



IITM Pune Hosts "The APARC Early Career Workshop" and Curtain-Raiser for ESTIC

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The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) Pune hosted the Early Career Researcher (ECR) Workshop titled **"The ECR Nexus: Connecting Voices, Tools, and Science to Society"** today, at the Meghdoot Hall. The event served as a curtain-raiser for the Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC).

The pivotal address was delivered by Dr. T. Srinivasa Kumar, Hon'ble Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, who outlined the core vision and strategic objectives of the conclave. His opening remarks emphasized the critical convergence of science, technology, and policy in driving India's futuristic development and fostering a robust ecosystem for research and innovation.

The address underscored the Ministry's ongoing commitment to advancing critical scientific frontiers and creating collaborative platforms for researchers, policymakers, and industry leaders. By highlighting the primary goals of ESTIC, Dr. Srinivasa Kumar's address served as a call to action for stakeholders to leverage emerging technological breakthroughs toward sustainable national progress. The curtain-raiser has effectively built strong anticipation for the conclave, promising deep-dive discussions into transformative science and technology initiatives.

Key Highlights of the Event:

- **Opening Ceremony:** Featured **welcome address** by IITM Director Dr. Suryachandra A. Rao, Additional welcome addresses was delivered by Scientific Organizing Committee (SoC) representatives Dr. Ines Tritscher (Director of the APARC Office, Jülich, Germany), Dr. Jonathon S. Wright (Tsinghua University, Beijing) and Dr. Hindumathi Palanisamy (WCRP, WMO, Geneva, Switzerland), Vote of Thanks by Dr. Suvarna Fadnavis (SoC & Project Director, CCCR, IITM). ECR Workshop details were presented by session convener Dr. Aditi Modi.
- **Keynote & Expert Panels:** Dr. Maria Molina from the University of Maryland delivered a keynote presentation on AI and Machine Learning in Earth Sciences. An interactive panel discussion explored career trajectories within and beyond academia, featuring global experts from organizations such as NVIDIA, the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP/WMO), Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the University of Tokyo, and the Central University of Jammu.

- **Technical Sessions & Training:** Attendees participated in hands-on breakout brainstorming sessions focusing on key thematic priorities, a "Meet the Editors" interactive segment with representatives from Nature Portfolio and Springer Nature, and a comprehensive technical tutorial on the Earth System Model Evaluation Tool (ESMValTool) coordinated by Dr. Birgit Hassler.
- **Global Engagement:** The Young Earth System Scientists (YESS) community lead a presentation on international networking opportunities for early career researchers. The workshop aimed to foster collaboration, skill development, and cross-disciplinary dialogue among the next generation of atmospheric and Earth science researchers.

About ESTIC

The **Emerging Science, Technology, and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC)** is India's premier science, technology, and innovation platform. It brings together government ministries, policymakers, top scientists, academic institutions, industry leaders, and deep-tech startups to foster cross-sector collaboration and showcase cutting-edge research and promotes innovative solutions to national challenges, driving India towards its goal of Viksit Bharat 2047.

ESTIC 2026 guided by the vision of "Creative Minds, Catalyzing Science, Empowering Technologies." Under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, this initiative brings together scientific minds, inspires young innovators, and strengthens India's journey towards scientific excellence and technological advancement. Designed to break down traditional silos between institutions and sectors, the multi-day conclave features high-level plenary talks, thematic technical sessions, and exhibitions focused on driving India's vision toward technological self-reliance and sustainable national progress.

About APARC Early Career Researcher (ECR) Workshop 2026

The APARC Early Career Researcher (ECR) Workshop 2026, titled "The ECR Nexus: Connecting Voices, Tools, and Science to Society," was organised on 11 October 2026 at IITM, Pune, ahead of the APARC General Assembly 2026. The workshop was designed specifically for students and Early Career Researchers, with the objective of providing a platform to discuss career development, emerging scientific tools, research challenges, scientific communication, and opportunities for greater engagement with the international atmospheric and climate research community.

Around **120 national and international participants** took part in the workshop, bringing together Early Career Researchers, senior scientists, experts, editors, and professionals from different scientific and institutional backgrounds.

The programme was structured to address both the scientific and professional challenges faced by researchers at the early stages of their careers. A panel discussion on career pathways examined opportunities within and beyond academia, while also creating space to discuss issues such as changing funding environments, mobility, access to research infrastructure and computing resources, international opportunities, and pathways to scientific leadership.

A central purpose of the workshop was to encourage open interaction between Early Career Researchers and established scientists while also allowing ECRs to exchange experiences with their peers. The panel and brainstorming sessions brought forward diverse perspectives on the changing landscape of scientific careers, including funding and mobility, unequal access to data and computing infrastructure, AI/ML, leadership opportunities, and the need to connect scientific research more effectively with society and policy. The Program was sponsored by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, WCRP, WMO, APARC, Forschungszentrum Jülich, Germany, IAMAS, ICMA, NASA, and private partners.





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