide for Sustainability

September - October 2025



Key Takeaway

Successfully bridged sustainability awareness, environmental literacy, and youth leadership development through a structured two-phase model that **transformed learning into measurable conservation action.**

Waves of Change 2025 engaged over 510 participants in a multi-phase initiative that moved from awareness to real-world action. Through hands-on activities and peer engagement, participants deepened their understanding of consumption, waste management, and environmental health while strengthening communication and advocacy skills. By combining a high-visibility campus showcase with field-based conservation efforts, the program translated environmental messaging into tangible outcomes, including waste reduction and coastal rehabilitation. Strong partnerships with NGOs, student groups, and government-linked institutions expanded its reach and credibility. The initiative's measurable results and positive feedback reflect the fellows' leadership and capacity to drive sustained, community-based environmental impact.



#3 Plastic: “Re-Purpose” Exhibition

29 October 2025



Key Takeaway

Achieved high engagement through interactive, hands-on learning while demonstrating **strong campus interest in sustainability and generating valuable, data-driven insights** to guide future recycling and upcycling initiatives.



The Plastic “Re-Purpose” Exhibition showcased the fellows’ ability to deliver a low-cost, high-engagement sustainability initiative on campus, reaching over 80 students and staff. The hands-on DIY station proved more impactful than static displays, driving strong participation and interest in environmental topics. More than 80 structured feedback responses indicated increased environmental awareness and practical skills, particularly in DIY recycling and upcycling. The smooth execution and effective use of feedback highlighted the fellows’ strengths in engagement design, impact measurement, and sustainable program development.

#4 Aqua Mind 2025: Nurturing Youth Awareness for Marine Sustainability

13 December 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened marine biodiversity literacy, deepened critical understanding of human-induced ocean degradation, and empowered youth with the knowledge, confidence, and advocacy skills needed to champion sustainable marine conservation in their communities.



Aqua Mind 2025 engaged 179 participants from schools, universities, NGOs, and youth networks across Malaysia through a well-coordinated online program. Expert-led sessions covered marine ecosystems and the impacts of plastic pollution, overfishing, and climate change, helping participants understand how everyday actions affect ocean health. Strong participation, active Q&A sessions, and positive feedback demonstrated effective knowledge transfer and highlighted the fellows’ strengths in coordination, partnership-building, and delivering impactful environmental education online.





Reflection

Sustainability Sass-Masters

“

Balancing Commitments: Resourcefulness and Strategic Adaptation

The AJYELN journey highlighted the realities of working within structural and institutional constraints. Limited budgets required creativity in securing sponsorships and forming local collaborations, while university regulations and approval procedures demanded patience and careful navigation. Balancing academic responsibilities alongside program commitments further emphasized the importance of time management and clear communication.

Negotiating with potential partners and securing external support became essential leadership skills. Financial limitations were not merely obstacles—they became opportunities to develop strategic thinking, persuasion, and collaboration. By leveraging mentorship, teamwork, and mutual support among the team, we learned to adapt under constraints while remaining committed to their goals.

Conclusively, environmental leadership often begins with resourcefulness. Progress depends on careful planning, effective communication, and transforming institutional limitations into opportunities for growth and stronger partnerships.

”



Myanmar ReCircle



Win Pyae Pyae Aung



Khaing Su Myat Thin



Myat Noe Khin Khin



Aye Chan Pwint Phyu

ReCircle

recircle2025

Our “ReCircle” project focuses on empowering people with disabilities, a group frequently overlooked in sustainability initiatives. Through inclusive plastic waste education, hands-on upcycling training, and youth-led facilitation, we aim to ensure that environmental action is accessible to all. We also launched an online campaign inviting young filmmakers and film enthusiasts to create awareness films on plastic pollution, amplifying diverse voices in the movement. Guided by the belief that “One Community, One Solution, One Bright Future,” we envision a circular economy where everyone—regardless of ability—plays a meaningful role in building a more sustainable future.

4 Activities implemented

100% Project completion

425 People reached

3 Collaborated local organizations

- Purple - ပုံပေ (Social Enterprise)
- HinThar Education
- AAR-Japan (Association for Aid and Relief, Japan) Myanmar

Achievements

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

Thant Zin Tun
Facilitator



#1 Turn Trash Into Treasure!

8 August 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened foundational understanding of upcycling, deepened awareness of plastic pollution impacts, and cultivated inclusive peer networks by integrating practical skill-building, environmental education, and community engagement into one cohesive learning experience.

The workshop guided participants from limited knowledge of upcycling to confidently applying it in daily life. In just two hours, they learned to turn plastic waste into functional items like bracelets, with potential for sustainable income. Knowledge-sharing sessions reinforced awareness of plastic pollution and responsible waste management, while a shared lunch encouraged collaboration and idea exchange. Overall, the activity effectively combined education, hands-on practice, and community-building to inspire practical environmental action.



#2 Trash Sorting Workshop @ AAR-Japan

30 October 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened practical waste segregation knowledge, reinforced environmental responsibility, and cultivated inclusive peer collaboration by integrating interactive learning tools with community-centered engagement.

The event fostered a welcoming space where participants connected over lunch and strengthened their commitment to sustainability. They gained a clearer understanding of biodegradable, recyclable, and hazardous waste, learning how proper segregation reduces pollution and improves recycling efficiency. Hands-on activities using color-coded boards and sorting stickers translated theory into practice, while small group work encouraged collaboration and problem-solving. Overall, the activity combined experiential learning with community-building to reinforce responsible waste practices and collective environmental action.



#3 Upcycling Workshop @ AAR-Japan

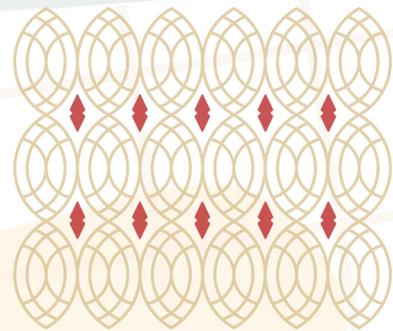
8 November 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened waste-to-resource literacy, inclusive practical upcycling competencies, and community cohesion by converting prior waste-sorting knowledge into accessible, collaborative, and action-oriented sustainability practice.

Building on lessons from the earlier trash-sorting workshop, participants deepened their understanding of how properly cleaned and segregated plastic sachets can be transformed into valuable new products, shifting mindsets from disposal to resource recovery. The hands-on keychain-making session created an inclusive and supportive environment for participants of all abilities, with volunteer assistance and sign language interpretation ensuring full participation. Through small-group collaboration, participants exchanged creative ideas, practiced problem-solving, and supported one another throughout the process. The workshop not only enhanced technical upcycling skills but also reinforced teamwork and shared responsibility, demonstrating how inclusive, creative engagement can translate environmental awareness into tangible, community-driven sustainability action.





Reflection

ReCircle

“

Bridging Differences: Growing Through Teamwork and Flexibility

Working with teammates from different countries was both exciting and challenging. Coordinating activities across time zones, balancing different schedules, and adapting to diverse working styles required patience and clear communication. At the same time, designing our environmental education activities—especially the upcycling workshops—meant making sure everyone could participate comfortably, regardless of their background knowledge or access to materials.

To navigate these challenges, we focused on staying connected and flexible. Regular team check-ins helped us stay aligned, adjust plans when needed, and support one another. For the workshops, we simplified explanations, emphasized hands-on learning, and encouraged open discussion so participants felt confident to try, ask questions, and share ideas.

Balancing AJYELN commitments with academic and personal responsibilities also pushed us to manage our time more intentionally. Through teamwork and mutual support, we learned that environmental leadership is not just about creating impact—it's about listening, adapting, and growing together along the way.

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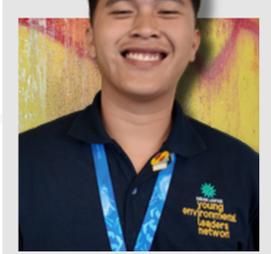


Philippines

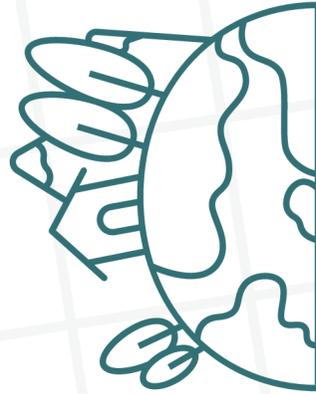
Project DUGONG: Developing Urgent Guidance for Oceans Navigating Generations



Jick L. Acupan



Prince Nico U. Geolaga



f @Team Projico

Project DUGONG is an initiative focused on education, leadership, and capacity-building to nurture a new generation of environmental stewards. Through this program, youth participants learn to analyze ridge-to-reef environmental challenges and develop practical, community-based solutions. By empowering young leaders to turn ideas into action and solutions into concrete resolutions, Project DUGONG aims to create a meaningful and lasting impact for both people and the ocean.

- 16** Activities implemented
- 100%** Project completion
- 6,358** People reached
- 1,356** Kilograms of waste collected
- 31** Collaborated local organizations
 - Provincial Government Unit of Sarangani
 - Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape - Protected Area Management Board
 - League of Youth Development Officers - Sarangani
 - Malungon Youth Movement
 - United States Government Alumni Association - SOX
 - AFS - Intercultural Programs Philippines
 - SACCA
 - JPIENP
 - Salom sa Kinaiyahan
 - Menro-Maitum
 - Philippine Coast Guard

- SK Federation of Maitum
- Barangay Councils of Old Poblacion, Mindupok, and Kiambing
- Malalag National High School
- Notre Dame of Maitum
- Women's Alliance for Security and Peace
- Radyo Kasaganaan 99.7 FM
- Lun Padidu National High School
- Youth Affairs and Development Office - Malapatan
- Glan SARCCO
- LGU-Glan
- CENRO
- Office of the Municipal Mayor
- Glan Junior Officials
- Plantplant Forestry Support Services
- Angie-Uno Youth Organization
- Sangguniang Kabataan Unit of Barangay Colon
- Fisheries Student of MSU-Gensan
- Kiamba National High School SSLG Officers
- Ecological Solid Waste Management Officers
- Youth for Environmental School Organization, James L. Chiongbian National Trade School Students

Achievements



Project DUGONG of Team Philippines really kick-started a movement not just in their province of Sarangani but in the Philippines, too. I am proud to have witnessed their journey from planning to execution. Inspiring groups of people from different communities in their province is not an easy feat, but they were able to do so with commitment and grit. I hope what they have started will result in a ripple effect of actions from the grassroots level to a much higher level.

Jason Orolfo Salvadora
Facilitator



#1 E-SEAssions

6 September 2025 - 20 September 2025



Key Takeaway

From awareness to action, E-SEAssions **transformed participants into informed youth advocates equipped to drive sustainable change.**

E-SEAssions, the digital learning arm of Project DUGONG, provided accessible and interactive environmental education to youth, including those in underserved communities. The program featured three modules: “Ridge to Reef,” on ecosystem interconnectedness; “The State of Us,” on environmental conditions in the Buayan–Malungon River Basin and Sarangani Bay; and “From Solutions to Resolutions,” focused on developing data-driven, policy-oriented solutions. Through topics such as the 5Rs, Waste and Brand Audits, and resolution writing aligned with the National Environmental Code, participants deepened their understanding of human impact and learned to turn data into actionable proposals.



#2 Planet D: Discover, Design, Deliver

27-28 September 2025



Key Takeaway

Transformed environmental awareness into structured, community-rooted conservation leadership by guiding youth from ecosystem discovery to project design, pitching, and locally aligned implementation.

Through Planet D under Project DUGONG, participants embarked on a Discover–Design–Deliver journey that strengthened their knowledge, skills, and leadership mindset. Guided visits to the Environmental Conservation and Protection Center and the Sarangani Bay Marine Sanctuary deepened their understanding of local conservation challenges. Workshops on project management and problem-solving enabled youth from seven municipalities to develop practical, data-informed solutions. The program concluded with pitching sessions, where proposals were refined through expert feedback. With support from Local Youth Development Officers, participants are now ready to implement community-aligned environmental initiatives.



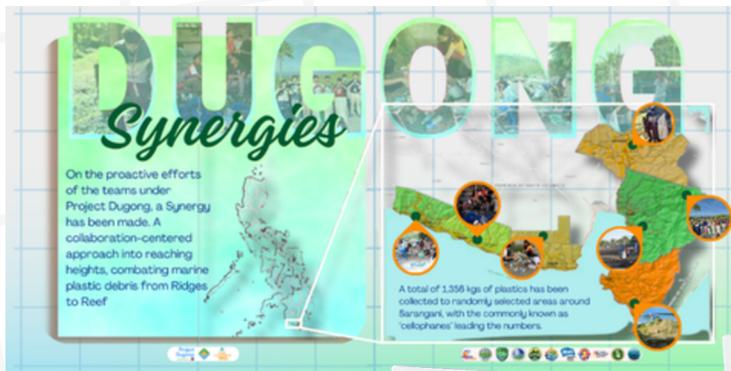
#3 Dugong Synergies

1 October - 9 November 2025

Key Takeaway

Different communities, different contexts, one goal: DUGONG Synergies demonstrated that lasting environmental change begins with locally grounded actions strengthened by **collective commitment, shared leadership, and cross-sector collaboration.**

DUGONG Synergies represents the implementation phase of the project, where participants moved from learning to leading after completing the E-SEAssions and Planet D programs. Teams brought their proposals to life through collaboration-centered initiatives addressing marine plastic pollution from the Buayan-Malungon River Basin to the Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape. Participants recognized that plastic challenges vary across communities, reinforcing the importance of designing solutions rooted in local realities. Through shoreline cleanups, waste repurposing, workshops, faith-based advocacy, and plastic-free campaigns, they demonstrated how sustained collective action can drive meaningful change. By partnering with barangays, schools, youth groups, faith leaders, and local government units, participants strengthened leadership capacity and built a unified network committed to long-term, community-based environmental impact.





Reflection

Projico

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Leading Through the Tide: Resilience, Collaboration, and the Real Work of Environmental Action

Joining a program on environmental leadership and combating plastic pollution revealed that meaningful change requires more than technical knowledge—it demands resilience, adaptability, and strong partnerships. The experience highlighted the complexity of balancing program responsibilities with academic and personal commitments, coordinating with multiple stakeholders, and navigating limited resources, weather disruptions, and varying levels of community participation. Field implementation underscored the reality that carefully designed plans must remain flexible to align with community schedules and local processes.

Challenges in teamwork and unexpected lapses in support further emphasized the importance of accountability and selecting reliable partners. When circumstances shifted, progress depended on adaptability, continuous communication, and the strength of established networks. Support from mentors, youth leaders, and partner organizations proved essential in sustaining momentum and ensuring successful implementation.

Finally, the journey demonstrated that environmental leadership is built not only on passion for sustainability but also on collaboration, perseverance, and the capacity to respond effectively to real-world challenges.

”



Singapore

E-race it away!



Alicia Chan Wen Si



Alyssa Chua Kai Lin



Chloe Aw Bao Fang



Team ACA

@acleaneratmosphere

Our team came together through our shared experience in the Outward Bound Singapore Leadership and Service Award programme, where we developed a deeper appreciation for environmental stewardship. We recognized that young people can play a more active role in driving positive change. Although Singapore is widely regarded as a clean and green city, litter remains an ongoing concern. We therefore sought to address this gap by empowering youths to contribute meaningfully to both the environment and the wider community.

2

Activities implemented

100%

Project completion

63

People reached

1

Collaborated local organizations

- Outward Bound Singapore (OBS)

Achievements



I was really impressed by how well the three of you brought E-Race It Away! to life, making environmental learning both engaging and meaningful. Even though you faced challenges such as time management and participant recruitment, you managed to pull it through with strong leadership, adaptability, and resilience. Keep building on this momentum as you continue creating real, people-centred change.

Khew Ee Hung
Facilitator



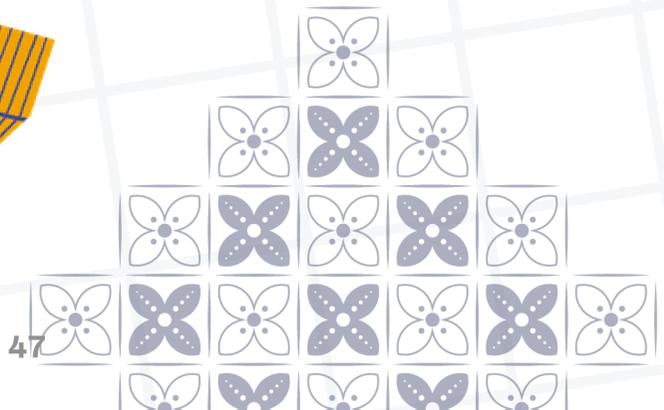
#1 E-Race It Away!

1 & 15 November 2025

Key Takeaway

Deepened environmental empathy, strengthened personal accountability for waste reduction, and cultivated youth leadership through immersive, gamified learning that combined nature appreciation, action-oriented challenges, structured reflection, and collaborative teamwork.

The “E-Race It Away!” project engaged 63 youths across two sessions at Coney Island through an experiential environmental programme integrating digital missions, hands-on activities, and guided reflection. Biodiversity spotting and nature photography encouraged participants to appreciate local ecosystems, fostering gratitude and stronger emotional connection to green spaces. Interactive challenges tested practical actions they could begin immediately, reinforcing the idea that environmental improvement starts with individual responsibility. Facilitated reflections further consolidated learning and behavioral intention. Mixed-group participation under experienced facilitators promoted teamwork, peer bonding, and leadership development as participants collaborated to complete missions and earn points. Co-organised with Outward Bound Singapore, the project achieved strong outreach efficiency, low operational cost, and 100% recommendation from surveyed participants. Measurable shifts in environmental empathy and commitment to sustainable habits highlight the fellows’ capacity to deliver impactful, scalable, community-driven environmental initiatives.





Reflection

Team ACA - A Cleaner Atmosphere

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Adapting Perspectives: Coordination and Contextual Relevance

For us, challenges emerged from coordination and contextual differences. Administrative uncertainty and the absence of a clear local point of contact required initiative and careful confirmation of details. Within teams, differing schedules and responsibilities demanded consistent alignment and regular communication to maintain momentum.

A deeper challenge lay in translating regional environmental issues into Singapore's context. In countries where plastic pollution is highly visible, urgency is immediate and tangible. In Singapore, where structured waste systems reduce visible litter, we needed to rethink their approach. This required shifting the focus toward environmental education and awareness, particularly among youth, and adapting ideas such as creative recycling and upcycling to ensure local relevance.

Through dialogue, regular meetings, and shifts in perspective we learnt that environmental leadership is not about replicating solutions—it is about adapting them thoughtfully. Our journey reinforced that relevance, creativity, and collaboration are essential when addressing sustainability across diverse contexts.

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Thailand RIFFAI



**Kolatat
Katousano**



**Phattharapong
Duangkham**



**Puthiphat
Jirawatanaphalin**



Tintchai Bootseeta



f @RIFFAI

As a team of passionate engineers, scientists, and strategists from Southeast Asia, we've experienced the harsh realities of climate change—floods, droughts, and uncertainty threatening our communities. That's why we founded RIFFAI: to Bring Space Down to Earth. Using satellite technology and advanced AI, we transform space data into real-time insights that help governments, cities, and industries prepare for a changing planet. We're not just observing the future from above—we're building it from the ground up. We create the future here, where innovation meets impact, and every solution brings us closer to a more resilient world.

- 1** Activities implemented
- 100%** Project completion
- 3,000** People reached
- 1** Collaborated local organizations
 - Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA)

Achievements



RIFFAI demonstrated that digital tools can directly benefit stakeholders within similar sectors, while also strengthening broader environmental preservation efforts when supported by the right tools and knowledge. It is hoped that similar initiatives can be expanded to other regions, enabling real-time monitoring of plastic waste and significantly improving data-driven strategies to address the issue effectively.

Irfan Tsany Rahmawan
Facilitator

#1

“RIFFAI Blue: Developing AI × Satellite for Macro Monitoring of Ocean Plastic Waste in the Asia-Pacific” Exhibition

1 December 2025 – June 2026



Key Takeaway



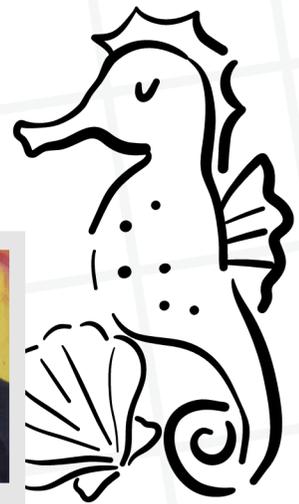
Bridging technology and public awareness on ocean plastic monitoring: The RIFFAI Blue exhibition successfully translated advanced AI and satellite-based marine plastic monitoring into an accessible, interactive public learning experience, demonstrating how technological innovation can strengthen environmental awareness, dialogue, and action.

The year-long public exhibition, “RIFFAI Blue: Developing AI × Satellite for Macro Monitoring of Ocean Plastic Waste in the Asia-Pacific,” officially launched on 1 December 2025 at the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (DEPA) headquarters in Bangkok and runs until December 2026. By combining artificial intelligence, satellite data, digital visualization tools, and real marine debris samples, the exhibition made complex scientific research both tangible and relatable. AJYELN Fellows served as facilitators, translating technical concepts into clear, engaging discussions on microplastics, sustainable consumption, and plastic-free lifestyles. Educational talks and AI-supported storytelling further enhanced understanding. Surveys, interviews, and online engagement activities measured shifts in awareness and behavioral intention, extending impact beyond the venue. Overall, the initiative illustrates how youth leadership and technological innovation can converge to advance collective action against marine plastic pollution.





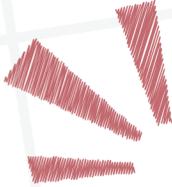
Viet Nam No Plastic Mũi Né



Lê Đỗ Thanh Tú



Lê Đoàn Ngọc Hân



The Viet Enviroeneers

f @thevietenviroeneers

As young Vietnamese passionate about change, we launched the “No Plastic Mũi Né,” a community-driven initiative empowering students and local vendors to tackle plastic waste in Mũi Né, Viet Nam. Through beach clean-ups, creative workshops, and the promotion of eco-friendly business alternatives, we aim to turn awareness into meaningful action. More than just a campaign, our vision is for “No Plastic Mũi Né” to become a replicable model for coastal communities across Vietnam and beyond—demonstrating how education, creativity, and collective effort can transform polluted shores into clean, vibrant spaces while supporting long-term sustainable tourism.

- 6** Activities implemented
- 100%** Project completion
- 1,517** People reached
- 550** Kilograms of waste collected
- 16** Collaborated local organizations

- GRAC Technology
- Xanh Việt Nam Community
- MorEco Recycling Enterprise
- Bùi Thị Xuân – Mũi Né High School
- Dong Phuc Á Châu (Asia Uniform)
- PEDACO Green Environment Joint Stock Company
- Peace Resort
- Sunset on the beach cafe
- SOHO Coffee Cafe
- Mui Ne Fishing Village
- International Windsurfing School
- Flyboard
- Fairy Stream
- Cargo Remote Homestay
- Sailing Club Resort Mui Ne
- Anantara

Achievements

What stood out most was how the two of you shifted from running individual activities to building a sustainable system—one that not only empowers the younger generation, but also transfers ownership and adapts to real-world constraints. I encourage you to continue strengthening the project by focusing on high-leverage structures such as mentorship loops and school-based ownership, which will help ensure your impact endures beyond your direct involvement.

Khew Ee Hung
Facilitator



#1 Beach Cleanup

15 November 2025



Key Takeaway

Demonstrated measurable environmental impact while successfully transitioning from mentored coordination to fully autonomous, youth-led implementation—removing 550 kg of coastal waste across two large-scale clean-ups and strengthening local leadership, cross-city collaboration, and sustainable community ownership.

Beach Clean-Up 01 and 02 marked major progress for the No Plastic Mũi Né project. The first mobilised 70 students and teachers, removing 300 kg of plastic waste and generating over 67,000 organic social media views while strengthening teamwork and coordination between the Saigon and Mũi Né teams. The second, independently led by the local youth team, removed an additional 250 kg and validated the project's training-of-trainers model. Local participants managed safety, delegation, and logistics confidently without direct oversight. Together, the activities improved environmental conditions while strengthening youth leadership, community engagement, and long-term sustainability.



#2 Booth Day “Trash for Treats”

5 – 6 December 2025



Key Takeaway

Strengthened community-wide environmental engagement through a transparent closed-loop recycling system while building local youth leadership capacity—mobilising 210 participants, collecting nearly 100 kg of plastic and 6.5 kg of used batteries, and reinforcing hands-on learning, accountability, and sustainable school-based action.

Booth Day “Trash for Treats” showcased the Vietnam fellows’ ability to lead a large-scale, youth-driven environmental initiative within a school community. Over two days, 210 participants collected more than 100 kg of plastic and 6.5 kg of used batteries, all transferred to PEDACO through a verified closed-loop process. As the school's first major student-led environmental event, it provided hands-on experience in coordination, communication, and problem-solving. Mentorship strengthened local leadership, while strong media engagement and positive feedback reflected the fellows’ capacity to combine environmental action with sustainable community mobilisation.



#3 Green Tourist Map

31 December 2025



Key Takeaway



Demonstrated that **context-sensitive collaboration with local businesses, strategic sustainability storytelling, and cross-sector partnerships are essential** to building scalable, youth-led environmental initiatives rooted in real operational realities and long-term community impact.

The Green Tourist Map initiative highlighted the Vietnam fellows' ability to adapt project design to real-world constraints while delivering meaningful system-level outcomes. By engaging 10 tourism-related vendors and waste management partners, the fellows shifted from prescriptive solutions to a collaboration-driven model aligned with local business operations. Through documentation, translation, and digital promotion of green practices, the initiative amplified sustainable tourism narratives and positioned businesses as active environmental stewards. The project also strengthened cross-sector linkages between youth leaders, enterprises, and educational institutions, creating pathways for mentorship and school-based environmental engagement. Although modest in scale, its strategic pivot, partnership depth, and transparent reflection demonstrate strong systems thinking and the capacity to build locally grounded, sustainable environmental interventions with long-term youth leadership impact.





Reflection

The Viet Enviroeneers

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Leading in the Field: Resilience, Trust, and Real-World Complexity

AJYELN presented intensive, on-the-ground challenges that mirrored the complexity of real-world environmental work. Building trust with local communities required patience and sustained engagement, particularly where hesitation or skepticism toward external initiatives existed. Bureaucratic procedures and multi-level approvals introduced delays, while limited financial resources—combined with long-distance travel and logistical costs—added operational pressure. Internal team coordination under tight timelines sometimes led to tension, requiring strong communication and mutual trust. External factors, legal constraints, and unexpected changes demanded flexibility and rapid adaptation. Carefully designed plans often had to be revised to accommodate shifting circumstances.

Adapting to these changes needs resilience and proactive leadership. We sought sponsorships and in-kind partnerships, practiced transparent communication with communities, and revised timelines while preserving core objectives. Maintaining optimism, preparing backup plans, and fostering open dialogue within teams became central strategies.

The experience underscored that environmental leadership is forged in uncertainty. It requires patience to build community trust, courage to navigate bureaucracy, and adaptability to sustain momentum despite setbacks. For us, the challenges were not merely obstacles—they were transformative lessons in perseverance, collaboration, and purpose-driven leadership.

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Fellows' Testimonials



As an AJYELN Fellow, I greatly valued the cross-cultural exchange and genuine collaboration with youth leaders from across ASEAN and Japan, where diverse perspectives were actively integrated into meaningful discussions on real-world environmental and societal challenges. The program went beyond theory, offering practical and relevant engagement that strengthened my confidence as a youth leader and affirmed the value of my background in community engagement and regional advocacy. It also expanded my exposure to policy dialogue and intercultural leadership, enabling me to communicate my ideas more clearly and engage more thoughtfully in complex regional and global conversations.

Haji Muhammad Izzuddin Bin Haji Nor Hisham
Brunei fellow

I enjoyed the supportive and collaborative environment of the AJYELN program. I valued connecting with passionate youth from diverse backgrounds and gaining practical experience that strengthened my leadership skills and sense of purpose. This program helped me develop leadership, teamwork, and communication skills while deepening my awareness of social and environmental issues. I learned how to turn ideas into meaningful action and gained confidence by working with diverse youth and mentors.

Sodalis Sophea, Cambodia Fellow

This program allowed me to connect with other young people and create impact in my community. I learned a great deal about the environment, leadership, and project management. AJYELN is a place where you can learn, lead, and thrive.

Menghorng Kao, Cambodia Fellow

This program gave me a meaningful space to grow alongside passionate young people from across ASEAN and Japan who share the same commitment to creating positive change in our communities. What I enjoyed most was the sense of connection—being able to exchange ideas, learn from diverse perspectives, and build genuine friendships beyond borders. AJYELN encouraged me to think beyond a single issue and recognize the importance of collaboration in creating meaningful impact. I now see myself as someone who will continue to drive positive change not only in the environmental field but also in other areas by working together with people from different backgrounds and sectors.

Somnang Chhum, Cambodia Fellow

As an AJYELN Fellow, I especially valued the opportunity to build connections with driven young leaders from across ASEAN and Japan, engaging in meaningful discussions on environmental issues while gaining insights from diverse cultural contexts. The mentorship sessions were particularly impactful, offering practical guidance and real-world perspectives that helped translate ideas into actionable plans. Through the program, I strengthened my leadership and project management skills, enhanced my strategic thinking, and became more confident in collaborating with diverse teams and taking initiative in advancing sustainable environmental projects.

Luh Anggreni, Indonesia Fellow

The training in Indonesia was a valuable and inspiring opportunity to interact with participants from diverse backgrounds, build meaningful connections, and exchange knowledge and ideas. It motivated me to grow both personally and professionally while strengthening my confidence as a youth leader. I learned that when I take initiative and communicate effectively, people respond positively...The experience also taught me that careful planning is essential for implementing effective and impactful projects. Overall, the training reinforced the importance of initiative, communication, and strategic preparation in creating meaningful community engagement.

Sakura Suzuki, Japan Fellow

Fellows' Testimonials



I especially enjoyed the session in Indonesia, where I joined workshops that strengthened my skills in project planning and stakeholder negotiation—areas I had not formally studied before. Both the online meetings and in-person sessions provided practical insights, especially through learning from alumni who shared their real project experiences. Being able to apply those lessons directly to my own project was particularly valuable, as it helped me align my ideas with effective planning strategies and increased my confidence in managing future initiatives.

Hazuki Moriyama, Japan Fellow

TI enjoyed learning not only from the lectures provided by AJYELN but also from fellows from other countries. The program helped me realize that many young people in my generation share a strong awareness of environmental issues and are actively working to address them. This realization motivated me and strengthened my commitment to continue contributing to positive environmental action.

Noa Tatsuno, Japan Fellow

As an AJYELN Fellow, I deeply valued the strong sense of community and shared purpose within the program. Being surrounded by passionate young leaders from different countries was highly motivating. AJYELN significantly contributed to my personal growth and strengthened my leadership, communication, and project management skills, increasing my confidence in taking initiative and collaborating with diverse teams.

Padaphone Atvaly, Lao PDR Fellow

I truly enjoyed meeting fellows from across Southeast Asia during the program. Both the online sessions and in-person gatherings were inspiring, as everyone was passionate, energetic, and deeply committed to creating change. Connecting with such dedicated peers motivated me to stay engaged in my own efforts. Receiving advice and feedback from experienced activists was also extremely valuable. Learning from real-world practices and gaining specific input on our activities helped us reflect more critically and identify ways to improve from a broader perspective.

Hajime Kaneto, Japan Fellow

I truly enjoyed the positive and welcoming atmosphere of the AJYELN program. The organizers created an environment where connecting with mentors and peers felt natural and meaningful. Applying my skills to real-world challenges was a major highlight, and I leave the program feeling more confident and inspired. I learned that there is no single “right” way to approach a challenge. Being part of this fellowship broadened my perspective by surrounding me with people who see the world differently. Listening to how others approach problems gave me fresh insights that were far more impactful than learning from textbooks alone.

Xaiyadeth Ounniyom, Lao PDR Fellow

I appreciated how the AJYELN program supports youth-led projects from diverse backgrounds and approaches to environmental protection. Being part of an inclusive space that values different perspectives was both inspiring and motivating, encouraging me to learn from others while contributing my own ideas. The program broadened my understanding of environmental action, strengthened my confidence in youth-led initiatives, and inspired me to engage more thoughtfully in sustainability work. Learning from fellows with diverse experiences was especially impactful.

Prasone Khaosaath, Lao PDR Fellow

Fellows' Testimonials



I particularly appreciated the strong connections formed during the program and the guidance from a supportive mentor. AJYELN helped me realize that even small efforts can create meaningful impact, reinforcing my belief in incremental yet powerful change.

Samuel Ling How Zhuon, Malaysia Fellow

I valued the professional sharing sessions and expert mentorship. The engaging talks helped me rethink and improve my team's project. The program encouraged me to think more holistically and strategically when implementing projects. It also provided a platform to connect with environmental leaders from other countries, which strengthened my motivation to deliver meaningful results.

James Ling Lee Sheng, Malaysia Fellow

I enjoyed connecting with like-minded youth leaders from diverse backgrounds. The discussions broadened my perspectives on leadership, sustainability, and community service, while also giving space to share my own ideas. AJYELN significantly strengthened my leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. It enhanced my critical thinking on youth and community issues and boosted my confidence to take initiative in academic, organizational, and volunteer work.

Michelle Lau Ling Ling, Malaysia Fellow

Being an AJYELN Fellow was a meaningful journey of growth and learning. I especially valued collaborating with passionate youth from across ASEAN and Japan, which broadened my perspective on environmental challenges and solutions. The program strengthened my leadership, communication, and project planning skills and helped me translate environmental knowledge into inclusive, community-based actions such as upcycling workshops. It also increased my confidence in leading sustainability initiatives within my community.

Khaing Su Myat Thin, Myanmar Fellow

I greatly appreciated the opportunity to connect with diverse youth from different countries and backgrounds. AJYELN encouraged us to take proactive and meaningful steps toward creating positive change within our communities. The program not only inspired new ideas but also supported us in turning those ideas into concrete action.

Myat Noe Khin Khin, Myanmar Fellow

This program provided me with valuable time and space to actively engage in environmental and social impact initiatives. It deepened my involvement in sustainability projects while allowing me to build meaningful networks and connections with fellow changemakers across the region.

Win Pyae Pyae Aung, Myanmar Fellow

AJYELN had a significant impact on me, particularly in strengthening my project management and content creation skills. The program introduced me to inspiring individuals I never expected to meet and gave me opportunities to engage in activities I had never imagined undertaking. It contributed greatly to my personal growth while expanding my network of environmental advocates both locally and across ASEAN and Japan.

Prince Nico Geolaga, Philippines Fellow

Fellows' Testimonials



The AJYELN program exceeded my expectations. It was more than a seminar—it was a transformative experience that equipped me with essential skills for leading impactful projects. Beginning with online masterclasses and followed by immersive on-site sessions, the program deepened my understanding of environmental leadership and strengthened my confidence in organizing activities and pitching proposals. Through AJYELN, I enhanced my project management, advocacy, and community engagement skills, enabling me to turn ideas into action, including advancing my project, Dugong. The experience also highlighted that youth worldwide face shared environmental challenges, reinforcing the importance of collective action. It strengthened my belief that young people are present changemakers and deepened my commitment to environmental stewardship.

Jick L. Acupan, Philippines Fellow

I enjoyed meeting new people who shared similar environmental interests. The program taught me how to lead a team and organize a meaningful event, building my practical leadership skills.

Alyssa Chua Kai Lin, Singapore Fellow

I deeply appreciated the welcoming, supportive environment created by organizers, mentors, and fellows. I felt a strong sense of belonging and found the shared energy and encouragement inspiring and meaningful. Through AJYELN, I became a co-founder and led a core team of nearly 30 people. I developed skills in multitasking, stakeholder engagement, strategic planning, and cross-department collaboration. The experience strengthened my belief in youth-led change and provided me with a strong international support network.

Lê Đoàn Ngọc Hân (Jessie), Viet Nam Fellow

I appreciated meeting fellows from other countries, exchanging ideas, and learning through the structured Jakarta sessions with diverse speakers. Interacting with highly motivated peers inspired me and my team to work harder toward creating environmental change among Singaporean youths.

Chloe Aw Bao Fang, Singapore Fellow

I valued working with passionate youth leaders across ASEAN and Japan. Learning about diverse approaches to plastic pollution and sustainability broadened my understanding beyond Singapore's context. I also appreciated the hands-on leadership and project management training. AJYELN strengthened my leadership, teamwork, and project planning skills. I gained confidence in conceptualizing and implementing community-based initiatives and became a more informed and creative environmental advocate.

Alicia Chan Wen Si, Singapore Fellow

I particularly valued the empowerment model of AJYELN. I appreciated the autonomy to design and manage my own initiative while receiving mentorship rather than micromanagement. I also valued the international exchange, cross-cultural collaboration in Jakarta, and the deep friendships formed. The program also profoundly strengthened my leadership, project management, and community empowerment skills. I developed a strong passion for grassroots environmental action, gained clarity on youth agency, and witnessed tangible impact in both my community and the young people that I trained—reinforcing my belief in long-term environmental stewardship.

Le Do Thanh Tu (Chloe), Viet Nam Fellow

2026 AJYELN 2.0 Application



NOW OPEN!

6 Mar - 15 Apr 2026



WE WANT YOU

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

Youth for a Plastic-Resilient Region: Action. Innovation. Transformation.



Thematic Focus:

- Marine plastic waste
- Plastic pollution
- Waste and wastewater management
- Circular economy approaches for plastics

Project Scope:

- Community engagement
- Awareness initiatives
- Enhancing capacity through networking and collaboration



Who we're seeking:

- Self-driven youth aged 18-25 years old
- Team of 2-3 members
- Citizen of ASEAN member states or Japan
- Proficient in conversational English
- Individuals passionate about environmental and social action



SCAN ME!

REGISTER NOW

Mark Your Calendar

Key Application Dates

- 6 March 2026** - Application Start
- 15 April 2026** - Application Deadline
- 15 May 2026** - Shortlist Notification
- 22 May 2026** - Interview (Pitching)
- 5 June 2026** - Announcement of Selection

Program Timeline

- June–July 2026** - Online training
- 11-13 August 2026** - In-Person Leadership & Project Training (Jakarta, Indonesia)
- 30 August 2026** - Seed Fund
- September–December 2026** - Project Implementation
- January 2027** - Reporting (Impact & Financial Reports)
- March 2027** - Capstone Summit (TBC)

Why Join Us?

As an AJYELN Fellow, you will:

- Receive seed funding to bring your project to life
- Join a dynamic network of youth leaders across ASEAN and Japan
- Participate in leadership and project management training
- Receive guidance throughout your implementation
- Strengthen your confidence, teamwork, and project execution skills
- Make a real difference in your community

**Don't let this incredible opportunity slip away!
Apply now and let your journey with AJYELN2.0 begin!**

bit.ly/join_AJYELN2026

#JoinUs #ApplyNow #AJC #AJYELN





<https://www.asean.or.jp/en/project/ajyel/>



ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network



@ajyel



Dive into a world of innovation and collaboration with the **ASEAN-Japan Young Environmental Leaders Network (AJYELN)**! This storybook showcases the inspiring journeys and impactful projects of AJYELN fellows across the region. From tackling marine plastic pollution to creating sustainable fashion and utilizing digital tools for coastal conservation, these environmental leaders are making waves of change. Join them as they empower environmental actions, fostering a sustainable future for our planet. Let us build a cleaner, greener world together!