

## **APACPH Secretary General's Report: September 2016-August 2017**

**Prepared by: Secretary General, Professor Bruce Maycock, PhD**

This report details activity that has occurred in the since the Tokyo AGM and Executive meeting. It reports activity related to the Global Challenges Research Fund, activities undertaken by the Secretary general to promote APACPH and potential new members.

### **International Promotion of APACPH**

At the Tokyo AGM, I asked members to contact me with research proposals suitable for the Global Challenges Research Fund. As a consequence I received one proposal from Vietnam which is still in discussion with UK Universities.

On the 17/10/2016, I copied the APACPH Executive into an email stating that "I have copied all of the Executive as I am hoping we can identify a couple of projects to pursue. Given the need to manage this process closely to ensure there is benefit to APACPH and its members I am hoping the Executive might be able to identify potential projects in the lower and middle income countries that we could champion. I think the ideal model is a multi-institutional partnership between a UK institution, an APACPH member from a lower or middle income country and also an APACPH member from a higher income country or an APACPH member that is strong in research. That way the APACPH members can support each other".

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of November I received a request from Plymouth and Exeter Universities regarding support for a GCRF grant (see appendix one). As the University of Malaya was specifically identified I contacted Prof Data Dr Mohd Amin Jalaludin, Professor Awang, and Prof Maznah from the University of Malaya and had a reply that same day.

The submission was sent with APACPH support and also had support from members (appendix 2). I have been notified that the submission was successful and that implementation of the proposal will occur in 2018.

I will continue to pursue research and funding opportunities for our members.

### **Promotion of APACPH**

Attended the **1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on Global Health 2016 in Jakarta November 9-11, 2016**. My trip was funded and supported by Curtin University.

This was an excellent conference with the highest level of government support. It was well coordinated, with good speakers, and excellent organisation.

During the two days I:

- Had morning tea and a discussion with Dr Anung Sugihantono the Director General of Public Health. He expressed an interest in partnering with any projects we do with UI. I have subsequently written to him regarding potential GCRF.

- I attending a round table lunch with Prof, Dr Bambang Brodjonegoro Minister of National Development Planning / Head of National Development Planning Agency. He gave a keynote on SDG's and said the priority areas were maternal mortality, poverty and malnutrition with 37% of toddlers experiencing stunting, and prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- I had conversations with Prof Ede and Prof Agustin. Ede is President of the Public Health association and Prof Agustin is Chair of the Indonesian Universities Public Health group (as well as countless other National groupings and National working parties and Dean of Public Health). We discussed the possibility of submitting an application to the GCRF.
- Met with Prof Sabarinah, Vice Dean for Education Research and Student Affairs, to discuss capacity building and potential research.
- Other people met were Dr Rustina, Dean Nursing and Vice dean education, research and Student affairs, Prof Wiku coordinator of Indonesia one health university network,

### **Potential new Members**

I met with DVC Research Professor David Morrison and DVC International Professor Lyn Karstadt regarding Murdoch University joining. Paper work is currently being completed.

Met with and wrote to VC Peter Dawkins and Provost Kerri-lee Krause from Victoria University asking them to continue as active members.

### **Other issues of note.**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> May I attended a strategic planning meeting sponsored and supported by Mahidol University and APACPH. Along with other members of the Executive we spent time identifying strategic priorities and new directions for APACPH (discussed elsewhere).

On 17-20 September as Secretary General I will be presenting at the Faculty of Public Health UI Science Festival, and discussing competency development, required for rural and urban practice.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of July I sent a letter of support for Professor Baker to the DVC International and Development at Queensland University of Technology (see Appendix 3) and the following day received the response below. .

Dear Bruce

Thank you very much for the note and the recognition of Professor Baker in this role. The principles of quality engagement and genuine long term collaboration in teaching and research are very much consistent with the strategy of QUT and in particular our Faculty of Health. The excellent Executive team of the Faculty are very much aligned with these principles for international engagement in public health and I am sure see continuing connections with APACPH.

Regards

Scott

**Scott Sheppard | Deputy Vice-Chancellor, International and Development**

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## **Appendix 1. Proposal from Plymouth and Exeter Universities.**

### **GCRF Building capacity for planning for sustainable interactions with marine ecosystems for health, wellbeing, food and livelihoods of coastal communities.**

**Led by** Professor Melanie C Austen at Plymouth Marine Laboratory, and Professor Lora Fleming at the European Centre for Environment and Human Health at Exeter University

**UK Partners:** Plymouth Marine Laboratory; Exeter University; Plymouth University; North Devon Biosphere Reserve Foundation

**SE Asia Co Investigators:** Hanoi University, Vietnam; Western Philippines University and Palawan State University, Philippines; University of Malaya, Malaysia

**Partner:** UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme National Committee in China (to be confirmed)

**Supporting agency:** Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium of Public Health.

**Vision:** To develop interdisciplinary research capacity that informs and facilitates novel and innovative application of planning in the marine environment to improve economic growth, food security, and health and wellbeing for coastal communities through the sustainable use of marine resources

### **Objectives**

1. To bring together an interdisciplinary, international team of researchers, businesses and communities to provide a research base to support spatial planning in the marine environment (marine planning) through a novel integration of ecosystem services, ecosystem valuation (monetary and non-monetary), ecological public health and governance approaches.
2. To co-develop research capability of the team by addressing actual marine resource management, economic, health and wellbeing and conservation challenges using case studies of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (BRs) and marine protected areas in South East and East Asia.
3. To co-develop through research appropriate stakeholder engagement, knowledge and tools towards optimising regional and local food security, economic growth, social outcomes, and health and well-being outcomes for coastal communities, whilst being environmentally sustainable.
4. To use research to identify ‘what works’ in fostering wellbeing, protecting human and ecosystem health, and achieving sustainable development.
5. To use the lessons learned to further co-develop and apply methods and tools to support decision making and marine planning at local, national and regional scales.

Marine and coastal ecosystems support local economies, and health and well-being of coastal communities through the provision and exploitation of marine ecosystem services (e.g. farmed and wild capture protein-rich seafood for local consumption and sale, coastal flood

and storm defences, tourism, leisure, marine renewable energy, and climate regulation,). As demographics drive rapid urban and coastal population growth, the ability of coastal and marine ecosystems globally to continue sustaining food security, and human health and wellbeing is in doubt, while at the same time there is a drive to achieve economic growth. Multiple and interacting pressures are being exerted on the marine environment and its ecosystems, which further interact with the simultaneous impacts of environmental changes brought about by climate change, such as increasing sea temperatures, extreme weather events, ocean acidification and reduced oxygen levels. The pressures act directly and indirectly, causing many possible changes in marine life, altering ecosystem functioning and processes, which can in turn affect the provision of the ecosystem services on which coastal communities depend. Coastal areas are therefore a crucible of environmental and social risks, exacerbated by the growing challenges of climate and other environmental change. Spatial planning of the uses of coastal and marine space and resources (known as marine planning) is increasingly being seen as a way to better manage areas where the demands are rapidly increasing, in the same way that planning is routinely used terrestrially. Planning involves first understanding the policies and requirements (economic, social, health, wellbeing) associated with different uses of marine resources and services; the interactions and conflicts of different uses and users; the potential and realised benefits of different marine ecosystem services; the carrying capacity of the ecosystem and the degradation and harm that different uses can create and Thus far, in most DAC countries, marine planning is an aspiration that has not been implemented, largely due to lack of know-how.

By focussing around existing governance structures at the coast of Biosphere Reserves (Vietnam, Philippines, China) and marine protected areas (Malaysia) the project already taps into existing networks, with some associated research expertise and local infrastructure (as well as identifiable sustainable development challenges) where a need and application for an increase in research capacity can readily be identified. These can also be used as learning systems within wider networks to which the acquired knowledge and approaches can be further spread both regionally within South-East and East Asia research but also internationally through the larger UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme. The UK team has extensive and deep experience in applying integrated, interdisciplinary research in marine systems, including in DAC countries, spanning governance, stakeholder engagement, public health and wellbeing, natural and social science including spatial modelling. A programme of interactions between the UK and overseas partners will be developed to ensure transfer of research skills and co-development of research and hence an increase in research capacity for all partners. This will start with face to face meetings, will include formal training in both the UK, overseas, and via virtual media, exchange visits and secondments for intense training and collaboration, and mentoring, accompanied by regular project meetings both virtually and physically in the region.

The interdisciplinary research will focus on studies, data gathering, analyses and policy recommendations for a mix of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for each of the Biosphere Reserves (BRs) and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the proposal. We will use the BRs as learning laboratories. The research methodology will be designed to allow comparisons of results deriving from the different sites. Our proposal already links to SDG 14 (Life below water), SDG3 (good health and wellbeing), SDG 17 (partnerships for SDGs), SDG 15 (life on Land) and SDG 13 (climate action). We anticipate that at some sites research will specifically link to SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG7 (alternative energy), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger).

Appendix 2.



5/12/2016

Dear Prof Austen

**GCRF Building capacity for planning for sustainable interactions with coastal ecosystems for health, wellbeing, food and livelihoods.**

As Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium of Public Health (APACPH) I am writing this letter to confirm our support for and engagement with the proposal *Building capacity for planning for sustainable interactions with coastal ecosystems for health, wellbeing, food and livelihoods in coastal communities* that you are submitting to the Research Councils UK for support under the Global Challenges Research Fund. This project will build research capacity of our members and contribute to the wellbeing of coastal communities.

APACPH is a consortium of 84 schools of medicine and public health (and one regional government membership). We have regional offices in Malaysia, China, Indonesia, USA, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, SE Asia, and Australia. Examples of member institutions include the National University of Singapore, National Taiwan University, Fudan University, Peking University, University of Malaya, Seoul National University, University of Tokyo, Monash University, Deakin University, University of New South Wales and Queensland University of Technology and many institutions from lower and middle income countries in the region.

My role as Secretary General is to build the academic capacity of our members and contribute to health and wellbeing in the region. This application addresses an important public health issue with large regional impact. The support from the Global Challenges Research Funds is essential as many of our members from lower and middle income countries have very few resources and require further support to develop capacity in this area. Further, in this region there are significant tensions impacting upon coastal developments including the tensions between urban development, agriculture, climate change, salt water inundation and tourism, all of which impact upon the health and wellbeing of coastal peoples.

As Secretary General I have initiated and am coordinating the linking of APACPH members with external expertise to build regional research and other capacities. To this end I have had conversations with Sir Steve Smith (Vice-Chancellor of Exeter University) and have initiated discussions between my members and academics leading this proposal. While we have not worked together, the discussions with Vice-Chancellor Smith indicated that these partnership are intended to be deep and ongoing. Where my members have indicated an interest in this proposal I have initiated discussions between the relevant academics.

Additionally I have sought to create high level connections between the Vice-Chancellors to ensure there is high level support for the proposal.

I will continue to provide support for this proposal by continuing to link APACPH members with the UK members and also to link the UK partners to relevant regional government officials. Further, I hope you will be able to present to the Dean's and Senior Leaders group at our annual regional meeting in Korea in 2017. At this Annual meeting we will also hold our annual conference which for 2017 has a focus on the Sustainability Goals. The *Building capacity for planning for sustainable interactions with coastal ecosystems for health, wellbeing, food and livelihoods in coastal communities*, proposal links to or has the potential to impact upon SDGs 1, 2, 3 (poverty, hunger and good health and wellbeing) which are core to the goals of APACPH members. The primary focus of this proposal is about capacity building. It will be sustainable if it achieves its goals of building multidisciplinary teams, building research and other capacities and if the relationships between partners are deep and respectful.

The role of the Secretary General will be to connect the UK partners with regional members who will be active partners in the project. The selection of members will be based upon the specific aspects being investigated. APACPH members that have already expressed interest in being involved include the University of Malaya, University of Indonesia, and the Fiji School of Medicine. As Secretary General I will provide network support, and will participate as a preliminary advisor until the partnerships with my member organisations are fully developed.

I look forward to working with the UK team and building the capacity of APACPH members, to help address the significant public health issues associated with coastal ecosystems.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Bruce Maycock  
Secretary General  
Asia Pacific Academic Consortium of Public Health.  
Professor Public Health Curtin University  
Director: Collaboration for Evidence, Research and Impact in Public Health

### APPENDIX 3.

Dear Professor Sheppard,

I am writing to you as Secretary General of the Asia Pacific Academic Consortium (APACPH) of Public Health to express my thanks to your institution for its support and the international leadership it has provided. For the last two years Queensland University of Technology via Professor Philip Baker's appointment as Australian Regional Director has provided national and international leadership to APACPH. As a member of the APACPH Executive Dr Baker has been instrumental in shifting the direction of APACPH and in particular the movement to increasing the focus upon research collaborations and the sharing of learning and teaching expertise.

APACPH is a consortium of 84 schools of medicine and public health including most of the Asian Universities in the top 150 in the ARWU rankings. Recently we have had accepted membership applications from the Director General of Health Taiwan. APACPH has regional offices in Malaysia, China, Indonesia, USA, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, SE Asia, and Australia. Examples of member institutions include the National University of Singapore, National Taiwan University, Fudan University, Peking University, University of Malaya, Seoul National University, University of Tokyo, Monash University, Deakin University, University of New South Wales and Queensland University of Technology. Previous Executive members include previous Ministers for Health, current Vice Chancellors, and Vice Presidents of Asian Universities.

As part of our recent strategic review we have initiated an international project to build research networks and partnerships involving ten UK universities, APACPH members and the £1.5 billion Global Challenges Research Fund. In 2016 we submitted a multi-institution grant led by Plymouth Marine Laboratory and Exeter University that was successful. It is our intent to further develop this network and secure further research funding for APACPH members. The forthcoming General Assembly in Korea will provide the opportunity to develop several research initiatives.

At our recent Executive meeting we considered and endorsed a proposal from Dr Baker to strengthen learning and teaching collaborations between APACPH institutions and to provide a forum via our APACPH conferences to showcase excellent teaching and educational initiatives in public health. Several institutions (such as the University of Southern California, and Mahidol University) are interested in curriculum sharing and there is interest in joint degrees and student and staff exchange.

Over the next four year I believe there will be substantial opportunity for APACPH members to build research and teaching collaborations. Typically these will need to be led by high quality institutions and it is my hope that Australian institutions will be central to these new endeavours.

Yours sincerely



Professor Bruce Maycock

Secretary General APACPH.

