



ACKNOWLEDGED BY



7TH ASIA-PACIFIC RCE MEETING

University Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
26 August 2014, 9am-4pm

The 7th Asia-Pacific RCE Meeting was hosted by RCE Penang (Malaysia) on 26 August 2014. The meeting was combined with an International Symposium, entitled “A Decade of Regional Centres of Expertise on ESD: Reflections and Advances in Asia-Pacific”, as well as an agenda of cultural activities for participants. This document includes the minutes of the Asia-Pacific 7th RCE Meeting only. The dialogues arisen from the International Symposium are captured in the Symposium Report and Proceedings.

In attendance:			
1	Mrs Helen Angelakis	RCE Greater Western Sydney	Australia
2	Prof Mohammed Aatur Rahman	RCE Greater Dhaka	Bangladesh
3	Ms Ragini Kumar	RCE Delhi	India
4	Ms Shabana Gazi	RCE Goa	India
5	Dr Puji Astuti	RCE Yogyakarta	Indonesia
6	Ms Yuko Kimura	Ministry of the Environment	Japan
7	Mr Furusawa Reita	RCE Chubu	Japan
8	Prof Miyake Hiroyuki	RCE Kitakyushu	Japan
9	Mr Masaaki Nagareo	RCE Okayama	Japan
10	Prof Masami Kaneko	Rakuno Gakuen University	Japan
11	Ms Kosuga Chie	Rakuno Gakuen University	Japan
12	Prof Osamu Koike	RCE Yokohama	Japan
13	Mr Abe Kimihiko	RCE Yokohama	Japan
14	Ms Ampo Yumiko	RCE Yokohama	Japan
15	Ms Basnet Yasoda	RCE Yokohama	Japan
16	Prof Mario Tabucanon	UNU-IAS	Japan
17	Ms Sachiko Yasuda	UNU-IAS	Japan
18	Ms Kyoko Shiota	UNU-IAS	Japan
19	Dr Zainal Abidin Sanusi	AKEPT	Malaysia
20	Representative	COSMOPOINT, RSEN	Malaysia

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22	Dr Fujino Junichi	Iskandar Regional Development Authority	Malaysia
23	Mr Jouman Boyd Dionysus	Iskandar Regional Development Authority	Malaysia
24	Prof Kamarulazizi Ibrahim	Centre for Global Sustainability Studies	Malaysia
25	Tn. Hj. Osman Bin Hussain	JPN Penang	Malaysia
26	Dr Mohamad Shafiq bin Abdul Aziz	Kampus Sejahtera	Malaysia
27	Mr Mohd Hasim Abd Hamid	KOPEL Bhd, RCE Sabah (observer)	Malaysia
28	Representative	Museum USM, RSEN	Malaysia
29	Representative	Penang Free School, USM	Malaysia
30	Representative	Pusat Sejahtera, RSEN, USM	Malaysia
31	Prof Munirah Gazhali	RCE Penang	Malaysia
32	Mr Ammar Aziz	RCE Penang	Malaysia
33	Ms Dora Ayub	RCE Penang	Malaysia
34	Dr Asyirah Abdul Rahim	RCE Penang	Malaysia
35	Dr Mageswary Karpudewan	RCE Penang	Malaysia
36	Dr Ingrid Mulà	RCE Penang	Malaysia
37	Ms Fatin Aliah Phang	UTM, RCE Sabah (observer)	Malaysia
38	Prof Ho Chin Siong	UTM, RCE Sabah (observer)	Malaysia
39	Prof Sandra Morrison	RCE Waikato	New Zealand
40	Dr Betsan Martin	RCE Waikato	New Zealand
41	Dr Quilicot Gordiano	RCE Bohol	Philippines
42	Ms Annie A. Manzano	RCE Cebu	Philippines
43	Ms Byun Wonjung	RCE Tongyeong	Republic of Korea
44	Ms Melissa Leung Hiu Tuen	RCE Tongyeong	Republic of Korea
45	Ms Kang Bunae	RCE Tongyeong	Republic of Korea
46	Dr Sonjai Havanond	RCE Cha-am	Thailand
47	Ms Areeporn Sittayanpaiboon	RCE Cha-am	Thailand
48	Dr Pham Ngoc	RCE Southern Vietnam	Vietnam
49	Dr Pham Thi Hoa	RCE Southern Vietnam	Vietnam

Opening Ceremony

1. The national anthem (Negaraku) and the University Sains Malaysia (USM) song (Menara Ilmu) were played to formally open the event and welcome international participants to Malaysia and USM.
2. The USM Vice-Chancellor officially opened the meeting and welcomed distinguished speakers, guests and participants. UNU-IAS and RCEs were thanked for their excellent work on leading change for sustainability in local and global communities. The USM Vice-Chancellor then emphasized how seriously sustainability was taken in USM and reminded to participants that RCE Penang was one of the first seven RCEs in the world to be acknowledged by UNU-IAS. He wished participants to have fruitful discussions and encouraged them to take the time to meet local stakeholders during the International Symposium on the following day.
3. UNU-IAS was invited to take the stage and deliver its opening remarks. USM colleagues and distinguished guests were thanked and RCEs were welcomed to the meeting. A special welcome went for RCE Waikato (New Zealand) and RCE Changwon (Republic of Korea) as new RCEs and potential RCE candidate Sabah (Malaysia) as an observer. It was noted that the first Asia-Pacific RCE Meeting was held in Penang in 2007 and RCE colleagues from the region were gathered again in Penang at the year when the United Nations Decade for Sustainable Development (UN DESD) ends and the Global Action Programme (GAP) is to be launched. UNU-IAS clarified its continuous commitment to supporting the RCE community and promote ESD activities at all levels after the UN DESD.
4. The UNU-IIGH Director was then welcomed and invited to deliver his opening speech. UNU-IIGH thanked honorable guests and participants at the RCE meeting and introduced the work of the institute. The aim of UNU-IIGH goes far beyond supporting quality in health systems and care services, but to promoting wellbeing globally. To effectively do so, UNU-IIGH is engaged in exploring the interlinkages between sustainability, human ecology and wellbeing. To illustrate this, the Boyden's biosensitivity triangle was shown in a powerpoint slide. The triangle expresses the hypothesis that the level of biosensitivity achieved by society influences the levels of both human's and planet's health. It also shows that there are co-benefits that a human ecosystem confers on human health. The UNU-IIGH Director expressed interest to connect more closely with UNU-IAS and individual RCEs to work together on overlapping issues of both UNU institutes such wellbeing and sustainable development.

Plenary Session

5. RCE Tongyeong was invited to the stage and facilitate this plenary session. RCEs were welcomed and the context and dynamics of this meeting were introduced.

Review of the 6th Asia-Pacific RCE Meeting

6. The first item on the agenda was to review the minutes of the previous Asia-Pacific Meeting which was hosted by RCE Kitakyushu from 22 to 22 October 2013 in Kitakyushu, Fukuoka,

Japan. Over 56 participants representing 15 member RCEs and 1 new candidate, RCE Waikato, attended this meeting in Japan. RCE Kitakyushu was invited to say some words about last year's meeting.

7. RCE Kitakyushu presented the RCE Meeting/International Symposium report which was developed after the event. The main key areas discussed in Kitakyushu included progress of the global RCE movement, inter-RCE collaborative projects, thematic discussions and a roadmap towards 2014 and beyond. RCE Kitakyushu invited RCEs to look at the Symposium's report which captures the key messages from the international event. The report was included in participants' folders

Review of the agenda

8. The facilitator of this session presented the agenda of the meeting which included opportunities to:
 - better understanding the RCE "family" in-Asia Pacific through reviewing progress of the global RCE Movement and introducing new RCEs;
 - understanding common/diverse areas of interest through thematic discussions on Youth/ Schools/ Community/ Biodiversity/ Disaster Risk Management; and,
 - discussing and planning collaborative efforts beyond the UN DESD, including collaborative projects, Asia-Pacific RCEs contribution to the GAP, and RCE achievements and challenges.

RCE Global Movement

9. UNU-IAS presented an overview of RCE network developments and RCE-related activities since November 2013. The current total number of RCEs is 129, of which 47 are from Asia-Pacific. In 2013, a total of 9 new RCEs were acknowledged being 2 of them from the Asia-Pacific region. These 2 new RCEs are RCE Waikato (New Zealand) and RCE Changwon (Republic of Korea). Due the growing number of RCEs, UNU-IAS is re-designing the RCE map and the RCE Portal.
10. The following are activities and events taking place between November to November 2014:
 - 8th Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs and 8th Global RCE Conference (November 2013, Nairobi, Kenya)
 - RCE Youth Session and YUVA Meet 2014 (February 2014, Delhi, India)
 - Japanese RCE Meeting (March 2014, Okayama, Japan)
 - RCE Assessment Projects (Australia, India, Thailand, Japan, Kenya, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania)
 - 3rd RCE Americas Meeting (August 2014, Western Jalisco, Mexico)
 - 7th RCE Asia-Pacific Meeting (August 2014, Penang, Malaysia)
 - African RCE Meeting (September 2014, Windhoek, Namibia)
 - 9th Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs and 9th Global RCE Conference (November 2014, Okayama, Japan)
11. In November 2013, 22 projects from 20 RCEs were submitted for an RCE Award and 6, including RCE Okayama and RCE Greater Western Sydney, received an "Outstanding Flagship Project" award.

12. UNU-IAS announced that a commemorative 10 year book will be launched in Japan in November 2014.
13. The bulletin and the RCE portal will continue to be used as key RCE communication tools.
14. UNU-IAS urged those participants who had not registered to the Global RCE Conference to do so as soon as possible and before the 19th September.

Introduction of new RCEs

15. The facilitator of this session returned to the stage and introduced the two new RCEs acknowledged last year and RCE candidates. These RCEs were asked to say a few words about themselves.
16. RCE Waikato is hosted by the University of Waikato in New Zealand and has a strong focus on indigenous people, ESD professional development for teachers and ethics of responsibility. A new Maori project on water as a commons to development a law is currently being implemented.
17. RCE Changwon is based in Republic of Korea and its main focus is on low carbon and climate change agendas as well as supporting community development and inclusiveness for ESD.
18. A potential RCE candidate Sabah is based in the island of Borneo, Malaysia. If successful, the RCE will be hosted by the Universiti Malaysia Sabah with close collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Key activities will include the development of eco-tourism and the establishment of educational programmes for schools which promote biodiversity conservation.

Thematic Discussion

19. After the plenary session, thematic discussion groups were organised in the following topics: Youth, Community, Schools, Biodiversity and Disaster Risk Management. Each thematic group was moderated by a facilitator and a rapporteur. Facilitators were asked to summarise the key points of the discussion in the plenary.

Thematic Group 1: Youth

- Attended by 6 RCE members.
- RCE activities in this area are primarily focused on: healthy lifestyles, food, sustainability volunteerism, embedding ESD in specific disciplines, youth motivation in action for sustainability.
- Discussions were centred on: strategies to involve youth parents in activities such as the organisation of seminars and initiatives related to healthy food; the importance of engaging higher education/college students in sustainable practice (eg., reducing energy use); and, the need to use social media to engage youth more meaningfully.
- The group concluded that it is important to increase youth awareness in sustainability. To do so, there is the need to motivate youth through competitions and give incentives.

Thematic Group 2: Community

- Attended by 5 RCE members.
- RCE initiatives in this thematic area are diverse: promoting low carbon emissions and community development in rural areas through the implementation of FELDA projects; supporting biodiversity conservation through eco-tourism developments; engaging disadvantaged groups through social enterprise and entrepreneurship initiatives.
- Discussions were focused on: how to coordinate community members to ensure sustainability of projects; the need for government support to ensure an effective implementation of projects; methodologies that can be used by the community to develop their own action plans; the need for local systems and/or handbooks that can help communities to implement and sustain projects; the importance of ensuring that the community understands the project key issues; the need for greater collaboration of all community stakeholders.
- The group concluded that there is a need for more government support to develop and implement community projects; quality of projects is key to their success; and, there is a need for creating sustainability awareness at the community level.

Thematic Group 3: Schools

- Attended by 8 RCE members.
- School initiatives and projects highlighted in the discussion included: embedding ESD in curriculum syllabus using participatory approaches; promotion of education in mother tongue and traditional and indigenous knowledge; inter-school collaboration on sustainability issues; assessing sustainability progress in schools as a way to improve on certain key sustainability issues.
- Discussions were centred on: the need to embed local/indigenous knowledge in the curriculum through national negotiations, teacher training and working with schools; the need for national support for educating using children's mother tongue; the challenge/problems of upscaling and mainstreaming projects to different parts of the world; the need for tracking sustainability progress in schools to identify issues which need to be addressed; organisational challenges arising when leadership changes and when there is no stability regarding the coordination of RCEs; the need for new methodologies which capture stories of children who have lived natural disasters.
- The group agreed that RCEs should work more closely with partners and broker new partnerships for sustainability; explore new funding possibilities; and, document good practice and case studies through group emails.

Thematic Group 4: Biodiversity

- Attended by 5 RCE members.
- The group shared various challenges and case studies on biodiversity and traditional knowledge from the past year and agreed that 2014-15 should be focused on collaboration on awareness on climate change and biodiversity.
- Discussions were focused on the following key issues: climate change and its effect on biodiversity of the region; ESD as a key strategy to address climate change and loss of biodiversity; public awareness and learning strategies on climate change and their impact on biodiversity conservation; need for transdisciplinary approaches to effectively raise public's awareness.
- The group decided to work on an APRCE CEPA on Climate Change and Biodiversity Project (RCE Penang to coordinate with APRCE and others); reactivate Facebook for communication and discussion; organise an International Conference on Climate Change

and Biodiversity in 2015 (RCE Chaam); and, focus on public awareness (Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness).

Thematic Group 5: Disaster risk management

- Attended by 7 RCE members.
- The various activities and initiatives highlighted by RCEs include: adaptation of resources on disaster risk reduction from ACCU links; the Bangladesh Climate Change Adaptation Fund; embedding of ESD in the higher education syllabus.
- Discussions took place around the need of developing structural flood control management and creating awareness on flood risk areas.
- Two important conferences were announced: the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (Sendai, March 2015) and the Water Conference (November 2015).
- The group concluded that it is important for RCEs and HTC to support ESD in Disaster Risk Management. Members proposed to embed ESD in Landscape Management and promote natural and traditional defence mechanisms such as Disaster Mitigation.
- Future plans of the group include: training local communities on disaster recovery protocols (6 RCEs); increasing awareness on upstream population to protect local (RCE Southern Vietnam); getting involved in the draft of the NAPA (RCE Greater Dhaka); engaging with HTC on a conference on ESD and Disaster Mitigation.

Inter-RCE Partnerships and Collaboration

20. RCE Bohol and RCE Greater Phnom Penh have joined forces to organise the 6th International Conference on Environmental and Rural Development during 7-8 March 2015 in in Bohol Island State University of (BISU), Bohol, Philippines. The Conference will explore and discuss strategies and processes for sustainable rural development taking into account agricultural and environmental aspects in developing countries.
21. RCE Okayama was invited to the stage to share plans of the RCE Global Conference ESD Week in November 2014 in Japan. The RCE Conference will take place from 4-7 November in Okayama and the preparation is currently underway. On Thursday 6 November, the ESD Week will be officially opened and various ESD stakeholder meetings, like the UNESCO ASPnet World Conference and Youth Conference, will also take place in Okayama. The International Conference on Higher Education for Sustainable Development (9 November) and the UNESCO World Conference on ESD (10-12 November) will take place in Nagoya. Japanese RCEs is planning to jointly organize an ESD-related event on 10 November in Nagoya.
22. RCE Greater Western Sydney organises the Youth Education Summit - YES! Summit annually. The Summit is for school students and their teachers. It promotes student leadership and showcases sustainability achievements and practices in both primary and secondary schools. RCE Penang launched this initiative in Penang in 2013 and participants joined the Summit virtually.
23. RCE Tongyeong announced that the Sejahtera Centre will be finalised very soon and officially launched on 30th March 2015. The Sejahtera Centre borrows its name from an indigenous word in Malaysia which is usually translated as “well-being”, but it actually embraces more than well-being (environment, health, spirituality, balance...). The Centre will host various

organisations including RCE Tongyeong and will provide great opportunities to strengthen partnerships and collaboration amongst RCEs in Asia-Pacific. Collaborative activities could include volunteerism or internship programmes, but many others which are still to be defined. It was agreed that first year activities of the Centre would be centred on the topic of traditional knowledge.

RCEs Beyond 2014

24. UNU-IAS reminded again participants about the different events which will take place in Japan in November 2014 and briefly presented the priority action areas of the GAP. UNU-IAS has submitted GAP Launch Commitments restating that UNU-IAS will be committed to integrating ESD in education and SD policies through policy-relevant research and strengthening capacities of policymakers and young professionals; transforming higher education institutions in the pursuit of sustainability through integration of SD and ESD into curricula, capacity building of educators, and promotion of innovative research, methodologies and pedagogies; and advancing ESD at the local level through the RCE imitative.
25. The “Advancing ESD Beyond 2014: Strategy for Asia-Pacific RCEs” was shared with RCE Asia-Pacific colleagues previous to the meeting. This session aimed at discussing the document and deciding whether it could be accepted as a Strategy of RCEs in Asia-Pacific after the DESD. UNU-IAS proposed some questions for discussion and then presented the document which has been structured following the GAP Priority Action Areas (advancing policy, transforming learning and training environment, building capacities of educators and trainers, empowering and mobilising youth, accelerating sustainable solutions at the local level). The main key points raised are summarised below.

Policy support

- Importance of stressing the need to creating closer linkages with universities and increasing participation of local communities in ESD/SD policy-making.
- RCEs can share experiences on ESD policy-making.
- It would be interesting to illustrate some of the strategic points with some examples.
- In 2014, many ESD strategies launched at the start of the Decade will expire. This is an important opportunity for RCEs to be involved in lobbying for new strategies or to participate in the development of new ones.
- Need for highlighting the importance of M&E processes and benchmarks to track ESD progress and learning, and capture lessons learned.
- Sections could be re-ordered taking into account the policy making process cycle.

Whole Institution Approach

- Need for clarifying what whole institution means and what processes this involves.
- Institutions and organisations are different between each other and this needs to be taken into account when facilitating change for sustainability.
- The organisational learning process and the involvement of all institutional stakeholders are crucial.

Educators

- Educators should be open to different ESD approaches.
- It was encouraged to change some of the wording so it is more aligned with “ESD language” (eg., educating teachers)
- It is important that holistic approaches are used to implement this Strategy (the different priority areas are cross-cutting).
- The professional development of educators should not be limited to traditional opportunities such as modules.
- As action points, it was proposed to better engage with the business sector in ESD and develop a database for sharing best practice in this area.
- The question of whether SD and ESD should be defined in the document was raised.

Youth

- There should be stronger collaboration with universities to develop youth strategies in ESD.
- More innovative approaches need to be used when engaging with youth.
- Leadership/leadership capabilities are keywords which should be included in this section, but also throughout the document.
- It is important to promote intergenerational learning processes.
- Strategies to empower the youth for leadership should be developed.

Local Communities

- There is a need for more inclusiveness in community programmes. It is important to reach marginalised groups in society.
- Approaches for mutual learning with the community should be further promoted.

Closing

26. The meeting was closed by the facilitator of this meeting and the Director of RCE Penang. RCE Yogyakarta was also asked to say a few words to summarise the day.