ileaps | Integrated Land Ecosystem - Atmosphere Processes Study

December 2025

Newsletter

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Editor's Note

Dear iLEAPS Community,

The final quarter of 2025 highlights the continued strength, diversity, and global reach of the iLEAPS community in advancing integrated land–atmosphere science and translating research into societal relevance. This edition brings together scientific advances, regional activities, and capacity-building efforts that reflect our shared commitment to understanding Earth system processes in a rapidly changing climate.

This issue features important regional updates showcasing long-term observational and modelling efforts across continents. From coupled land–atmosphere experiments in China and dryland ecosystem resilience studies in Australia, to tropical forest research and capacity-building initiatives in South America and Southeast Asia, these contributions underscore the value of sustained observations and international collaboration in addressing climate extremes, ecosystem vulnerability, and carbon–water interactions.

A key highlight of this quarter is iLEAPS' active engagement in major international scientific forums. Our participation at INTROMET-2025 in Pune emphasized the importance of integrating high-resolution observations with advanced modelling frameworks to improve understanding of tropical weather, monsoon variability, aerosols, and land–atmosphere feedbacks. The strong focus on air quality, health impacts, and climate services reaffirmed the need for science that directly supports decision-making and societal resilience.

This edition also reflects iLEAPS' continued commitment to early- and mid-career researchers. Workshops and training programmes across regions—including initiatives in India, Japan, and the Indo-Pacific—demonstrate our collective efforts to build capacity, foster interdisciplinary thinking, and strengthen the science–policy interface. These activities are essential for nurturing the next generation of Earth system scientists and ensuring inclusive participation in global research networks.

In addition, the newsletter highlights important milestones in community engagement, leadership, and recognition, celebrating achievements that contribute to strengthening our network and advancing iLEAPS priorities.

Together, the contributions in this issue reinforce key iLEAPS principles: advancing integrated science across disciplines and scales, fostering global partnerships, and embedding co-design and collaboration to address pressing environmental challenges. We invite you to explore the diverse insights and activities presented here and to continue engaging with the iLEAPS community as we work collectively toward sustainable and actionable solutions.

We thank all contributors, particularly Bhagyashri Katre for the meticulous compilation of this edition, and reaffirm our commitment to the iLEAPS mission: integrating land–atmosphere processes to understand and respond to planetary change.

iLEAPS Regional Updates - 2025

China The field stations, supported by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and led by iLEAPS SSC member Xianhong Meng, continue to host two major long-term control experiments. The first focuses on manipulating temperature and precipitation, while the second examines human impacts by comparing grazing and no-grazing conditions along with nitrogen fertilisation treatments.

Conferences/Workshops:
Xianhong participated in the forum *"Land Surface–Ecology–Hydrology Processes under Climate Change: Observations, Modelling and Prediction"* held in Beijing, China from 27-29 October 2025. The event brought together researchers to discuss climate-change-driven land–atmosphere–hydrology interactions, and she presented her work on the development and validation of a freeze–thaw hydro-thermal-mechanical coupled scheme in CLM5.0.

In addition, Xianhong and her colleagues have submitted a session proposal titled *"Multiscale Coupling and Feedbacks among Land,, Atmo-sphere, and Hydrology in Rapidly Changing Cold Regions"* for the AOGS Conference to be held in Japan in 2026.

India

Pallavi Saxena organised a five-day in-person training programme at Hindu College, Delhi, titled "Climate Goals: A Roadmap to Net Zero" was held from 22–26 September. The course gathered early-career researchers for 24 hours of instruction delivered by experts from the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), CSIR, and TERI (The Energy and Resources Institute).

The training combined theoretical foundations with practical applications, including greenhouse gas inventory and accounting techniques, carbon budgeting exercises, and an introduction to carbon markets and carbon credits. The course received strong participation and was regarded as highly successful.

Japan

iLEAPS Japan and the Global Carbon Project jointly hosted a workshop at Hiroshima University in November 2025. The programme included 24 oral presentations, primarily by early-career researchers whose participation is supported through Global Carbon Project funding. Prior to the workshop, the iLEAPS Japan Committee held an in-person planning meeting, also at Hiroshima University, to advance preparations for the iLEAPS Open Science Conference 2027.

Masayuki Kondo presented updates on iLEAPS and Global Carbon Project activities in Japan at the Future Earth Japan network national gathering held in November. Representatives from Urban KAN, the finance and economics communities, and the broader Future Earth Japan network also attended to explore collaborative opportunities and define future priorities.

Hisashi and Masayuki have also submitted a session proposal to the AOGS meeting scheduled for August 2026.

Glimpses from GCP Workshop at Hiroshima University

South America

The annual ATTO (Amazon Tall Tower Observatory) workshop was held in September at the National Amazon Research Institute (INPA), Manaus, Brazil. The event marked the 10th anniversary of the ATTO tower. Following the workshop, a summer school took place at the same venue, bringing together 16 international students for training across five thematic areas: volatile organic compounds, greenhouse gases, micrometeorology, ecology, and aerosols.

As in previous years, preparations are underway for the December distribution of Christmas presents to riverine communities. ATTO also had the presence at UNFCCC COP30, held in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025.

LAECESS has noted interest in supporting the SOLAS Summer School and is currently in discussion with Douglas Hamilton (SOLAS). Potential contributions include hands-on practical lectures delivered on site, involvement of Brazilian meteorological institutions, and the extension of atmospheric measurement activities in the Tamandaré region.

A recent Biogeosciences publication highlights the alarming decline of Amazon rainforest ecosystems due to human-driven fires: https://doi.org/10.5194/bg-22-5247-2025.

ATTO Tower

Panel discussion of LAECESS Team at COP30

South-East Asia

Eliani Ezani reported continued collaboration with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), based at the Kitakyushu Urban Centre in Fukuoka, Japan. IGES hosts an annual SDG Training Programme that supports students and early-career researchers from the Global South and Southeast Asia.

Eliani is exploring avenues for collaboration between IGES and iLEAPS, particularly through possible integration with the iLEAPS Early Career Researcher Network. This partnership could expand opportunities for training, exchange, and engagement in sustainability-focused research and activities.

iLEAPS Activities

Dr Qiaoyun Xie continues to contribute internationally through service and leadership, including roles on the IGARSS 2025 organising committee (>3,000 attendees) and as convener of the session *"Monitoring Climate Change Impacts on Vegetation"*, featuring five oral presentations and twelve posters aligned with iLEAPS priorities.

Her PhD student Huanhuan Wang published two high-impact studies on ecosystem vulnerability to climate extremes. A *Remote Sensing of Environment* paper (https://doi.org/10.1016/ quantified ecosystem resistance and resilience across the North Australian Tropical Transect, while a second study in *Environmental Research Letters* (https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ae1e15) showed how subsurface constraints amplified forest vulnerability during the 2023–24 hot drought in Western Australia's Jarrah Forest. These results were presented at AGU 2024 and IGARSS 2025. Another PhD student Yang Chen advanced understanding of dryland ecosystem processes through a *Global Change Biology* paper (https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.70542), demonstrating that legacy effects from extreme wet years sustain dryland productivity. His work received international recognition, including the Best Student Poster Award at AOGS 2025 and third place in the IGARSS 2025 Geo-Pitch.

Dr Xie and her PhD students also undertook research visits in Arizona, USA, through a collaborative project. Visits to long-term flux tower and rainfall manipulation sites in Tuscon, Arizona and discussions at the Global Drylands Center at Arizona State University strengthened international collaboration and links between Australian and U.S. dryland research.

Together, these outcomes deliver new insights into carbon–water coupling, ecosystem resilience, and climate extremes, directly supporting iLEAPS priorities in land–atmosphere science and Earth system modelling

Dr Xie's lab visits A/Prof William Kolby Smith's rainfall manipulation experiment site in Tucson, Arizona, USA

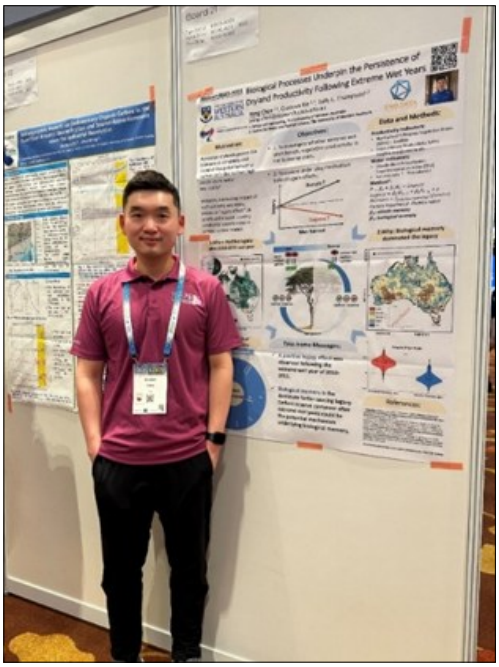


Photo: PhD student Yang Chen's Poster

Photo: PhD student Yang Chen's GeoPitch at IGARSS 2025

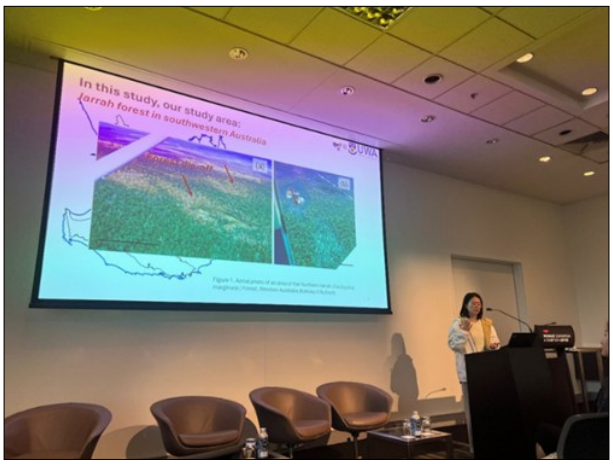


Photo: PhD student Huanhuan Wang's IGARSS 2025 oral presentation in Brisbane, Australia.

iLEAPS at INTROMET2025

iLEAPS IPO, Executive Officer, Dr. Semeena Valiyaveetil Shamsudheen delivered an invited talk at the International Symposium on Tropical Meteorology (INTROMET-2025), held from 18–20 November 2025 at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) in Pune, India. INTROMET-2025 the flagship conference of the Indian Meteorological Society (IMS) — brought together more than 800 scientists, researchers, and practitioners from around the world under the theme "Advances in Tropical Weather, Ocean, and Monsoon Climate Research for a Sustainable Future."

The three-day event featured plenaries, panel discussions, and thematic sessions across 28 scientific domains spanning weather prediction, monsoon dynamics, aerosols, climate services, and extreme event analysis, highlighting cutting-edge tropical meteorology and climate science.

In her session, Dr. Semeena focused on the novel insights into land–atmosphere interactions and their implications for tropical convection and weather predictability.

Drawing from recent research, she underscored the importance of integrating high-resolution observational data with advanced modelling frameworks to improve forecasts of convective events and their broader climate impacts. Her talk also highlighted how these research advances can inform practical climate services and decision support tools — especially for regions heavily influenced by monsoon variability.

The session underscored the value of bridging fundamental research and operational applications — a central theme throughout the symposium.

INTROMET-2025 provided an invaluable platform for cross-disciplinary exchange and reinforced the global community's commitment to advancing tropical

meteorology research that supports climate resilience, hazard mitigation, and sustainable development. intromet25.tropmet.res.in

INTROMET 2025 at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune

The **International Tropical Meteorology Symposium (INTROMET-2025)** was successfully held at the **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune**, from **18 to 20 November 2025**, in association with the **Indian Meteorological Society (IMS)** and the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**. Over three intensive days, the symposium brought together the global Earth science community to exchange ideas, share new re-research, and reflect on emerging challenges in weather and climate science.

Organised around the theme **"Advances in Tropical Weather, Ocean, and Monsoon Climate Research for a Sustainable Future,"** INTROMET-2025 served as a premier international platform for scientists, researchers, academicians, students, and policymakers. The discussions spanned the latest advances in meteorology, oceanography, climate science, and allied Earth system disciplines, highlighting both fundamental science and its applications for society.

This 30th edition of TROPMET/ INTROMET marked a milestone, recording the largest participation and the highest number of scientific deliberations in the history of this conferences series. In total, 849 scientific deliberations were

presented during the symposium, comprising 159 invited talks delivered by eminent and 490 poster presentations, scientists from India and abroad, 200 contributory oral presentations reflecting the breadth and depth of contemporary research in tropical meteorology and allied Earth system sciences.

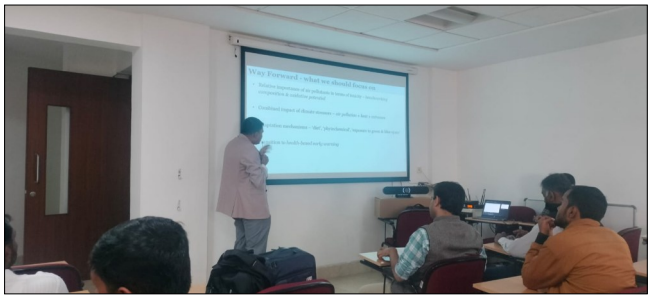
The symposium also witnessed participation from more than 50 international scientists, who actively contributed through invited and keynote lectures across all three days of the conference.

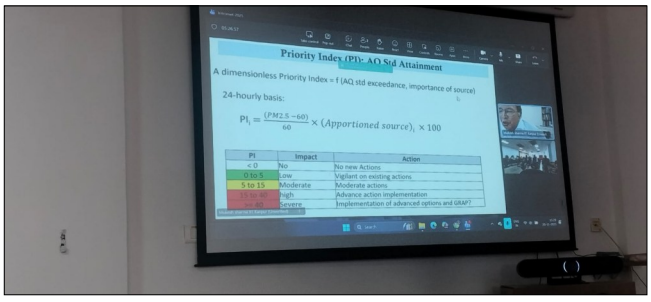
The scientific programme covered a wide array of themes, including **advances in weather prediction and early warning systems; monsoon dynamics and predictability in a changing climate; physical, chemical, and biological oceanography; ocean–atmosphere interactions; aerosol–cloud–precipitation processes; thunderstorm dynamics; radar and remote-sensing applications; AI and machine learning in weather and climate science; polar and cryosphere studies; paleoclimate; biosphere–atmosphere interactions; soil hydrology; geoinformatics; and urban meteorology**.

Alongside core science, the symposium also addressed critical societal challenges such as climate change and extreme events, flood and drought risks, disaster preparedness, climate services for sectoral applications, sustainable agriculture and water resources, community engagement, and emerging startups in weather and ocean sciences.

A special highlight was the **Air Quality and Health Impacts** sessions, which featured **around 50 scientific deliberations**, underscoring the growing recognition of atmospheric pollution and its direct links to human health and policy-relevant research. Together, these sessions reinforced the importance of an integrated Earth system approach in supporting resilience, sustainability, and informed decision-making.INTROMET-2025 witnessed broad participation from IITs, IISERs, and leading universities, key MoES institutions such as INCOIS, NIOT, CMLRE, NCMRWF, IMD, and IITM, as well as other premier organisations including ISRO and DRDO, in addition to strong participation from the global scientific community. Importantly, the symposium provided an invaluable platform for **B.Tech, Master's, and Ph.D. students** to present their work and interact closely with senior scientists and internationally renowned experts, fostering the next generation of Earth-system scientists.

Air Quality and Health Impacts Session Summary, INTROPMET 2025





The International Symposium on Tropical Meteorology (INTROMET) 2025 was held at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, during 18–20 November 2025. As part of the symposium, a dedicated session titled “Air Quality and Health Impacts” was organized on 20 November 2025 and conducted in two technical slots. The session was chaired by Dr. Gaurav Govardhan (Scientist-D) and Dr. Abhilash S. Panicker (Scientist-F). The session featured four eminent invited speakers, along with several contributed presentations, covering a broad spectrum of contemporary research in air quality and health impact assessment. Dr. Rajesh Kumar (NCAR, USA) delivered an invited talk on deterministic and probabilistic short-term air quality forecasting, emphasizing its critical role in supporting operational air quality management and decision-making frameworks. Prof. Sagnik Dey (IIT Delhi) presented insights into the current understanding and key challenges in estimating disease-specific health risks attributable to air pollution across India. Prof. Mukesh Sharma (IIT Kanpur) discussed real-time source apportionment of fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) in Delhi, focusing on the identification and quantification of contributions from major emission sectors and their relevance for targeted mitigation strategies. In another invited presentation, Prof. Dilip Ganguly addressed the relative roles of meteorology, emissions, and transboundary transport in driving seasonal air pollution over India, underscoring the importance of an airshed-based approach for effective mitigation planning. In addition to the invited talks, several contributed presentations showcased recent research on topics including burnt-area-based open biomass burning emissions, health risks associated with microplastics in Delhi, urban heat island effects in Indian megacities, black carbon variability in the arid regions of north-west India, industrial pollution assessment, radiation sensitivity in chemical transport models, and the development of ensemble-based probabilistic air quality forecasting frameworks for India.

Overall, the session facilitated lively scientific discussions and strong audience engagement, providing valuable insights into emerging directions, methodological advancements, and policy-relevant applications in air quality and health impact research.

Empowering the Next Generation: EMCR Workshop on Leveraging Climate Research and Modelling for Action and Policy in the Indo-Pacific

The Indo-Pacific region is at the frontline of climate impacts—from intensifying monsoons to rising sea levels and shifting weather patterns. In response to the urgent need for climate-informed action, the WCRP *My Climate Risk Hub* at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, successfully hosted a dynamic Early and Mid-Career Researcher (EMCR) Workshop titled "Leveraging Climate Research and Modelling for Action and Policy in the Indo-Pacific", on 21st November 2024.

This three-day event brought together over 40 early and mid-career researchers from across India. The workshop aimed to bridge the gap between state-of-the-art climate modelling and its practical application in regional policy, planning, and community resilience.

Highlights from the Workshop

The event featured a rich lineup of fireside chat event, interactive sessions, and group activities, led by global experts and practitioners from science and policy domains. Key sessions focused on:

- Ocean and Coastal Ecosystems with the expert, Dr. Smitha B.R., from Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology, Ministry of Earth Sciences, India, and moderated by Dr. Faseela Hamza from Indian Institute for Tropical Meteorology, Pune, India.
- Air Pollution and Changing Land Surface Dynamics with Dr. Semeena Valiyaveetil Shamsudheen, iLEAPS International Project Office, UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, UK, and moderated by Dr, Roxy Mathew Koll from Indian Institute for Tropical Meteorology, Pune, India.
- Climate Change Assessment over India with Prof. Prof. Chirag Dhara from Krea University, Chennai, India and moderated by Dr. Aditi Deshpande from Savitri Phule Pune University, Pune, India.

Monsoon Variability and Water with the expert with Prof. Akshaya Nikumbh Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, India & Prof. Simona Bordini from Caltech, United States and moderated by Dr. Aditi Modi from Indian Institute for Tropical Meteorology, Pune, India.

Interactive and Participatory Learning

One of the most appreciated aspects of the workshop was the brainstorming and post-it-based group exercises, where participants were split into thematic teams to co-design actionable climate solutions for each sessions.

Building a Community of Practice

Beyond knowledge sharing, the workshop fostered meaningful networking, with participants from different parts of India. The cohort expressed a strong interest in building a continuing community of practice that can engage in cross-country collaboration and support policy-relevant science across the Indo-Pacific.

A post-workshop survey showed that over 90% of participants found the content highly relevant, and most cited the interactive group work and expert talks as the most useful components.

Key Takeaways

- Climate research must be grounded in local contexts and co-produced with communities and policy actors.
- EMCRs play a crucial role in bridging the science-policy gap.
- Creating platforms for international collaboration and mentorship enhances research translation.

11th WMO Scientific Conference on Weather Modification (Pune, India, 3-7 November 2025)

The Eleventh Scientific Conference on Weather Modification and Cloud and Precipitation Physics, organized by the World Meteorological Organization, was held from 3–7 November 2025 in Pune, India, and was hosted by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology.

The conference provided an international platform for scientists, researchers, and practitioners to present and discuss recent advances, emerging challenges, and future prospects in weather modification research. The scientific programme covered a wide range of topics, including cloud physics cloud and precipitation processes, observational studies and field campaigns, laboratory experiments, numerical modelling and model intercomparisons, verification and assessment studies, and new technological developments in seeding platforms, materials, and delivery methods. Data-driven approaches, including AI/ML and statistical methods applied to weather modification experiments, were also prominently featured.

In addition to physical science themes, the conference addressed environmental, socio-economic, and policy-related aspects of weather modification. Sessions examined environmental impacts, user requirements, cost–benefit analyses, inadvertent weather modification, and linkages with climate change and geoengineering. Presentations spanned research, development, and operational perspectives, highlighting both established practices and emerging scientific results.

Overall, the Eleventh WMO Scientific Conference on Weather Modification facilitated rich scientific exchange and interdisciplinary dialogue, strengthening international collaboration and advancing understanding of cloud and precipitation processes and their potential applications in weather modification.

Indian International Science Festival (IISF) 2025 Organized by IITM Pune at Panchkula (Chandigarh Tricity)

The Indian International Science Festival (IISF) 2025 is a flagship national science event aimed at promoting science-led development and innovation in India. The festival was coordinated and organized by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, and held at Panchkula, Haryana, part of the Chandigarh Tricity region.

IISF 2025 brought together scientists, policymakers, educators, students, industry leaders, science communicators, and innovators on a single platform to strengthen the role of science and technology in nation-building.

Theme of IISF 2025

"Vigyan Se Samruddhi: For Aatmanirbhar Bharat"

The theme emphasizes the transformative power of science in achieving self-reliance, economic growth, and societal well-being, aligning closely with India's vision of Science for Society and Nation Building.

Objectives of IISF 2025

The key objectives of the festival included:

- Showcasing India's scientific achievements and technological innovations
- Encouraging science-based entrepreneurship and innovation-driven growth
- Inspiring students and young researchers to pursue careers in science and technology
- Strengthening the integration of traditional knowledge systems with modern science
- Promoting collaboration between academia, industry, policymakers, and society
- Addressing national and global challenges through science-led solutions

Organisers

The Indian International Science Festival (IISF) 2025 was organised by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) in collaboration with major national science agencies of the Government of India, including the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), along with Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA). The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune served as the Coordinating Institute, playing a central role in scientific planning, coordination, and execution of the festival.

Role of IITM Pune

Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune served as the Coordinating Institute for IISF 2025 and played a key role in:

- Scientific planning and coordination of multiple thematic sessions
- Organizing sessions on climate, clean energy, AI, bio-economy, quantum technologies, and Himalayan climate
- Facilitating interactions between scientists, policymakers, and young researchers
- Supporting outreach activities to promote climate and atmospheric sciences.

Major Thematic Areas Covered at IISF 2025

1. Himalayas in a Changing Climate
2. Thought Leaders' Round Table
3. Vision Sansad

4. Blue Economy
5. Clean Energy
6. Hackathon
7. Start-up Journeys
8. Circular Economy
9. International Olympiad Students Meet
10. Students S&T Village – The New Nalanda
11. Educators and Teachers Workshop – The Gurukula
12. Nari Shakti (Women in Science)
13. Young Scientists Conclave
14. New Age Technologies
15. Science Literature Festival – Vigyanika
16. Media Conclave
17. National Social Organisations and Institutions Meet (NSOIM)
18. Science through Games and Adventures – Science Safari

Honours and Recognitions

Dr. Rajmal Jat

Dr. Rajmal Jat received two prestigious recognitions in November 2025: he was awarded the Best Performance Award for his outstanding contribution as Scientific Project Staff (Modelling Research) at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, conferred during the IITM Foundation Day celebration held on 17 **November 2025,** and he also won the Best Poster Award at the 11th WMO Scientific Conference on Weather Modification, held in Pune, India, from **3–7 November 2025,** for his poster titled “Urban Climate and Air Quality Impacts of Open Wasteland in Delhi-NCR: A Modelling Study on Heat Mitigation and Pollution Reduction.

Upcoming Events

EGU 2026

iLEAPS is excited to run two scientific sessions at EGU2026 General Assembly to be held in Vienna from **3-8 May, 2026.**

Submit your abstracts here: AS3.28 (Urban Air Pollutants in Anthropocene: Composition, Chemistry and Health Impacts).

BG1.13 (Urban Ecosystems, human health and well-being: A way towards sustainability).

10th International Conference on Fog, Fog Collection, and Dew

The upcoming 10th International Conference on Fog, Fog Collection, and Dew will take place from the **21st to 25th September 2026 in Pune, India.**

The conference will provides a dynamic forum for the exchange of ideas and the latest research findings from scientists worldwide interested in the life cycle of fog and dew at the interface between surface, vegetation and the atmosphere, and in the collection of fog and dew for freshwater production. Its interdisciplinary character at the crossroads between fog and dew physics and chemistry and their interactions with and impacts on vegetation, materials, and human activities makes it unique as well as the range of topics and participants.

Both advanced scientific findings and fog collection projects find a broad audience. Participants include repre-sentatives from universities, the private sector, government and international agencies, and educational organiza-tions.

Dates: 21–25 September, 2026

Venue: IITM, Pune, India

More details: https://ews.tropmet.res.in/fogdew26/

7th iLEAPS Open Science Conference, Hiroshima, Japan

The 7th iLEAPS (Integrated Land Ecosystem-Atmosphere Processes Study) Open Science Conference will be held in Hiroshima, Japan, with the iLEAPS-Japan committee. https://esd.nies.go.jp/ileaps-japan/eng/ https://esd.nies.go.jp/ileaps-japan/ from the National Institute for Environmental Studies https://esd.nies.go.jp/ileaps-japan/ hosting the event at Hiroshima University. The conference is scheduled for **March 1-5, 2027.**

Location: Hiroshima University, Hiroshima, Japan.

Dates: March 1-5, 2027 (with pre-conference events on February 27-28).

Sponsor: iLEAPS (Integrated Land Ecosystem-Atmosphere Processes Study).

Organized by: iLEAPS-Japan, with support from the National Institute for Environmental Studies.

Focus: Open Science within the context of iLEAPS' research on land-atmosphere interactions.

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Newsletter Prepared By Bhagyashri Katre

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