RAOUL WALLENBERG INSTITUTE
OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN LAW

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Advancing the Rights-Based Environmental Governance in Asia and the Pacific



The Regional Asia Pacific Programme (RAPP2), "Advancing Just Transitions to Climate-Resilient and Nature-Positive Societies," was operationalized to strengthen the enabling environments for human rights-based and gender-responsive sustainable development. The program utilized a multi-level strategy to bridge the gap between normative standards and institutional practice.

Program at a Glance

Overall Objective	To contribute to just, inclusive, and sustainable development through mutually reinforcing protection of human rights, gender equality, and the environment.
Programme Period	May 2024 – June 2026
Total Budget	SEK 20,300,000
Funding Agency	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
Key Partner Organizations	AmerBon Advocates, Asia Pacific Forum, Ateneo de Manila University School of Law, Ateneo de Naga University, CamEd Business School, Djokosoetono Research Centre, Faculty of Legal Studies, South Asian University, Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University, International Commission of Jurists Minikino Film, PAHAM Padjadjaran University, Publish What You Pay Indonesia, School of Business and Management ITB, The Royal University of Law and Economics, and Thailand Institute of Justice.

Key Takeaways

RAPP2 showed that rights-based environmental governance becomes more durable when knowledge products are embedded and co-developed in institutions. The programme's strongest results emerged where teaching materials, monitoring tools, and legal resources were linked to universities, NHRIs, and judicial processes.

Practical tools mattered as much as training. Case studies, blended learning modules, repositories, and draft procedural guidance created clear pathways from learning to institutional use, helping move stakeholders beyond awareness to application.

The programme generated models with strong potential for adoption and scale. Several approaches developed under RAPP2—including blended learning for legal actors and case-based teaching for responsible business conduct—are already suitable for adaptation in new settings.

Sustainability is strongest where ownership and institutional fit are already in place. The programme leaves behind more than outputs: it leaves tested methods, partner commitment, and practical entry points for continued work on climate mobility, environmental justice, and responsible business conduct. In addition, regional training and exchange activities helped foster lasting relationships among practitioners and institutions, creating a foundation for continued collaboration and knowledge sharing beyond the programme's lifespan.

What the Programme Achieved

At the level of overall results, the programme showed how targeted investment in knowledge generation, capacity strengthening, institutional engagement, and regional exchange can produce effects that extend beyond immediate participation. Across the full implementation period across ASEAN countries, 553 participants engaged in programme-supported processes, with women representing the largest share including representatives from higher education institutions, judicial bodies, NHRIs, civil society organisations, government institutions, and the private sector.

288 **female**	228 **male**	37 **preferred not to disclose their gender**



More importantly, the programme helped move stakeholders from awareness to application. Teaching materials were prepared for integration into university courses, monitoring tools were linked to institutional action pathways, blended learning curricula were adapted for reuse, and regional dialogues informed live legal and policy processes. From a knowledge product perspective, this demonstrates that RAPP2 did not merely produce content; it generated evidence on how knowledge can be embedded, reused, and scaled.

A central pillar of the program was its strategic alignment with ASEAN, notably through its support for operationalizing the ASEAN Declaration on the Right to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment (ADER) and the submission of technical recommendations to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR).

Key judicial achievements included supporting the revision of the Philippines' environmental procedural rules as a tested legal model for regional adoption and developing a Regional Guidebook to harmonize environmental adjudication standards across ASEAN member states. These accomplishments, coupled with lessons learned regarding partner-led implementation, have established a strong foundation for the upcoming RAPP3 phase intended to scale these results across the Asia-Pacific.



Performance Analysis by Intermediate Outcome (IO)

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 1

Under Intermediate Outcome 1, the programme demonstrated that a human rights-based approach to climate mobility and climate change adaptation can be effectively integrated into institutional practices when institutions are supported with both conceptual framing and practical tools. In higher education, training needs assessments identified 20 curriculum entry points, faculty members deepened their understanding of the links between climate change, mobility, human rights, and gender, and partner institutions developed plans to introduce the material into future teaching. Importantly, the knowledge gained through the programme was already translated into practice, with participating faculty members co-developing and delivering three university courses that incorporated these themes following their training.

In parallel, the programme helped NHRIs strengthen their understanding of the links between climate mobility and human rights and explore how these issues relate to their existing mandates. Through the co-development of the *Climate Mobility and Human Rights Monitoring Toolkit* and collaboration with partner universities, stakeholders were supported in identifying practical ways to apply this knowledge within their institutional contexts. The central lesson from this outcome is clear: institutional uptake is more likely when awareness-raising and capacity strengthening are accompanied by practical tools and guidance that align with existing mandates and functions.

> *"The workshop helped us see that climate mobility is not a new issue separate from our mandate—it is a human rights issue that we can address through our existing monitoring, investigation, and advocacy functions."*
>
> ***- NHRI Officer***

> *"What was most valuable was moving from discussion to action. The toolkit gave us practical ways to integrate climate mobility and human rights into our institution's work."*
>
> ***- Nepal NHRC***

> *"The workshop created a space to reflect, learn from peers, and rethink how climate change, mobility, and human rights can be embedded across different academic fields."*
>
> ***- Lecturer from the University of Peradeniya***

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 2

Intermediate Outcome 2 generated practical knowledge on how access to environmental justice can be strengthened through blended learning, regional case analysis, and peer exchange. The programme developed a repository of 12 landmark cases and used this analysis to design a specialised course with a total of 14 modules for lawyers, prosecutors, and NHRI staff. Participants reported stronger knowledge, greater confidence, and improved readiness to address transboundary environmental harm using rights-based and gender-responsive approaches. Importantly, the course model also demonstrated replication potential beyond the initial cohort, showing how modular legal learning products can serve as effective vehicles for dissemination. The success of this curriculum and BLC led to its normative influence beyond the region, with its replication by RWI Regional Africa in Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya.

Public Interst Lawyers, ELAC Philippines:

"Learning from the sessions, and from the other participants, even during our free time, was a gift in itself. This event gave me a lot of ideas: our team at ELAC, together with Conservation Litigation under the Darwin Initiative, will be developing a module specifically on Environmental Tort."

Human Rights Enforcement Officer, Komnas HAM:

"Environmental protection is not only an ecological concern but a fundamental human rights issue. This training reinforced the importance of integrating environmental considerations into my work- ensuring our advocacy protects both ecological sustainability and the rights of the communities most affected by environmental harm"



INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 3

Under Intermediate Outcome 3, the programme generated valuable experience in using case-based learning to advance responsible business conduct in the energy transition sectors. In Cambodia, the program institutionalized the agribusiness sector focus on Amru Rice and Biofuels sector case studies into the Master of Laws and business programs at CamEd and ELBML/RULE. The two case-based teaching methods were utilized by other universities – including American University of Phnom Penh and National University of Management. In Indonesia, the program developed a specialized case study on PT Vale Indonesia and Critical Minerals/Nickel, which was integrated into the SBM ITB Business Case Centre to address human rights due diligence in the energy transition. The most significant change was not only the improved understanding of due diligence and responsible business conduct, but the creation of teaching ecosystems able to sustain and expand this knowledge across institutions and disciplines.

> *"Case study-based learning is more engaging and allows students to participate more actively in the learning process."*
>
> ***Legal Assistant, CSP & Associates Law Group***

> *"Working on a real case study made theoretical concepts more practical and meaningful."*
>
> ***Legal Officer, MekongNet***



INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 4

Intermediate Outcome 4 added a critical dissemination and systems dimension to the programme. Communication and MEAL functions helped convert technical work into accessible stories, evidence, and public-facing knowledge capable of traveling beyond the original activities.

Operationalized creative advocacy through the "Film for Change" event at Minikino Film Week, utilizing the award-winning film *The Swallowing Sea* to bridge public awareness and global policy.

Maintained a high-profile presence at global forums, including COP29 and COP30, to position Southeast Asian environmental rights and climate mobility on the international stage.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME 5

Through initiatives under Intermediate Outcome 5, the environmental rule of law workstream illustrated how regional dialogue and national legal reform can reinforce one another. Support to the revision of the Philippines' Rules of Procedure for Environmental Cases, together with the development of a regional guidebook process, generated knowledge that is directly relevant to judicial actors across Southeast Asia. Building on this dual approach, the workstream actively facilitated the cross-pollination of best practices by convening regional judicial dialogues. These platforms allowed jurists from neighboring countries to analyze the Philippines' pioneering legal architecture. Ultimately, this iterative loop between national application and regional synthesis demonstrated that true progress in the environmental rule of law is not built in isolation. Instead, it thrives when local legal victories are systematically analyzed, documented, and transformed into a collective toolkit for transnational judicial resilience across Southeast Asia.

Together, these outcomes show that knowledge products are most influential when they are linked to institutional processes, validated through stakeholder engagement, and positioned for continued use after project funding ends.

> *"We learn about best practices in ASEAN countries. So, this guidebook will be good for us in ASEAN. We learn from the Philippines, learn from Indonesia, learn from Thailand, and many countries that they have specific procedural law in terms of how to best practice to examine environmental cases."*
>
> ***Judge from Indonesia***



Lessons for Future Programming and Dissemination

Several lessons from RAPP2 are especially relevant for future programming and knowledge dissemination. First, partner-led and institutionally anchored approaches consistently produced the strongest results because they increased ownership and created credible pathways for uptake. Second, capacity strengthening was most effective when paired with practical tools such as teaching packages, toolkits, case repositories, blended learning modules, and reform drafts. Third, interdisciplinary collaboration added clear value by linking legal, academic, and civil society perspectives, although it required time and careful coordination. Fourth, experience from implementation confirmed that adaptable and modular knowledge products are more likely to be reused, transferred, and scaled across contexts. These lessons suggest that dissemination should focus not only on what the programme did, but on how its methods and products can be applied by others.

Opportunities for Scaling Up

The programme created several clear opportunities for scaling. The blended learning formats used for environmental justice and NHRI capacity development proved adaptable and cost-effective, making them well-suited to wider regional or thematic replication. Curriculum materials developed with university partners can be extended to additional institutions and disciplines, while the responsible business conduct case studies and its teaching package offer a practical model for developing more similar case studies and expanding work in other transition sectors and countries. In the judicial and policy sphere, the Philippines procedural reform process and the regional guidebook initiative provide concrete reference points for broader uptake across Southeast Asia. Seen through a knowledge dissemination lens, these scaling opportunities show that the programme generated not only results, but also models that can be transferred, adapted, and expanded.

The catalytic role of the program was further validated by additional support from the British Embassy in Manila and USAID, who co-supported regional judicial dialogues and the ongoing development of the regional guidebook.

Opportunities for Sustainability

Opportunities for sustainability are strongest where programme outputs are already embedded in institutional routines and where partner ownership is clear. Teaching resources integrated into university courses, NHRI monitoring tools aligned with institutional mandates, reusable legal learning materials, and judicial reform processes already underway all have good prospects for continued use. The programme's thematic relevance also reinforces sustainability, as climate mobility, environmental justice, and responsible business conduct are likely to grow in importance across the region.

Overall, RAPP2 offers a strong body of knowledge products for dissemination because it leaves behind more than completed activities: it provides tested tools, institutional lessons, practical models, and a network of regional practitioners for advancing rights-based environmental governance well beyond the life of the programme.

Taken together, these experiences position RAPP2 not only as a completed programme, but as a practical reference point for future rights-based environmental action across Asia and the Pacific.

Contact Person:

Windi Arini, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific (a.i.)
windi.arini@rwi.lu.se

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