

DRAFT PROGRAM (Last updated 9 October)

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

The Role of Nature-Based Solutions for Healthy Communities in Timor-Leste

14-15 October 2025 | City 8 Dili, Timor-Leste

Hosted By: Dili Institute of Technology & University of New South Wales

Timor-Leste faces unique environmental and development challenges, from watershed degradation and water insecurity to food system vulnerability and malnutrition. This symposium explores the powerful potential of Nature Based Solutions (NbS) to build healthy, resilient communities through ecological restoration, local knowledge, and sustainable development.

Details Available on Event Website: [The Role of Nature-Based Solutions for Healthy Communities in Timor-Leste](#)



Program Day 1

Time	Activity
1:30 – 2:00 PM	Registration of Participants
2:00 – 2:07 PM	National Anthem of Timor-Leste Opening Praying
2:07 – 2:10 PM	Welcome Speech: Pro-Rector for Academic Affairs, Dili Institute of Technology (Chairperson) Dr. Aderita T. Dos Santos, M.Eng
2:10 – 2:30 PM	Speech: Rector of Dili Institute of Technology (DIT) Dr. Salustiano dos Reis Piedade, MSci
2:30 – 2:50 PM	Speech: Deputy Dean (Societal Impact & Translation), Engineering, UNSW Prof. Rita Henderson
2:50 – 3:30 PM	Keynote Speech: General Director of Environment, “ <i>How Nature Based Solution (NbS) can align with Government policy on Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development</i> ”. Sr. Domingos Mesquita
3:30 – 3:50 PM	Speech: H.E. Australian Ambassador to Timor-Leste Ms. Caitlin Wilson
3:50 – 4:30 PM	Keynote Speech: H.E. Minister of Higher Education, “ <i>Papel Ensino Superior iha dezvoltamentu siensia liu husi Konferénsia Internasionál no Nasionál</i> ” Sr. José Honório da Costa Pereira Jerónimo
4:30 – 4:45 PM	Cultural Performance
4:45 – 5:10 PM	Official Opening of Symposium: H.E. President of Timor-Leste, Sr. José Ramos-Horta
6:00 – 10:00 PM	Gala Dinner – Cultural Performance – Social Networking Dinner

Program Day 2

8:00 – 8:30 AM	Arrival & Registration
8:30 – 8:50 AM	Opening Remarks: Executive Director of GS, Research, ICS, DIT Dr. Edio da Costa, M.Cs

Session 1: Reimagining Landscapes – Permaculture, Indigenous Knowledge, and Co-Creation

8:50 – 9:10 AM	Prof. Thomas Stodulka. Professor Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Co-Director Professional School Visual Anthropology, Documentary and Media Practice. University of Muenster. Presentation: Gardens of Hope: Permaculture, Decolonial Pedagogy, and Aspirational Futures in Timor-Leste
9:10 – 9:30 AM	Mr. Ego Lemos. Executive Director, Permatil. Presentation: Planting Water Using Nature-Based Solutions and Indigenous Knowledge,

	Rejuvenating Water Resources and Ecosystem Restoration in Timor-Leste.
9:30 – 9:50 AM	Mr. Jakob Kress. Student, Institute for Ethnology, University of Muenster. Presentation: Co-creation in-between the sciences, arts, and broader society: Tracing and Envisioning Permaculture in Timor-Leste
9:50 – 10:10 AM	Mr. Moises Soares. Manager of Geophysics, Instituto de Geociências de Timor-Leste (IGTL). Presentation: Nature-Based Solutions for Karst Aquifer Management in Baucau Plateau, Timor-Leste

10:10 – 10:20 AM Q&A moderated by **Prof. Greg Leslie**, Director of Global Water Institute, UNSW

10:20 – 10:40 AM Morning Tea Break

Session 2: Water Security – Groundwater, Customary Practice, Infrastructure and Coastal Ecosystems

10:40 – 11:00 AM	A/Prof. Martin Andersen. Associate Professor School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of New South Wales. Presentation: A Review of Groundwater Recharge Discharge Relationships
11:00 – 11:20 AM	Dr. Carlos Miraldo Ordens. Groundwater Technical Advisor, Institute of Geosciences of Timor-Leste (IGTL). Presentation: Community-Based Monitoring and Citizen Science as Approaches to Successfully Monitor the Effectiveness of Nature-Based solutions – The Context of PERMATIL activities in Timor-Leste
11:20 – 11:40 AM	Ms. Madeline Mead. PhD Candidate, RMIT University. Presentation: Combining Customary Practices and Hydrogeological Analysis to Increase Access to Drinking Water (asking for 30 mins)
11:40 – 12:00 PM	Ms. Danika Tavora. Independent Place-based Educator and Outdoor Curriculum Designer. Presentation: Catch Me If You Can: Terrestrial Run-Off, Catchment Design And The Crucial Role Permaculture Farms Play In Enhancing Reef Resilience
12:00 – 12:20 PM	Dr. Don Gaspar Noesaku da Costa. Associate Profesor at Study Program of Civil Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Katolik Widya Mandira, Kupang, Indonesia. Presentation: Water Conservation on Developed Land Using a Zero Runoff Model (Case Study: Maulafa Sub-district Office, Kupang City, Indonesia)

12:20 – 12:30 PM Q&A moderated by **Dr. Helio Brites, PhD**, Director of MBA Program/ Lecture and Researcher in Gender and Tourism Management

12:30 – 1:50 PM Lunch Break

Session 3: Building the Foundations for Nature-Based Solutions – Policy, Finance & Local Benefits (Part 1)

1:50 – 2:10 PM	Dr. Teresa Freitas Belo. Director of Internal Quality Assurance, Lecturer and Researcher in Finance Management, Dili Institute of Technology. Presentation: Budgetary Prioritization for Nature-Based Solutions in Timor-Leste: A Comparative Analysis of Public Expenditure in Key Ministries (2019–2024)
2:10 – 2:30 PM	Mr. Pedro Marcal da Costa. National Biodiversity Project Coordinator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Presentation: Biofin & Carbon Market. Exploring potential biodiversity and carbon credit in NbS projects for Timor Leste.
2:30 – 2:50 PM	Ms. Rebecca Brown. Engineering Projects Mentor, Engineers Without Borders Australia. Presentation: EWB-Experiences in improving rural water systems in Timor-Leste.
2:50 – 3:10 PM	Dr. Dr. Sc. Vanja Kenjic. Lecturer and Practitioner. Mr. Joaquim Viana. MSc. LSE Alumni and Practitioner. Presentation: Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Rural Development of Timor-Leste: An Opportunity for Strategic Integration

3:10 – 3:20 PM Q&A moderated by **Mr. Lachlan Mckenzie**, Co-founder and Director, Permatil Global Australia

3:20 – 3:40 PM Afternoon Break

Session 4: Building the Foundations for Nature-Based Solutions – Policy, Finance & Local Benefits (Part 2)

3:40 – 4:00 PM	Dr. Manuel Florencio Vong. Director of DBA (Doctorate Business Administration) Program, Lecturer and Researcher in Tourism Management, Dili Institute of Technology. Presentation: Marine Biodiversity Conservation as a Nature-Based Solution for Sustainable Tourism and Healthy Communities in Timor-Leste
4:00 – 4:20 PM	Mr. Jesuinho Gusmao. Agriculture & Economic Development Technical Specialist, World Vision Timor-Leste. Evangelita da Costa Pereira. MCH and Nutrition Specialist, Health, World Vision Timor-Leste. Presentation: Regenerating Landscapes, Transforming Lives: FMNR in Timor-Leste
4:20 – 4:40 PM	Mr. Gianluca Nardi. GEDSI Adviser, TOMAK (To'os ba Moris Di'ak / Farming for Prosperity). Presentation: Harnessing Nature-Based Solutions to Address Food Insecurity, Social Exclusion and Rural Youth Unemployment in Timor-Leste
4:40 – 5:00 PM	Ms. Jaoquina Bareto & Mr. Luis Pereira (TBC). The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry (MAPPF). Presentation: Nature-Based Solutions for Crop Production and Conservation Agriculture.

5:00 – 5:10 PM Q&A moderated by **Dr. Peregrinus D. S. Taa, M.Eng**, Executive Director of Planning & Development, Lecture and Researcher in Soil Engineering, DIT

5:10 – 5:20 PM Closing Remarks by **Prof. Greg Leslie**, Director, Global Water Institute, UNSW

5:20 – 5:30 PM Photo Session & Certificates

