



‘ASEAN Blue Economy Innovation’ Project: A Year of Innovation and Regional Collaboration

Background and Overview



- Driven by a vision to accelerate the sustainable and inclusive development of ASEAN's blue economy.
- Funded by the Japan Supplementary Budget; implemented by UNDP Indonesia in collaboration with other UNDP Country Offices (3/2024 – 3/2025).
- Leverages innovation/collaboration to address pressing challenges faced by ASEAN's water ecosystems.
- Focuses on i) marine plastic pollution, ii) sustainable fisheries, iii) sustainable tourism and iv) climate issues.
- Consists of three interconnected components: i) ASEAN Blue Innovation Challenge (ABIC), ii) Incubation Program and iii) Business Matchmaking.



Project Launch Event, 14 May 2025, Nusantara Hall, ASEAN Secretariat

Project Launch Event (1/2)



Inaugurated by the Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for the AEC, the Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN, and the UNDP Resident Representative in Indonesia, the event was attended by over 130 representatives from ASEAN CPRs, Dialogue Partners, international organizations, ACCSME delegates, as well as innovators, incubator companies, academia, and research institutions.



Project Launch Event (2/2)

The launch event brings together a dynamic blend of ceremonial proceedings, insightful briefings, captivating art performances, and a high-level gathering of key stakeholders, setting the stage for impactful collaboration and innovation.





Component 1: ASEAN Blue Innovation Challenge

Concerted outreach efforts were conducted during the 3-month application period, from April 17 to July 15, 2024

- Since its launch, UNDP leveraged partnerships with ASEAN and Japan to direct and indirectly engage more than 9,000 potential applicants.
- A total of 18 online and in-person sessions attracted over 1,200 participants, providing them with in-depth guidance on the application process.
- The dedicated ABIC page on the UNDP website attracted more than 450,000 unique visitors.
- E-flyers translated into ASEAN languages were distributed across all UNDP country offices and the ASEAN Secretariat to reach diverse audiences.
- Local media outlets were actively engaged to raise awareness of ABIC and its opportunities
- Platforms such as GoogleDisplay and GoogleAds were utilized to enhance visibility, with visuals featuring local celebrities to attract a wider audience.



Innovation Challenge announcement was widely circulated.

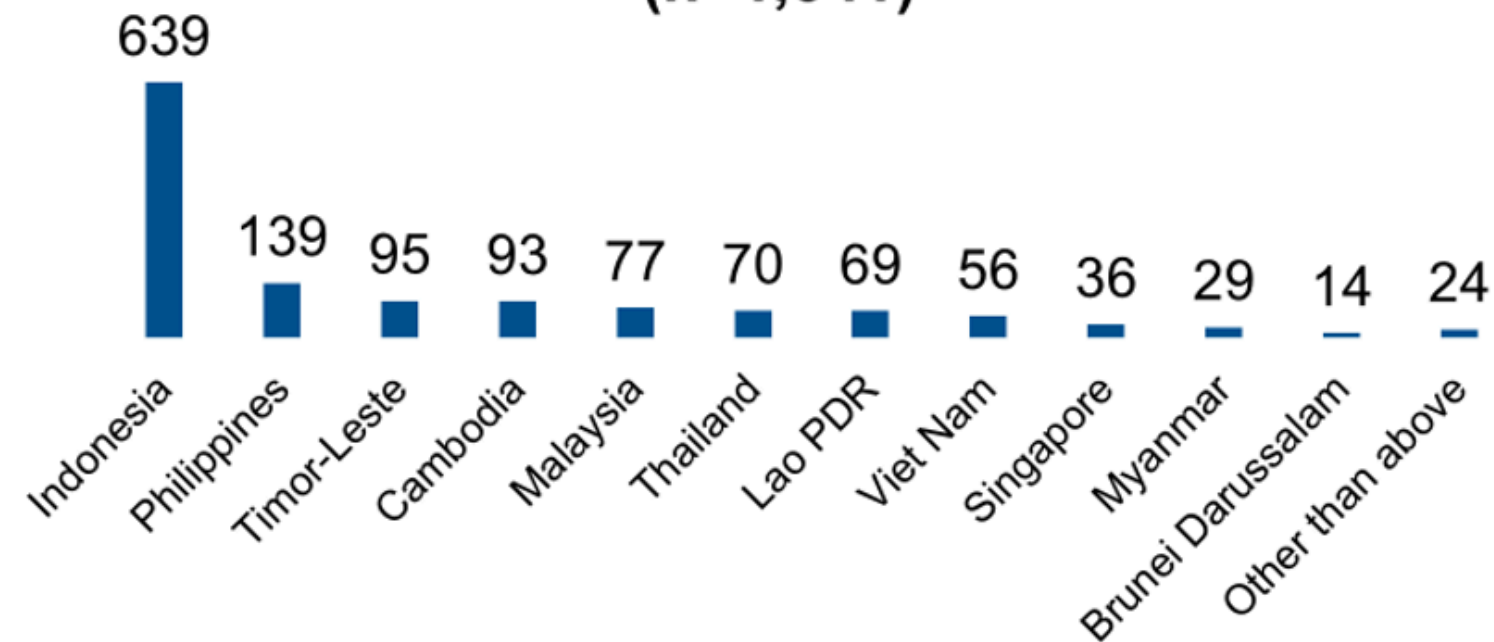


Media campaign was conducted to attract youth applicants.

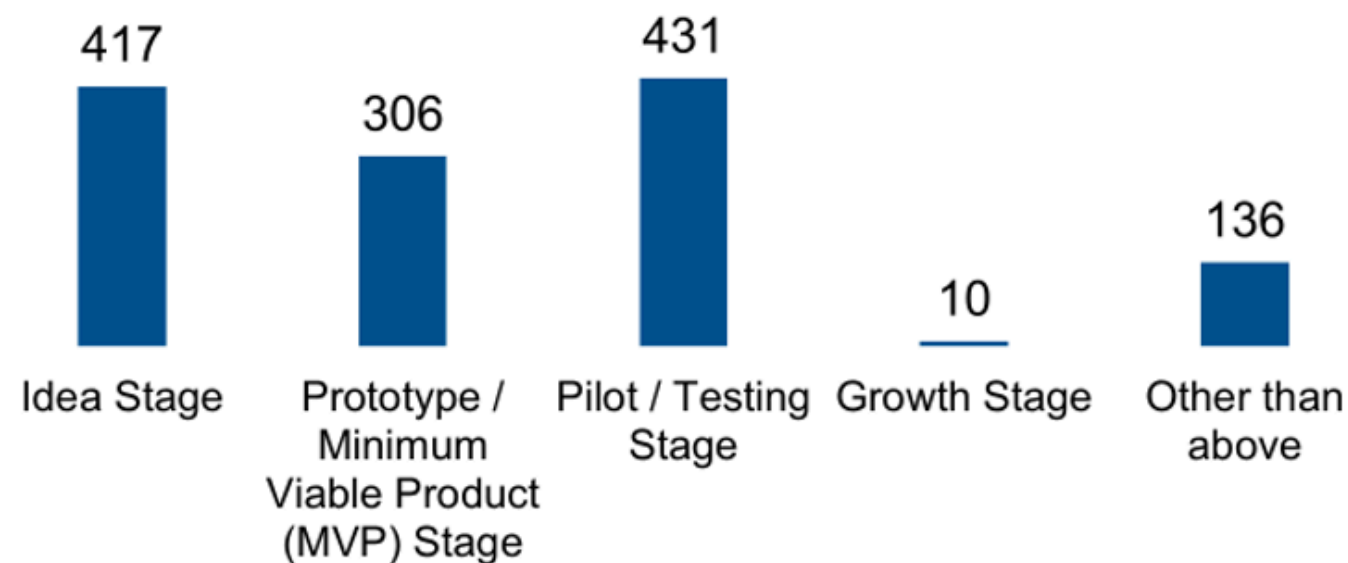
We received 1,341 applications covering the four topics with the majority being early-state innovation proposals



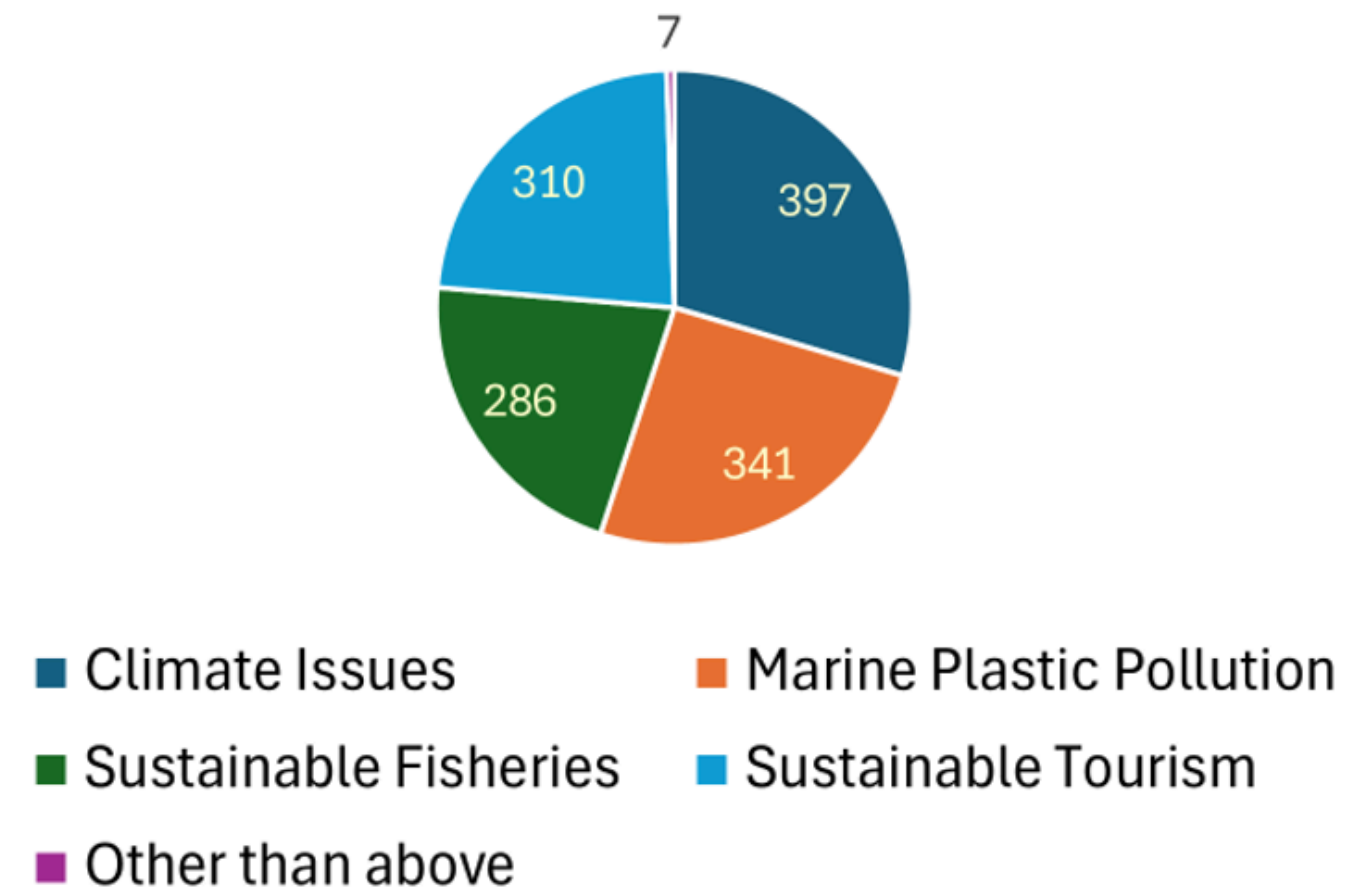
**Total # of applications by country
(n=1,341)**



**# of applications by self-reported
stage of innovation (n=1,300)**



of applications by topics (n=1341)



60 ABIC Winners were confirmed by the Joint Selection Committee and announced on 9 October 2024



ASEAN Secretariat News Statements Events Chairmanship

Search here 
Advanced search

ABOUT ASEAN ▾ WHAT WE DO ▾ WHO WE WORK WITH ▾ OUR COMMUNITIES ▾ SITEMAP

ASEAN, Japan, and UNDP Announce Winners of the ASEAN Blue Innovation Challenge

Home › ASEAN, Japan, and UNDP Announce Winners of the ASEAN Blue Innovation Challenge

Home › News › ASEAN, Japan, and UNDP Announce Winners of the ASEAN Blue Innovation Challenge

ASEAN, Japan, and UNDP Announce Winners of the ASEAN Blue Innovation Challenge

October 9, 2024

Jakarta, 9 October 2024 – ASEAN, Japan and UNDP have announced the winners of the ASEAN Blue Innovation Challenge (ABIC), an initiative aimed at advancing sustainable blue economy solutions across all ten ASEAN countries and Timor-Leste. Launched in April 2024, ABIC is part of the ASEAN Blue Economy Innovation Project endorsed by the ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and implemented by UNDP out of its office in Jakarta, with the funding support from the Government of Japan.

The initiative identifies and supports innovative solutions from the ten ASEAN member states and Timor-Leste that address pressing challenges in marine and freshwater ecosystems. It received 1,341 proposals, out of which 60 winners were selected by the Joint Selection Committee comprising H.E. Mr. Satvinder Singh, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for the ASEAN Economic Community; H.E. Mr. Kiya Masahiko, Ambassador of Japan to ASEAN; and Mr. Norimasa Shimomura, Resident Representative of UNDP Indonesia.

These 60 winners represent a diverse range of innovators, and their solutions aim to improve sustainability in aquaculture, fisheries, and tourism while addressing broader environmental challenges such as climate change, plastic waste, and water resource management. Through technological innovations, community engagement, and novel financing models, these innovation projects have the potential to generate positive impacts on social and environment across the region.

Another noteworthy aspect is the emphasis on gender inclusion. Of the 60 winners, 27 (45%) are women-led initiatives, with a total of 125 female team members, surpassing the 116 male members.

H.E. Mr. Satvinder Singh, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN said, "The Project marks a significant milestone in our collective journey towards sustainable blue economy development. By empowering local innovators and fostering regional collaboration, we are not only addressing urgent environmental challenges but also unlocking new economic opportunities for ASEAN. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the 60 winners whose solutions have the potential to reshape the future of our marine and freshwater ecosystems. I am confident that the partnerships formed through this initiative will drive lasting, positive change across the region."

Share This On



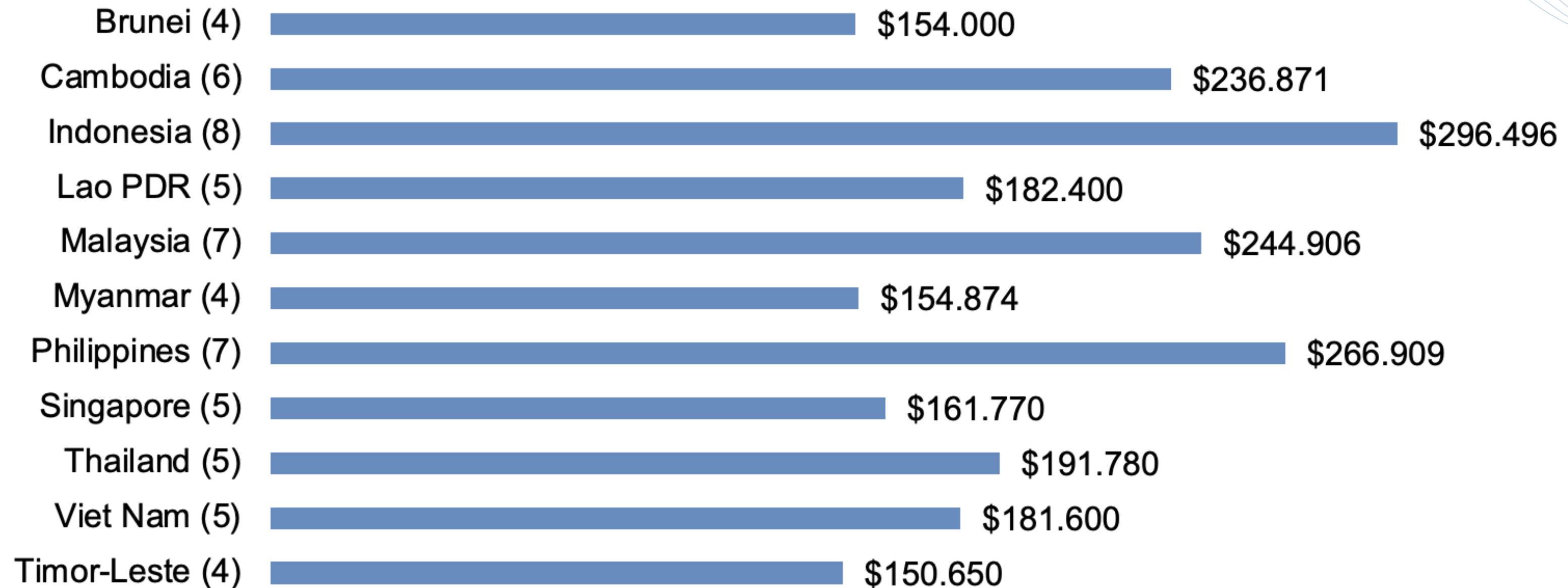
Other Articles

- Secretary-General of ASEAN delivers video message on International Women's Day 2025 on Accelerating Action for Gender Equality
- Secretary-General of ASEAN engages Cambodia-based media in Phnom Penh
- Secretary-General of ASEAN visits the Resource Centre of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC)
- ASEAN, Chile hold 6th ASEAN-Chile Development Partnership Committee (AC-DPC) Meeting
- Secretary-General of ASEAN Attends Gala Dinner of the Cambodia-ASEAN Business Summit 2025

Total amount awarded to the 60 winners is US\$2.2 Million



of awardees and amount awarded per country (US\$)
Total = US\$2,222,256





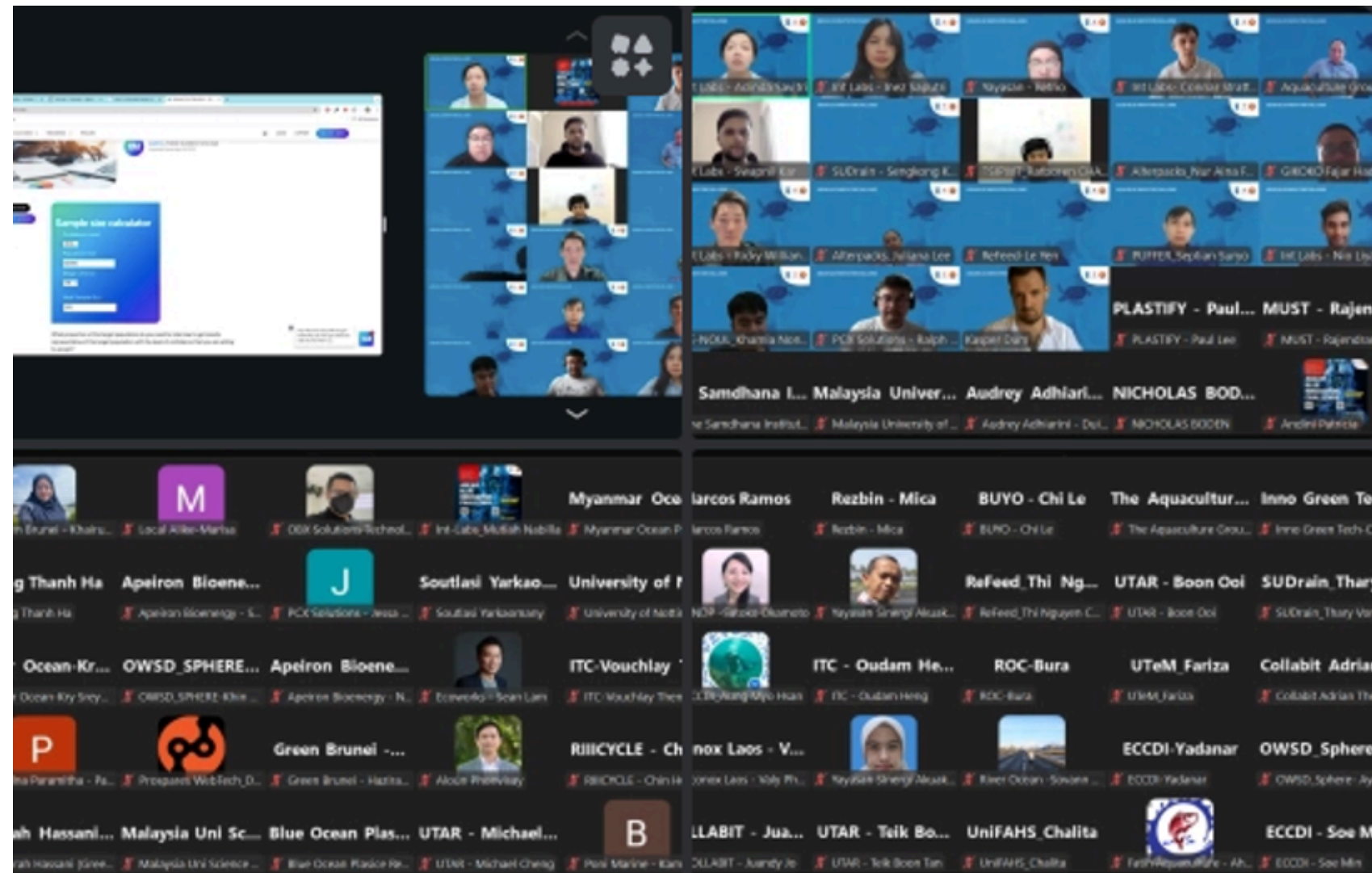
Component 2: Incubation Programme

Incubation program is led by a company specializing in start-up advisory and coaching



int labs.

we create the products, leaders,
and organisations of tomorrow,
today



Screenshot of the virtual workshop on hypothesis-driven startups on 16 Oct 2024

Key components of incubation

1. Workshops

- Six full-day highly interactive virtual workshops (one per month)
- All workshops completed with over 100 attendees for each with high satisfaction rate

2. Mentoring

- 1-hour team-level mentorship per month
- Follow up discussions via digital platforms

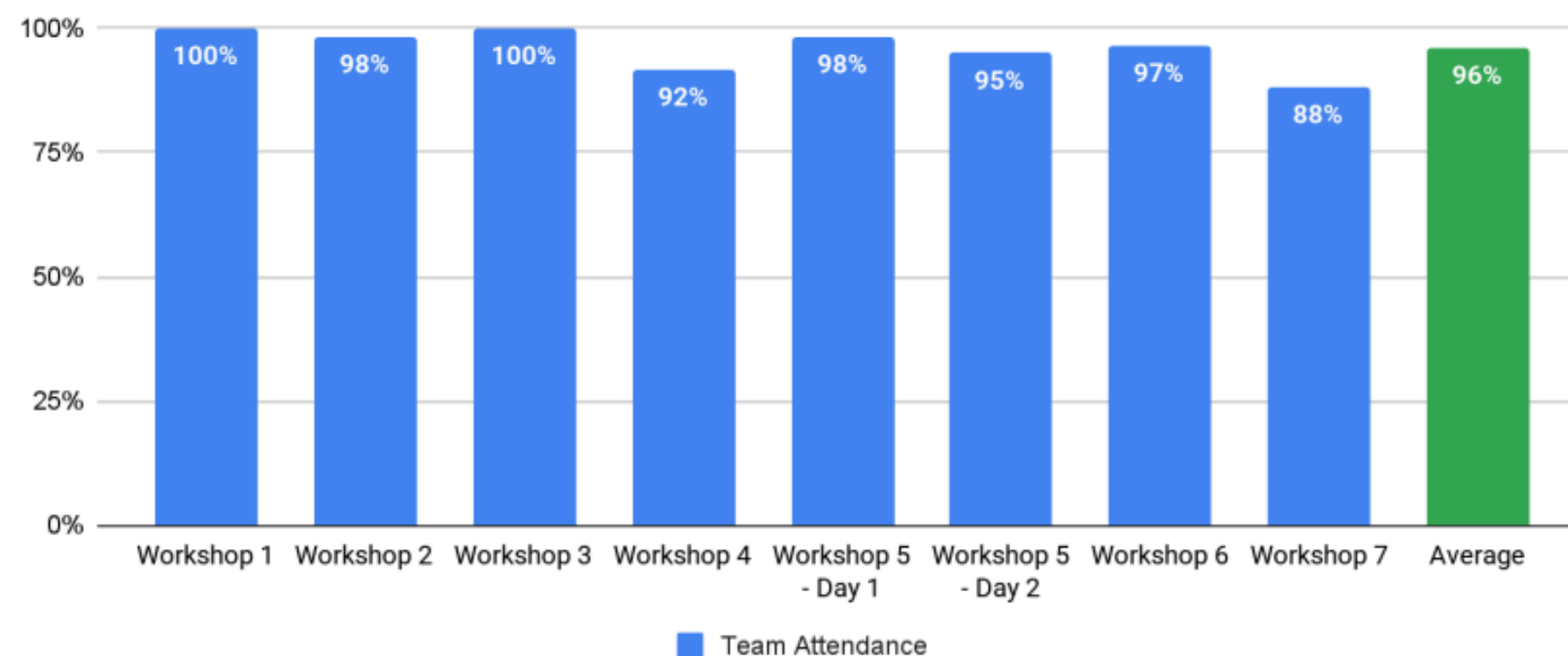
3. Report

- Virtual incubator report
- Final incubation report
- Media content for post-incubation activities

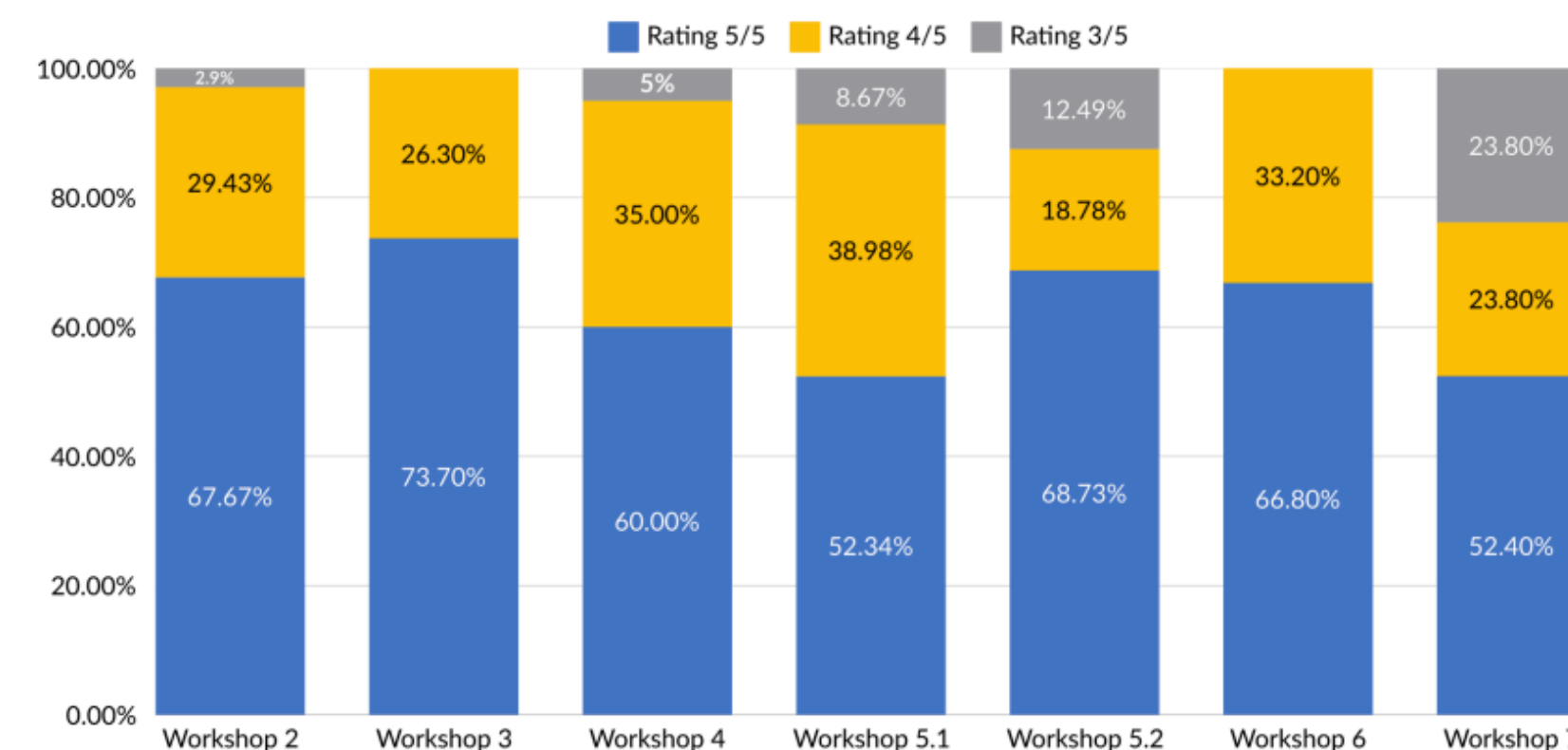
The incubation program was well attended and perceived as highly useful



Workshop Attendance



Graph 1: Overall rating of workshop sessions



Besides the seven full-day workshops, individual mentorship support further enhanced its impact.

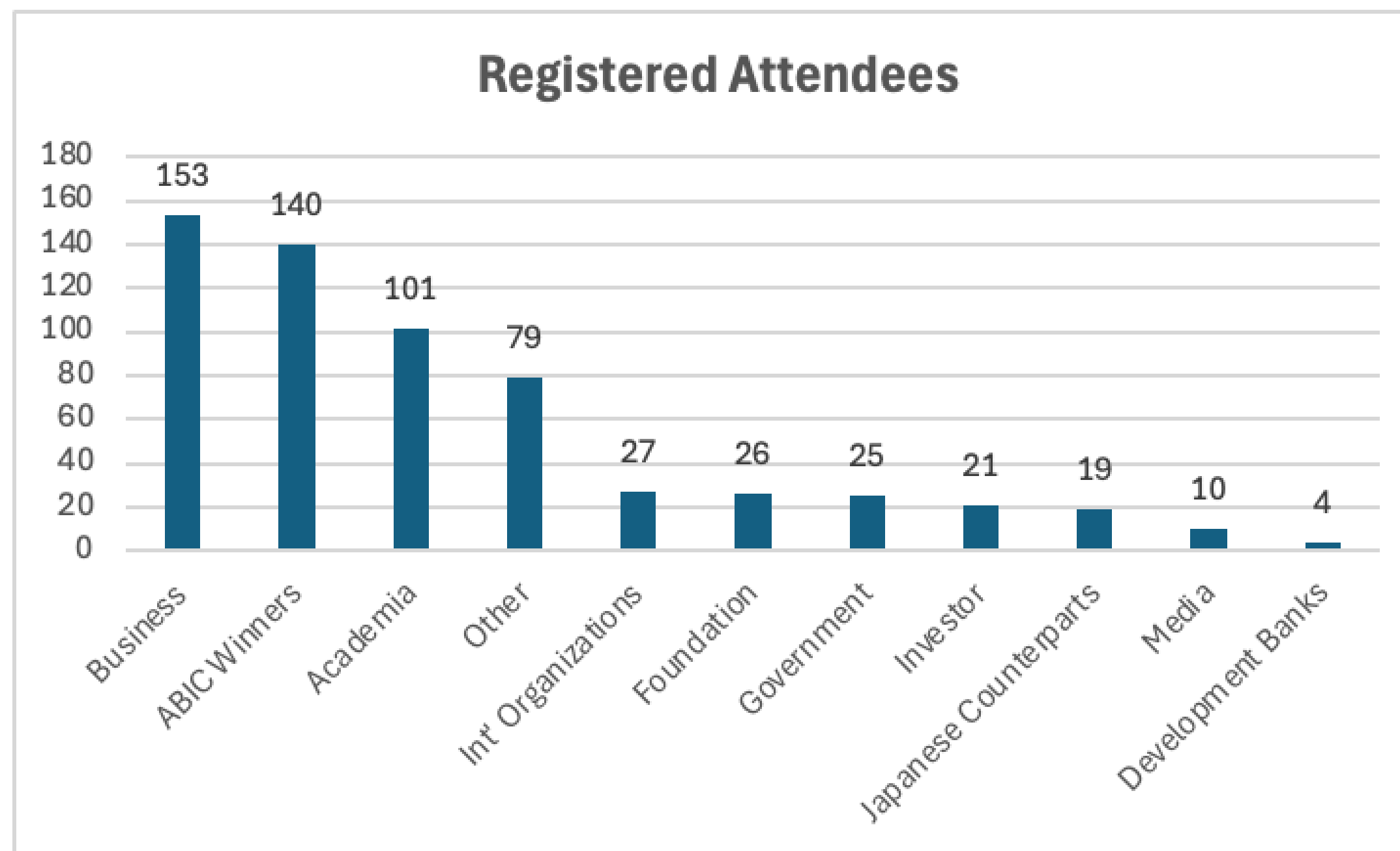


Component 3: Business Match Making

ASEAN Blue Innovation Expo and Business Matching, 19 February 2025



605 guests attended the event





The event brought together inspirational speakers, leading investors and guiding bodies in the blue economy sector ...





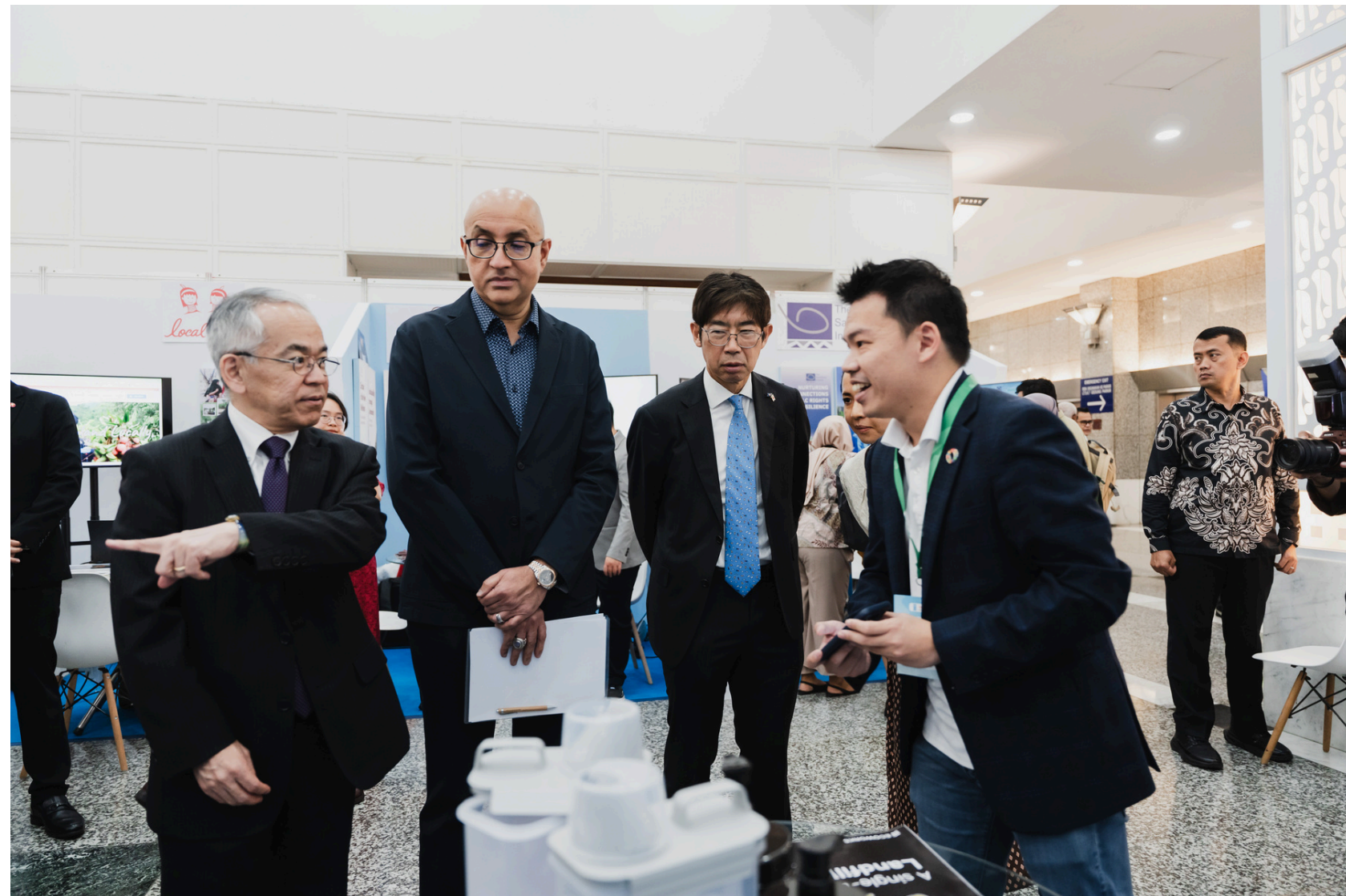
It provided platform for 60 ABIC winners pitch in front of potential investors and partners, and general public



Link to the video recordings: <https://www.undp.org/indonesia/asean-blue-innovation-challenge>



60 innovative solutions were showcased



It strengthened business ties between ASEAN & Japan, fostering cross-border collaborations possibilities



7

Seven Leading Japanese businesses and banks Participated

1. Marubeni Indonesia
2. Mizuho Financial Group
3. Murata Electronics, Singapore
4. Oki Manufacturing
5. Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp.
6. Sumitomo. corp.
7. Yamaha Indonesia Motor Manufacturing

34

A total of 34 Japanese stakeholders participated in the event

13

Gained steadfast support from 13 Japanese innovators and investors



Japanese stakeholders outlined six guiding principles for Japan's engagement in ASEAN's blue economy



Six Guiding Principles

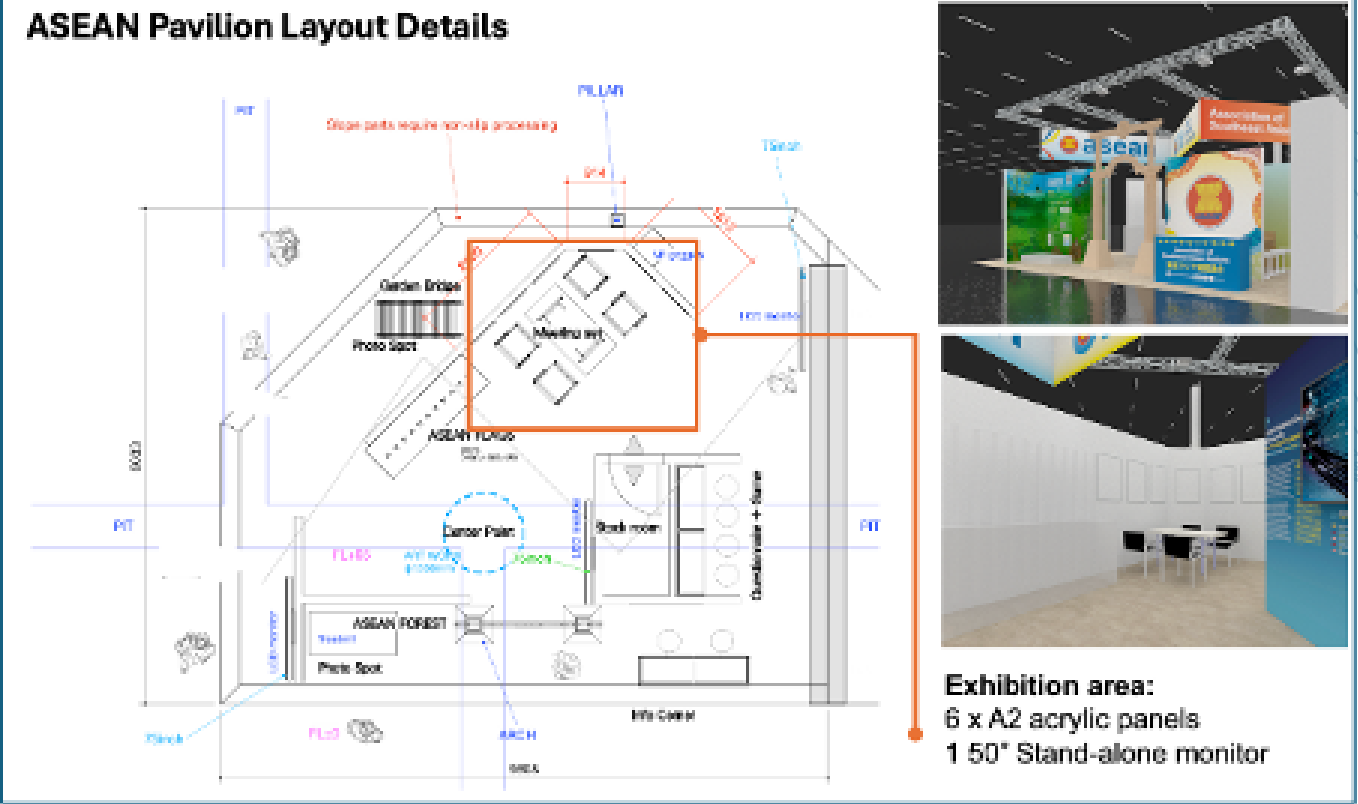
1. Cross-Border Collaboration
2. Collective Value Creation
3. Local Insights
4. Business Sustainability
5. Resilience of Those Who Choose to Act
6. Systems Approach



A five-day engagement programme for the 11 selected ABIC winners is scheduled for 6–10 May 2025 in Osaka. It aims to strengthen ASEAN-Japan partnerships in the blue economy, facilitate knowledge exchange between experts and innovators, and unlock new collaboration opportunities between ASEAN and Japanese stakeholders.



Date, Day	Time & Activities	Location
1 - 31 May	Exhibition of Blue Innovations from ABIC Winners	ASEAN Pavillion, Osaka Expo
6 - 10 May	Engagement Programme for the Selected ABIC Winners	Osaka
Detail Agenda of ABIC Winners in Osaka, 1-5 July 2025		
6 May, Tue	Arrival of ASEAN Blue Innovators	Kansai International Airport
7 May, Wed	Courtesy Visits – Meetings with blue economy stakeholders & site visits to blue carbon projects	Osaka
	Evening – Group Dinner & Networking	Osaka
8 May, Thu	Courtesy meetings and site visits (continued)	Osaka
9 May, Fri	Public Discussion: Unlocking Blue Carbon Potential: ASEAN & Japan’s Path to Climate Resilience	Festival Station, Osaka Expo
	Evening – Networking & Reception	Festival Station, Osaka Expo
10 May, Sat	Departure of ASEAN Blue Innovators	Kansai International Airport



Festival Station (Outside of ASEAN Pavilion Area)

