



HESD International Symposium
14 December 2008, Rikkyo Univ., Tokyo, Japan

UNU Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Regional Centres of Expertise (RCE) and ProSPER.Net

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United Nations University

- **Mission** (established in 1975)
Addressing pressing global problems that are the concern of the UN, its Peoples and Member States
- **Key roles**
 - International community of scholars
 - Bridge between UN and academia
 - Think-tank for the UN system
 - Build capacity for policy-makers and researchers, esp. in developing countries
 - Platform for dialogues and creative ideas

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United Nations University

- **Two major programme areas**
 - Peace and governance
 - Environment and sustainable development
- **UNU structure**
 - UNU Centre (Tokyo, Japan)
 - 15 UNU Research and Training Centres/Programmes in the world

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UNU WORLDWIDE



UNU WORLDWIDE
 ■ RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTRE/PROGRAMME
 ■ ASSOCIATED INSTITUTION
 □ OPERATING UNIT
 ● UNU LIAISON OFFICE



United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS)

- **Mission** (established in 1996)
Advancing knowledge and promoting learning for policy-making to meet the challenges of sustainable development
- **Major activities**
 - Biodiplomacy Initiative
 - Ecosystem Services Assessment
 - **Education for Sustainable Development**
 - Science Policy for Sustainable Development
 - Sustainable Development Governance
 - Special Programmes

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UNU Strategy to Promote ESD (EfSD Programme at UNU-IAS)

Launched in 2003 as UNU response to DESD
5 major activity areas are:

1. Advocacy and dissemination of ESD and DESD;
2. **Promotion of Regional Centres of Expertise on ESD (RCEs) and their networking;**
3. **Strengthening of ESD activities of higher education institutions;**
4. Further development of on-line learning for ESD;
5. Training of teachers and trainers on ESD

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DESD Vision

- Creation of a Global Learning Space for sustainable development-

- Create a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transition (a Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development)

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Four Major Thrusts of ESD

(as defined by Chapter 36, Agenda 21)

- Improve access to quality basic education;
- Reorient existing education programmes to address sustainable development;
- Develop public understanding and awareness on sustainable development; and
- Provide training programmes for all sectors of private and civil society.

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What is Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)?

- Broader concept than environmental education.
- Not sustainable development education, but education for sustainable development - education to enable people to better contribute to sustainable development.

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What is ESD ? (cont'd)

- **ESD should enhance the capacity for critical thinking:**
 - To understand complexity
 - To consider values and norms
 - To contribute in practical ways to sustainable development
- **ESD is not a topic that can be taught in a few weeks just at a certain age**
- **ESD should be integrated in all sectors of education, and at all levels in relation to relevant, already existing subjects.**

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What is RCE?

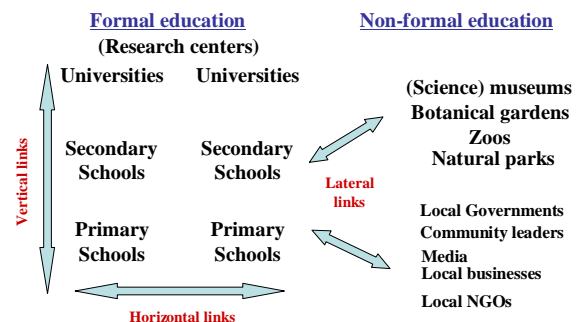
- Regional Centres of Expertise on ESD -

- Proposed by United Nations University
- A network of formal, non-formal and informal education and learning-related institutions who are mobilized to deliver ESD at regional (sub-national) and local levels.
- RCEs aspire to achieve the goals of DESD by translating its global objectives into the context of regional, local areas, in which it operates.

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Regional Centres of Expertise on ESD (RCEs)



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Functions of RCEs

- RCEs will create platform for dialogue among regional/local ESD stakeholders and exchange information, experience and good practices on ESD among them;
- RCEs will develop regional/local knowledge base.
- They will assist in promoting vertical alignment of curricula from primary through university education and in linking formal and non-formal sectors of education community.

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Some key issues on RCEs

- RCEs should not be too small, but not too big as well.
- We expect a few key institutions, including higher education institutions, to take a leading role for RCE activities.
- RCEs would facilitate collaborative activities among different stakeholders.

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Roles of Higher Education Institutions to Promote ESD

- Create a knowledge base for sustainability through research activities, etc.;
- Educate the next generation: both professionals as well as the educated people;
- Train and retrain all teaching staff at all levels of education both in formal and non-formal;
- Provide outreach and service to society.

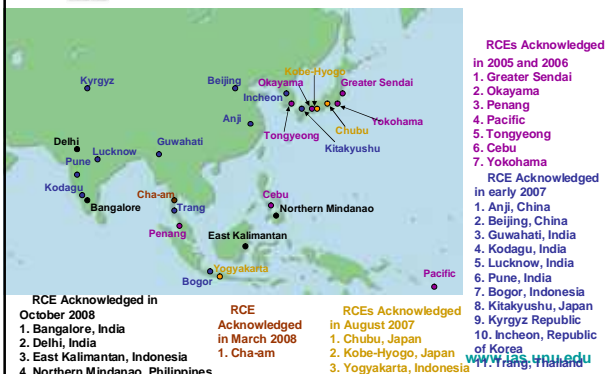
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55 Previously Acknowledged RCEs and 6 New RCEs acknowledged in November 2008



RCEs in the Asia Pacific Region



Procedure for RCE Acknowledgement

- The Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs reviews applications from RCE candidates and recommends UNU to acknowledge RCEs.
- The Committee meets normally once a year.
- Review criteria were established in December 2006.
 - Collaboration
 - RCE vision
 - Governance
 - On-going and planned activities

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Criteria for acknowledging new RCEs

1. Collaboration

- Involvement of higher education institutions
- Involvement of schools/school systems
- Involvement of other stakeholders including non-formal, informal stakeholders

2. RCE Vision

- Clear and specific vision for the RCE
- Consideration of all aspects of SD – economic, social and environment
- Regional challenges and relevance of proposed activities

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Criteria for acknowledging new RCEs (cont'd)

3. Governance

- Evidence of mobilization processes to develop the RCE
- Commitment of key institutions/financial sustainability
- Governance and management structure
- Monitoring/evaluation mechanisms

4. On-going and planned activities

- Description of previous and on-going activities specific to individual organizations
- Description of planned collaborative, coordinated activities
- Research and development component
- Transformative education component

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RCEs & a Global Learning Space

- RCEs together and their mutual relations would form the global learning space for sustainable development – a visible output of DESD
- UNU commits to promote RCEs and their networking throughout DESD and established the Global RCE Service Centre in UNU-IAS.

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International RCE Conferences

- 1st – June 2006, Yokohama, Japan (hosted by UNU-IAS)
- 2nd – August 2007, Penang, Malaysia (hosted by RCE Penang)
- 3rd – July 2008, Barcelona, Spain (hosted by RCE Barcelona)
 - Include discussions on monitoring and evaluation, reporting & communication and thematic/continental networks

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Continental Networking

- Continental discussions among RCEs in Asia, North America, Africa and Europe
- Continental meetings/conferences are held
 - During International RCE meeting in Penang – August 2007
 - North America – May 2007 (at the CSD); May 2008
 - Europe – December 2007; December 2008
 - Asia-Pacific – October 2008

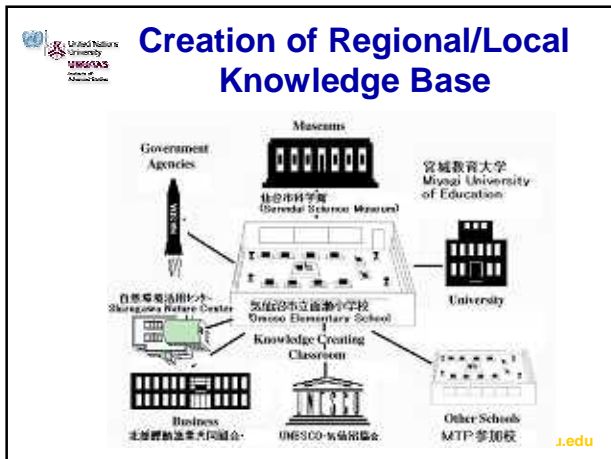
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Thematic areas today

- **Health and ESD** (emphasis on the community health) – RCE Penang, RCE Yokohama, RCE Cebu, and other RCEs in Africa and Europe
- **Sustainable production and consumption and ESD - Sustainable food systems and ESD** (proposal for action in preparation)
 - RCE Yogyakarta, RCE Cha-am, RCE candidate HCM City, RCE Penang, etc.
- **Youth and ESD**
- **Biodiversity**
- **E-Learning**
- **Teacher Training and Retraining** – leadership negotiated
- **Climate Change, Energy and ESD** – topic was emphasised as important but no RCE promoter yet

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- United Nations University
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
- ## ProSPER.Net Initiative
- under the auspice of UNU-IAS
- **ProSPER.Net**: Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network
 - 19-20 November 2007: “*Meeting of Heads of Higher Education Institutions in Asia-Pacific on Postgraduate Sustainable Development Education and Research*” (UNU-IAS, Yokohama, Japan)
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- United Nations University
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
- ## Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) can or potentially become
- Knowledge providers
 - Source of inspirations for schools
 - Providers of learning spaces (formal, non-formal, informal)
 - Undertakers of intellectual inquiries (research)
 - Have the ability to assume a “leadership by example” role in the education sector
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- United Nations University
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
- ## Networking of HEIs
- A strategic tool to optimize utilization of resources (material and knowledge) for the common goal of members.
- Learning from each other
 - Sharing of resources
 - Collaborating joint activities
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- United Nations University
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
UNEP/WHO
- ## Salient characteristics of ProSPER.Net
- A network of committed HEIs in the Asia-Pacific region
 - A collaborative mechanism for reform to integrate sustainability paradigm into postgraduate degree-level courses, curricula and programmes
 - A collaborative consortium to undertake research on ESD/SD
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ProSPER.Net June '08 Events in Hokkaido

- Joint Activity Meeting, June 19
- First General Assembly Meeting, June 20
- First Board Meeting, June 20
- **Launching Ceremony, June 21**
- International Symposium on Environmental Leadership Initiatives on Asian Sustainability, June 21

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ProSPER.Net Founding Members (18 in total)

- Australia: **RMIT University**
- China: **Tongji University**
- India: **TERI University**
- Indonesia: **Universitas Gadjja Mada**
- Japan: **Hokkaido University; Iwate University; Miyagi University of Education; Nagoya University; Okayama University; Rikkyo University; Shinshu University; University of Tokyo**
- Malaysia: **Universiti Sains Malaysia**
- Philippines: **University of the Philippines**
- Republic of Korea: **Yonsei University**
- Thailand: **Chulalongkorn University**
- Region (Asia Pacific): **Asian Institute of Technology; University of South Pacific**

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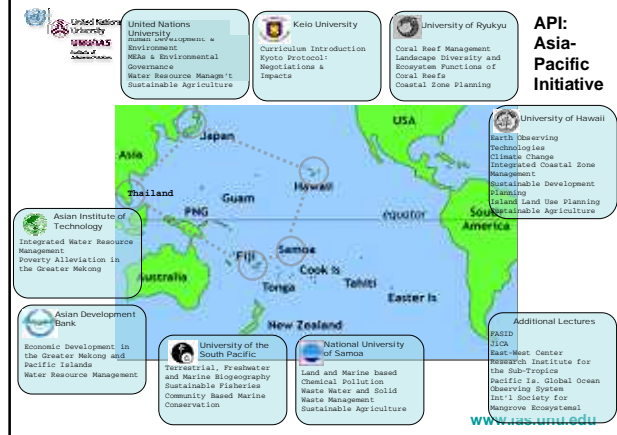
Working with Existing Networks in the Region

- UNU **RCE** → network of various ESD Stakeholders
- UNU **API** → online learning
- UNEP **RUC** → focus on China
- UNESCO **ESD-NET** → network of teacher training institutions



UNU-IAS ProSPER.NET → **Networking of HEIs for integrating sustainability paradigm in postgraduate education and research**

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UNEP Asia-Pacific Regional University Consortium (RUC)

- **Under the aegis of UNEP/ROAP (2003)**
- **Members:** Asian Institute of Technology, Griffith University, University of New South Wales, Wollongong University (Australia), Nanyang Technological University (Singapore), Tongji University (China), Yale University (USA), **Collaborating UN agency: UNU-IAS**
- **Objective:** To foster multi-disciplinary academic and research development through joint activities in the domain of environment, sustainable development and allied fields; and To serve as a resource base of expertise for the activities and programmes of UNEP and IESD

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Proposed Joint Activities of ProSPER.Net

1. Promotion of graduate students' engagement with SD issues.
2. Faculty and teacher training
3. Training of government officials
4. SD and business schools
5. Case studies on SD
6. Mapping of sustainability issues in higher education
7. Community engagement
8. Summer schools for master's and doctoral students
9. Faculty collaboration

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Prioritised Joint Activities

Prioritised joint activities started in 2008 with Ministry of the Environment of Japan's support :

- Curriculum development and delivery of the school of public policy and SD (TERI University as Lead institution)
- SD integration in business school curricula (AIT as Lead institution)
- Training on SD for educators and researchers (USM as Lead institution)

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Other Possible Joint Activities

- Summer School
- Establishing ESD Guidelines
- SD integration in engineering school curricula

Award

ProSPER.Net/Scopus Young Scientist Award in Sustainable Development

(supported by Elsevier)

- Business education and research
- Deadline: mid-March 2009

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Mid-term Review of DESD

- World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development - Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade – 31 March – 2 April 2009, Bonn, Germany
- International Forum on Education for Sustainable Development Dialogue 2008 2-5 December 2008, Tokyo, Japan

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Recommendations to the Bonn Conference from Int'l Forum (Extract)

(to Member States)

- Consolidate and strengthen partnerships with UN agencies, and build up closer connections with various stakeholders, **Higher Education Institutions**, NGOs, Private Sectors and Media.

(to UNESCO)

- Invite member states to support the development of national research agendas and to stimulate capacity of **Higher Education Institutions** for ESD research and innovations including incorporating relevant indigenous and local knowledge systems.

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For further information, please visit:

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Thank you !

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