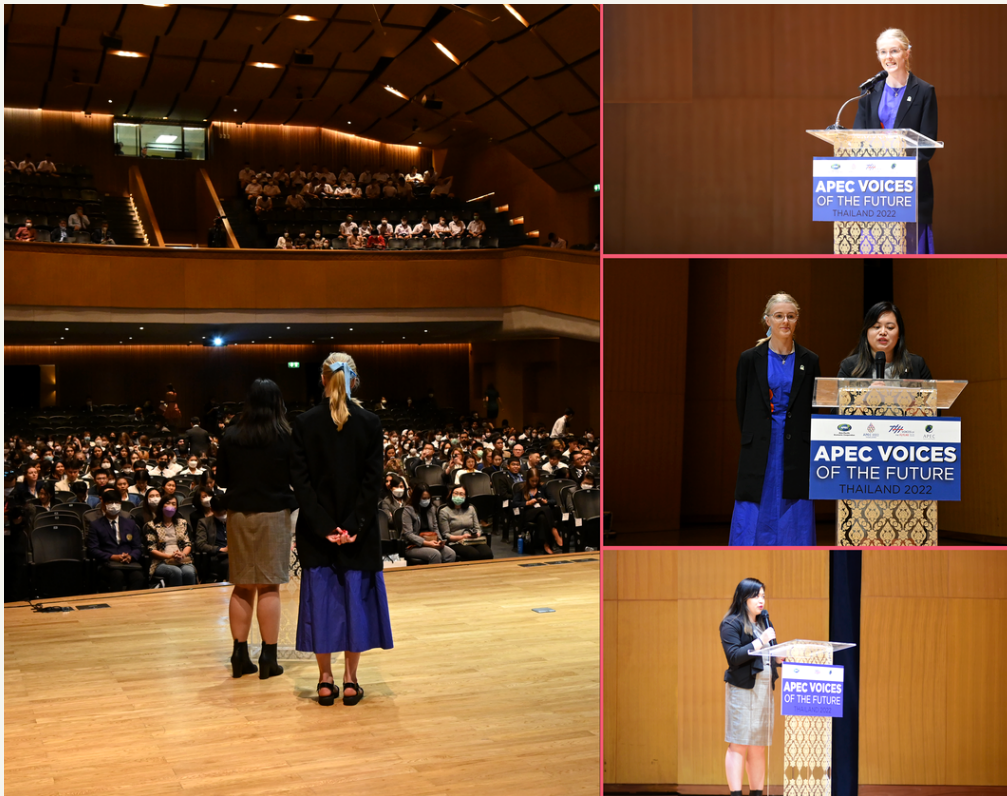


# REFLECTIONS ON

## APEC Voices of the Future 2022



**2021 JUNE MAYNE GOULD LEADERSHIP AWARDEES REPORT**

By Sophie Handford and Tracy Han

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Summary of APEC VoF 2022**
- 3 Sophie's Top 10**
- 5 Tracy's Top 10**
- 7 Learnings & Future Opportunities**
- 8 Acknowledgements**

# INTRODUCTION

## 2021 AWARD WINNERS

### APEC VOICES OF THE FUTURE

Held concurrently with APEC Summits annually, the APEC Voices of the Future program is a meeting of exchange amongst young people from the various APEC member economies. The program seeks to expand horizons, connect youth with leadership potential and promote in-depth cultural exchange within the region.

### THE JUNE MAYNE GOULD LEADERSHIP AWARD

The June Mayne Gould Leadership Award for the APEC Voices of the Future, which was launched at the APEC Voices 2011 in Honolulu, is named in honour of June Mayne Gould for her immense contributions in the development of youth leaders in the 21 APEC Member Economies and will be presented annually to an outstanding student who has demonstrated sincere, positive, encouraging, helpful character and leadership throughout the APEC Voices Week, greatly contributing to the program by helping other students do their best and get the most out of their APEC experience.

The recipient(s) of the June Mayne Gould Leadership Award also receives an APEC Voices Scholarship to the following year's APEC Voices program, where the award winner serves as a junior staff member to the APEC Secretariat Team leading the APEC Voices Week. All award winners will be recorded on a special commemorative plaque placed at the APEC Voices Secretariat, which is based at the National Youth Achievement Award Council of Singapore.



### SOPHIE HANDFORD

Kia ora! I'm Sophie, from Kāpiti in Aotearoa, New Zealand. APEC has potential to catalyze hope, empowerment, equity and inclusion, for the economies in the region but also young people within them.

I'm constantly inspired by the Young Elected Members I get to call colleagues, in my role as a Kāpiti Coast District Councillor. Young people are leaders in the here and now, and hold much of the vision, energy and ambition needed for us to overcome the climate crisis, for example. Back in 2019, we mobilized 170,000 people across NZ for climate justice. This snowballed from being a few friends & I, to coordinating a team of over 40. Having just been re-elected last year, I've now been appointed the Chair of Strategy, Operations & Finance.



### TRACY HAN

Kia ora, my name is Tracy. I am from Tamaki Makarau (Auckland), Aotearoa New Zealand. It was a real honour to receive the June Mayne Gould Leadership Award in 2021, and to have the opportunity to join the NZ Voices Delegation and be a part of APEC in 2022.

My involvement with APEC Voices dates back to 2017, when I was selected as one of four delegates to attend the forum in Da Nang, Vietnam. My experience of attending the programme in 2017 made me come to the realisation the importance of the voices of our youth. To ensure there was a youth voice as part of the planning and implementation of APEC 2021, I led the NZ Voices Alumni Working Committee. At present, I have the privilege of being a director at the APEC Voices NZ Trust, partnering with CAPEs to ensure the value of the Voices experience can continue to be accessed by as many New Zealand youth. Outside of this, I am also researching the experiences of the second generation from refugee and migrant backgrounds, aligning closely with my passion for diversity, inclusion and social equity.

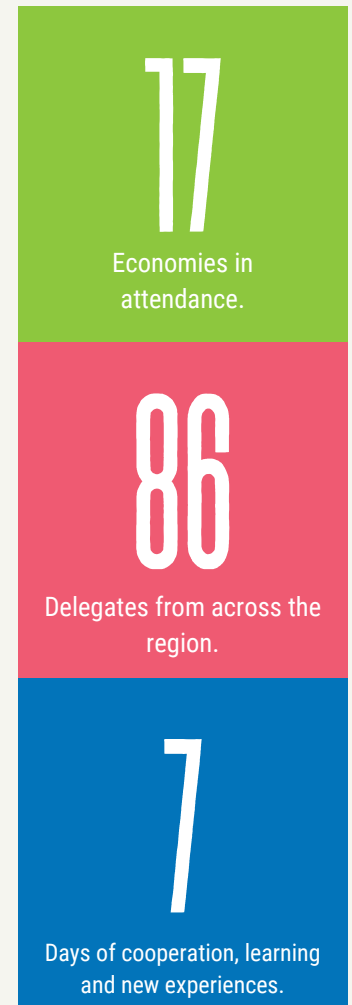
# SUMMARY

The theme for 2022's APEC meetings, including the APEC Voices of the Future Summit, was **Open. Connect. Balance** - prioritising making APEC **open** to all opportunities, **connected** in all dimensions and **balanced** in all aspects. As we grapple with being in the midst of health, economic and environmental crises, it is vital we promote long-term, future-proofed growth that is resilient, inclusive and sustainable.

The 2021 theme for APEC was **Join, Work, Grow. Together. Haumi ē, Hui ē, Tāiki ē** reflecting the collaborative effort required to reach common goals. Examples of this included combatting the adverse impacts of the COVID19 pandemic, the climate crisis and economic inequities. The focus over the last few years appears to have expanded and deepened to reflect the grasp we now have on some of the challenges in our midst, particularly now as we navigate the post pandemic world. We have the ability now to re-open our borders safely, to connect across the region and collaboratively foster a shared future we will feel proud to pass on to our future generations.

A significant part of the discussion pertained to diversity, equity and inclusion. The importance of women, indigenous peoples, youth and marginalised group voices was recognised as an opportunity, and something we must collectively recognise and give relevance to across all contexts.

The host country, Thailand, created an effective environment and framework for these dialogues to take place, both within the youth and wider context. This was particularly significant, as the 2022 APEC CEO and Voices of the Future Summits marked one of the first following a number of years of border & travel restrictions, due to COVID19.



## The key events and outings include:

- APEC Voices New Zealand Pre-departure briefing in Wellington (October 2022)
- NZ Embassy Visit in Thailand with Melissa
- APEC Voices of the Future Youth Summit 2022
- Drafting and presentation of the 2022 Youth Declaration
- Business visits to Naraya, PPT LNG
- Google Asia Pacific Let's Code Launch
- APEC CEO Summit 2022
- Meeting with ABAC New Zealand
- Meeting the Rt. Hon Prime Minister of New Zealand - Jacinda Ardern at the APEC CEO Summit 2022
- Education New Zealand Networking Event - with Minister for Trade and Export Growth, Damien O'Connor

# Sophie's TOP 10

...in no particular order!

2

## APEC CEO Summit



Witnessing our PM, Jacinda Ardern, address world leaders and CEOs, with pragmatism and compassion. Strengthening my understanding of how cooperation functions within the APEC context, and avenues through which real change for people and planet can be achieved.

4

## MCing; working with panelists & supporting the delegates



Was a huge privilege to represent Aotearoa and the June Mayne Gould award, through this opportunity. Despite being nervous, the magnitude of ensuring this experience was the most empowering and inspiring one possible for the delegates dominated my mind and actions.

1

## Supporting the Thailand Working Committee



Gaining insight into how the APEC VoF programme is coordinated and brought to life, and meeting the people that make it happen. A huge honour to be a part of making the experience what it was for the delegates, and contributing my skills and perspective.

3

## Cultural outings eg. Wat Arun Temple



Being inspired by the sights and stories of Bangkok. The contrast between our surroundings in New Zealand and when we were in Thailand were stark in the best of ways, enlightening the rich cultural experiences that can be gained in the APEC region.

5

## Reconnecting, and connecting with, people that inspire me



Activities that invited delegate collaboration across economies were a highlight. Conversations traversed some of the region's most pressing issues and opportunities, and ways in which we can collectively be a part of the solution through our individual lives and wider societal change.

# Sophie's TOP 10 cont...

6 Reflecting on the huge opportunities held in collaboration and unity.



The ability to listen to, and truly hear, diverse thoughts and perspectives is powerful and has the opportunity to land us with a better future than the one we're headed for now. Through greater open, constructive and balanced conversation paired with listening and the desire to understand, I found hope that we can find a way through.

7 CEO Summit Exhibitions.



The Bio-Circular Green economy exhibition at the CEO Summit was engaging, interactive and useful, alongside the wider plethora of exhibits which created the chance to connect with business leaders, new concepts, campaigns and products, along with super cool people.

8 Being in the company of, and learning from, our Aotearoa delegation.



Grateful to have been alongside our incredibly delegation from New Zealand. Their ideas, leadership and attitude contributed immensely to both my own experience, but also the experiences of many others present at APEC VoF 2022. Their knowledge, passion and energy is truly something to behold.

9 Experiencing the hospitality of Thailand, the Land of Smiles.



Had one of the most special birthdays I feel I will ever experience, with the warmth of Thai hospitality and culture truly showing itself. The smiles, love and manaaki from the Thai working committee, delegates and hosts was something that'll be etched in my memories forever.

10 Making lifelong friendships.



Never did I expect to make deep, and lasting, connections with new friends in such a short space of time, but it truly demonstrated how having shared values, and an open heart and mind, can lead you to the most wonderful of people. So thankful.

# Tracy's TOP 10

...in no particular order!

2

## Reconnecting with past APEC VoF Alumni



The opportunity to reconnect with familiar faces, past delegates, alumni and some educators from the APEC Voices programme, that has been running for over 20 years has been incredibly valuable. Some of these connections highlight the special intercultural friendship and bonds that are made. Pictured above with me are my dear friends, Jeerawut C. from APEC VoF 2017 and Sophie from APEC VoF 2021, also the team of MC's.

4

## Pre-departure Briefing in Wellington, New Zealand



Prior to our travels to Thailand, a pre-departure briefing was organised by the Centres of Asia Pacific Excellence and the APEC Voices NZ Trust to prepare our delegation for our participation at the APEC Leaders' Week in 2022. Highlights included a discussion about the role of APEC with former APEC Executive Director Alan Bollard, a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) New Zealand Headquarters in Wellington as well networking functions with key people involved with the APEC Voices New Zealand.

1

## MC'ing the 2022 APEC Voices Youth Summit



The plenary session brought together almost 90 APEC Voices of the Future Delegates from across the Asia-Pacific economies and their educators. As part of this session, representatives from each economy were given the platform to present their perspective of the role of youth in relation to the 2022 theme. It was a privilege to share the stage with such talented and insightful youth and listen to the innovative ideas they had to share.

3

## Travelling with the 2022 NZ Voices Delegation



Couldn't have asked for a better delegation to have travelled to Thailand and partake in the APEC Voices of the Future Programme with. The knowledge and insights from each and every person has been phenomenal. Here is a photo with the delegation at the Cultural Evening and final farewell party for the APEC Voices of the Future programme 2022.

5

## 2022 APEC CEO Summit and BCG Exhibition



The APEC CEO Summit is the highlight of the APEC Voices of the Future programme each year. The New Zealand delegation were very fortunate to have a brief meeting with the Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern after her panel discussion on the topic of 'Promoting Inclusive Growth and Development in APEC.' Earlier in the week, the 2022 APEC Voices of the Future delegates were also invited to the launch of the Bio-Circular-Green Economy by Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Centre.

# Tracy's TOP 10<sub>cont...</sub>

6

## Meeting with the NZ Embassy



A follow up to our pre-departure briefings in Wellington, New Zealand also included a special visit to the New Zealand Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand the day before the programme officially started. Although we didn't get to meet the Ambassador, we were very warmly welcomed to the embassy by Deputy Ambassador, Melissa and colleague Lucy.

7

## Kōrero with NZ ABAC members



In between the sessions at the APEC CEO Summit, we met up briefly with Stephen, Malcolm, Rachel and Anna, members of the New Zealand APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) to chat about our experiences. Having an informal chat about my experiences with APEC Voices of the Future with ABAC Chair Rachel Taulelei at the rooftop of the Athenee Hotel was also a real special and exclusive moment!

8

## New Zealand Networking Dinner



After nearly a whole week in Thailand, it was lovely to be able to connect with fellow New Zealanders over in Thailand at the Networking Dinner hosted by Education New Zealand at Kai. At this function, we reconnected with our New Zealand ABAC members, Lester Khoo and our familiar contacts from the MFAT NZ. We also had the opportunity to meet with the Minister for Trade and Export Growth, Damien O'Connor.

9

## Cultural Outings



The programme set out by the Thai Working Committee was packed full of opportunities to discover, learn, observe and experience the way businesses, educational institutes and Thai society are. Some of these key experiences including our outings to PPT LNG and the Panyapiwat Institute of Management, etc.

10

## Exploring Bangkok



And of course...amidst the packed schedule that we had as part of the APEC Voices of the Future programme, we couldn't forget our excursions in between the programme to some of Bangkok's key destinations to visit amongst the Chatuchak Markets, the malls, the temples and getting around the bustling city in a tuk-tuk!



# LEARNINGS

## & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

### Learnings:

- The commonalities and differences between issues, their severity and the perspectives held on solutions, across the economies.
- Observing the drafting of the Youth Declaration, and the uphill battle this appeared to be for some.
- The importance of delegates having the opportunity to connect socially, outside of the work.
- The importance of tapping into the knowledge of previous years - acknowledging the discussions/ kōrero that have taken place in previous years - particularly in relation to the Youth Declaration.

### Future Opportunities:

- Ensuring visits and experiences throughout the programme align to a clear and consistent theme and set of values,
- Ensuring the Youth Declaration is collaborative and youth-led, and that delegates from all economies have the opportunity to feed directly into the initial notes and draft,
- Empowering alumnae both into Working Committee roles, but also onto the Leadership Council, to ensure succession and continued relevance and engagement of the APEC Voices of the Future programme,
- Follow up response to the previous year's Youth Declaration from the Host Economy,
- Establishment of a formal opportunity for alumni/past delegates to reconnect, e.g, through an alumni network that is supported by APEC Voices International,
- Handover between host economies before each years' hosting to ensure the sharing of insights,
- The bringing together of all involved parties to be on the same page, and streamline communications.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**We are both incredibly grateful to have had this experience, as well as getting to support and be a part of APEC Voices of the Future 2022. To all of the people and organisations who developed, delivered and enabled the programme to be what it was, we thank you.**

**We'd like to acknowledge and extend a special thank you to;**

**2022 APEC Voices of the Future Thai Working Committee**

Chutchaval Thanvarachon, Tipaya Thongmee, CDR Bancha Chanrathai, Wipoo Palikomol, Sahanon Pramuanchok, Chonlathis Eiamworawutthiku, Natachol Annavadhana, Jeerawut Chavanaprayoon, Nitiphat Panichchaivat, Nop Tephaval

**APEC Voices Leadership Council**

James Soh, Aileen Yap, Noel Gould on behalf of the June Mayne Gould Leadership Award

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade NZ**

Paige, Melissa, Lucy, Rebecca and Grace

**ABAC New Zealand Members**

Rachel Taulelei, Malcolm Johns, Anna Curzon, Stephen Jacobi (Alternate Member)

**APEC Voices New Zealand Trust**

Courtney Davies, Martin Marriarsource, Dale Bailey, Catherine Ward, David and Christina Ward

**Centres of Asia Pacific Excellence (CAPEs) and Te Puni Kōkiri**

Angela Davis, Bella Mory, Charlie Gao, Lee Arna Nepia

**2022 APEC Voices New Zealand delegates**

Josh Ellwood, Kaylen Hojdelewicz, Melanie Roundill, Mareikura Ikin

**WE THANK YOU  
FOR ALL OF YOUR WORK & SUPPORT.**