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# RCE Bulletin

R C E A N D E S D N E W S

## An online platform for RCE communications: new developments

by J. Rikers (*Open University of the Netherlands*), S. Aipanjiguly (*UNU-IAS*)

### The need for communication

Communication within the RCE network has been a topic of discussion since the first Global RCE meeting in June 2005, when the first seven RCEs were acknowledged. At the initial stages of the mobilisation of the RCE community, communications via email were adequate. As the number of RCEs grew, the RCE bulletin was introduced as a tool for sharing knowledge and information within the RCE community, as well as to promote RCE activities to the network of peers and collaborators.

Today, the RCE community is 85-member strong and growing, and sub-communities have formed based on geographic criteria and on themes. The development of an online space for the RCE network and its groups to interact is now an urgent need, particularly since it is the exchange of information within the global RCE network that is one of the key mechanisms towards the creation of a global learning space on ESD. In theory, such an online space can facilitate information exchange on RCE activities and projects and can help source experience and expertise. However, the development of an ideal online space that takes into account every RCE's needs and demands is a challenge.

### First initiatives

In 2006, the UNU-IAS assisted in the development of a test site for RCE communications, which was presented at the RCE International Conference in Barcelona in 2008. However, the online tool was not welcomed by a majority of RCEs due to reasons of usability: RCEs found the tool too heavy to download, not easy to use or search, and found the lack of multi-language capability a barrier. The tool also required RCEs to purchase software, a cost that not all RCEs could afford.

A number of separate efforts by UNU-IAS and individual RCEs followed, with the UNU-IAS exploring a solution to

serve the global RCE network, some individual RCEs looking for a solution for communication between their partners, and some regional groups such as the network of European RCEs searching for an appropriate tool to serve them.

### Towards a solution

In 2009, RCE Graz-Styria and RCE Rhine-Meuse signed up as partners to a European project called *Lifelong Learning Network for Sustainable Development (3-LENSUS)*, together with a number of European universities and then candidate RCEs. One of the products to be delivered by this project was an internet platform servicing communication between European networks for ESD, organisations involved in ESD and the like. A special focus was on creating a communication facility for the European RCEs. The project consortium invited Zinaida Fadeeva from UNU-IAS as one of the external evaluators for the project. Once the potential of the platform arising from this 3-LENSUS project became clear, discussions between different groups of RCEs and the RCE Service Centre were initiated to join forces and develop a common solution as a single solution for the global network was preferred to possible regional solutions.

As a consequence of this decision an RCE platform development team, consisting of the RCE Service Centre, representatives from Asian, European and American RCEs, and the 3-LENSUS development team was formed.

### Merging initiatives

A first prototype was developed, based on the wish list of site capabilities from the RCE network, in the autumn of 2010. The prototype was tested within the development group led by the RCE Service Centre, improvements were made and the group of testers was extended to some RCEs that had shown interest in being involved in the testing process. By the end of 2010 the platform was almost ready in its first version and was demonstrated at the Annual European RCE Meeting in Munich, Germany. A second presentation was organised at a meeting of Asian RCEs in Yogyakarta in January 2011. Comments and suggestions were gathered, and where possible were implemented immediately. Other revisions are on a list for further

development, which will follow budget and organisational decisions.

### The platform

In its current form, the system offers a single entry point to all information on the RCE-based global learning network. It offers the opportunity for RCEs to share expertise and information on their activities. The tool can be used for communications within an RCE, between RCEs and also offers a space to publicise the work of RCEs to the outside world.

What has been developed is a platform that puts the individual users' needs at its heart. The site is set up in a fashion similar to other popular social media networks, is easy to use and allows the sharing of all types of information and files. Access to information can be controlled by the user who provides the information, who can make it available to just the RCE network or to the worldwide audience. A seamless integration of the RCE reporting tool is planned, with the platform acting as a gate to the reporting tool. The possibility for RCEs to create their own websites within the platform, which can be reached from outside with unique URLs, is also foreseen.

The platform was developed with the open source software ELGG, which was selected based on an analysis by the 3-Lens team.

### What next?

The prototype site, developed with the participation of several RCEs around the world, is very close to being launched. The few minor technical edits required can be made quickly, however the key questions confronting the growth of the portal will be a matter of debate and deliberation. Some of the issues that will need to be resolved for the portal to grow to its full potential are described below.

*Hosting of the platform:* The Open University of Netherlands, the University of Regina in Saskatchewan and the University of Crete are some of the members of the RCE community who have offered free hosting on their university servers. But a decision to work with one of the volunteer universities or to use a separate semi-dedicated server has to be made in keeping with the potential growth of the RCE community beyond the DESD. Issues of ownership of content should also be outlined clearly before agreeing on an arrangement.

*Maintenance and further development:* As the portal belongs to the RCE community, members of the community would ideally collaborate on the maintenance and further development of the site, even beyond the end of the DESD in 2014. Clear roles and responsibilities, as well as detailed processes need to be developed to ensure that members of the RCE community are aware and involved at all stages.

*Content:* The setting up of an editorial board to ensure that content is accurate and that it reflects the breadth and depth of RCE activities, is to be discussed.

*Moderation and facilitation:* The life of the portal will be determined by the number of users and frequency of use. A system for the moderation and facilitation of various groups and discussions will need to be set up with members of the RCE community taking turns with the tasks.

These questions are up for discussion in 2011 when the RCE portal is expected to be launched.

**For more information**  
**Sampreethi Aipanjiguly**  
**UNU-IAS**  
**[aipanjiguly@ias.unu.edu](mailto:aipanjiguly@ias.unu.edu)**

## RCE sessions at the 14th UNESCO-APEID Conference

Participants from several Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on ESD in the Asia-Pacific region participated in the two sessions organised by UNU-IAS at the 14th UNESCO-Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) International Conference.

The theme of the conference that was held in Bangkok from 21 to 23 October 2010 was Education for Human Resource Development (HRD). The conference addressed issues of knowledge, skills, competencies and values required for human resource development and attracted over 150 participants from 37 countries.

The theme of the two sessions organised by UNU-IAS at the conference was the Role of RCEs in Human Resource Development. One session was devoted to formal education and the other to community empowerment and non-formal education.

Some details on the presentations in the formal education session follow.

- *Fostering Leaders for Creating a Sustainable Society at Okayama University, Japan* by RCE Okayama (Japan);
- *An ESD Practitioner Course with Formal Curriculum and Informal Activities in the Higher Education* by RCE Hyogo-Kobe (Japan);
- *Teacher Training of Education for Sustainable Development in Greater Sendai* by RCE Greater Sendai (Japan); and
- *The Role of Regional Centres of Expertise in Competence Development for a Sustainable Society: 'University of RCE'* by RCE Penang (Malaysia).

The papers presented at the session on community empowerment and non-formal education were:

- *Promoting Sustainable Agriculture in Greater Phnom Penh, Cambodia*, by RCE Greater Phnom Penh (Cambodia);
- *Empowering Non-Formal Education for Generating a*

*Robust Human Capital in the Province of East Kalimantan*, by RCE East Kalimantan (Indonesia);  
 - *Human Resource Development for Protection and Public Hazard Relief Network* by RCE Trang, (Thailand); and  
 - *The Deployment of Education for International Understanding and Education for Sustainable Development* by RCE Greater Sendai (Japan).

RCE representatives also presented an overview of their RCEs during the sessions.

**For more information**  
**The Global RCE Service Centre**  
**UNU-IAS**  
[rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

### 3rd ASEAN-Plus-Three Leadership Programme on Sustainable Production and Consumption

Over seventy participants from the ASEAN region and beyond participated in the 3rd ASEAN-Plus-Three Leadership Programme on Sustainable Production and Consumption held in Manila, Philippines during 6-7 October 2010. The programme was designed for business leaders and managers from the ten ASEAN Member States plus China, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

The programme was co-organised by UNU-IAS in collaboration with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) of the Philippines, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), and the ASEAN Secretariat. The programme was organised into three sub-themes – Consumption and Production Patterns and Approaches; Alternative Models of Development; and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Supply Chain.

Pressing global challenges and the concomitant issues were addressed, and ways in which leaders, business leaders in particular, could assume effective stewardship towards creating sustainable societies were discussed. In dealing with consumption and production patterns and approaches, the hypothesis was that sustainable consumption is a major driver of sustainable development in Asia and that effective approaches – such as 3Rs, eco-design and sustainable manufacturing – are necessary to tackle current unsustainable practices.

Alternative models of development addressed were green economy, poverty reduction, business and biodiversity, and sufficiency economy philosophy. CSR in ASEAN and sustainable supply chain and logistics were among the topics addressed under the theme of CSR and Supply Chain.

The ASEAN-Plus-Three Leadership Programmes are held annually as part of the implementation scheme of the ASEAN Environmental Education Action Plan (AEEAP

2008-2012) approved by the governments of the ASEAN Member States and have been delivered under the leadership of UNU-IAS through its Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Programme.

The programme was attended by the Vice Rector of UNU and Director of UNU-IAS, the Undersecretary for Planning and Policy of DENR and Philippine Chairperson of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Environment (ASOEN), the Executive Director of ACB, and the Head of the Environment Division of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Department of the ASEAN Secretariat. The programme was honoured by the presence of the Ambassador of Cambodia to the Philippines, Cambodia being the current Chair of ASOEN, and the President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In addition to the UNU-IAS resource persons, other speakers came from the Asian Development Bank, ASEAN Foundation, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, ASEAN Secretariat, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), the Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

**For more information**  
**The Global RCE Service Centre**  
**UNU-IAS**  
[rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

### RCE and ESD side events at CBD COP 10

The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10) was held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan from 18 to 29 October 2010.

The side event *ESD and Biological Diversity: How can ESD contribute to CBD?* was jointly organised by UNU-IAS, UNESCO and RCEs Cha-am, Chubu, Greater Sendai and Curibita-Paraná, during the CEPA (Communication, Education and Public Awareness) Fair on 20 October 2010. Various ESD activities related to the Convention on Biodiversity were presented from international, national and local perspectives and the participants reaffirmed the significance of communication, education and awareness-raising as instruments for the promotion of ESD as well as the achievement of the three objectives of the Convention.



*Participants at the UNU-IAS side event at COP 10*

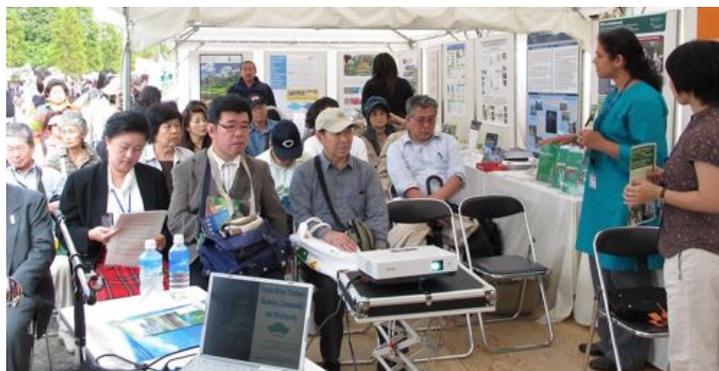
Another side event titled *Health, Biodiversity and Traditional knowledge: Strengthening linkages* was

co-organised on 25 October 2010 by the UNU-IAS, RCE Bangalore represented by the Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions, COMPAS, UNEP and the Equator Initiative, as a follow-up to the International Traditional Medicine Conference held in November 2009, in Bangalore, India. A policy brief on traditional healers and the report of the Bangalore conference were released at the event.

The event examined the challenges in achieving health for all despite various policy commitments. Speakers highlighted the relevance of traditional healers and medical practices in providing primary health care and serving a public health function through relevant case studies from India and Latin America, and indicated the various measures being taken at the local level to validate such knowledge and to mainstream practices and practitioners. Speakers also highlighted the need to examine non-tangible practices, such as spiritual healing, in the local context.

There was general consensus among panelists that despite health being one of the important services provided by biodiversity and ecosystems, discussions within the CBD context still focus on pharmaceutical values. Discussions on integration and linkages between traditional medicine and conventional medicine also raised questions on intercultural healing and inter-science dialogues, and dialogues and collaborative work between different policy forums.

As part of the COP10 Interactive Fair for Biodiversity, six RCEs from Japan organised a public forum and workshop to discuss the roles of ESD for Biodiversity Conservation on 20 October 2010. At the public forum, representatives from RCE Kitakyushu, Okayama, Hyogo-Kobe, and Chubu showcased their activities on Biodiversity, and RCEs Greater Sendai and Yokohama sought collaboration for biodiversity conservation. The workshop was also designed to discuss how to enhance collaboration among ESD networks for biodiversity among RCEs in Japan.



*At the Business, Community and Biodiversity workshop, COP 10*

For the two weeks during COP10, UNU and UNU-IAS set up a booth to display a number of publications and organised seminars and workshops. The ESD Programme

and RCE Cha-am conducted a workshop on Business, Community and Biodiversity: A Case Study of Toyota Thailand. A senior vice president of Toyota Thailand, one of the key partners of RCE Cha-am, and representatives of RCE Cha-am presented the vision, strategies and tools of the business sector to work on biodiversity and ecosystem services at the community level.

**For more information**  
**The Global RCE Service Centre**  
**UNU-IAS**  
[rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

## Eight new RCEs

Eight new RCEs have been acknowledged following a review of 24 proposals, at the Fifth Meeting of the Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs, held on 23 November 2010 at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) in Barcelona, Spain. The new members of the RCE network are RCEs Central Macedonia (Greece), Denmark, Espoo (Finland), Lima-Callao (Peru), Southern Vietnam, Vienna (Austria), Ulju (South Korea) and Western Australia. The RCE community now has 85 members around the globe. Four Committee members representing the Association of African Universities (AAU), COPERNICUS Alliance (former COPERNICUS Campus), International Association of Universities (IAU) and United Nations University (UNU) participated in the review and selection process of new RCEs, together with five regional advisors from America, Europe, Africa and Asia-Pacific regions and five members of the Ubuntu Secretariat - UNU-IAS. Of the 24 proposals reviewed, 6 were from Africa, 5 from Europe, 1 from the Americas and 12 from the Asia-Pacific region.

**For more information**  
**The Global RCE Service Centre**  
**UNU-IAS**  
[rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

## Call for applications for RCEs

The United Nations University is now calling for applications for new RCEs to be reviewed at the next Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs later this year. Those organisations who are interested in initiating the RCE process and applying to become an RCE are requested to submit the first draft of application and application summary by Monday, 6 June 2011. For more details, please refer to the UNU-IAS website.

In line with this, the UNU-IAS will call for peer-reviewers from the existing RCEs to review the submitted applications in June. The announcement in this regard will be made in due course. RCEs are encouraged to engage actively in the process.

**For more information**  
**The Global RCE Service Centre**  
**UNU-IAS**  
[rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

## IAC Public Symposium in Barcelona

The Inter-Agency Committee (IAC) for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) comprises UN agencies that are collaborating for the implementation of the DESD under the leadership of UNESCO. With an agenda of facilitating and building synergies between the various initiatives towards achieving the goals of the DESD, IAC members convene once a year. Although UNESCO is the lead UN agency for the DESD, UNU-IAS functions as the IAC Chair for 2010-2011, a role that is conferred to a different IAC member for one year.

A public symposium is organised, together with the IAC meeting, to serve as a platform to exchange ideas with a broader audience about relevant issues concerning the implementation of the DESD. This year the symposium was held in Barcelona on 22 November 2010 to coincide with the 5th Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI) Conference on Higher Education.

Following discussions and consultations with local partners, IAC members, UNU-IAS and RCE Barcelona agreed that evaluation and assessment of ESD would be a relevant theme for the symposium. The Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (GMEF) developed by a group of experts commissioned by UNESCO has produced some results and other efforts are ongoing at local, national and regional levels. Guest speakers from international organisations, higher education institutions and RCEs presented and discussed their perspectives on the subject according to their experiences and activities in the area.

Speakers at the symposium included Mark Richmond from UNESCO; Gemma Cendra, Director of the Recinte Historic de Sant Pau, an NGO in whose offices the symposium was held; Frederic Ximeno, representing the Government of Catalonia; Govindan Parayil, UNU Vice-Rector and UNU-IAS Director; Daniella Tilbury, Chair, UNESCO Global Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group for the UN DESD; Clemens Mader from RCE Graz-Styria; Laima Galkute, Member of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE); and Dzulkipli Abdul Razak, Vice-Chancellor of the Universiti Sains Malaysia.

**For more information**  
**RCE Global Service Centre**  
**UNU-IAS**  
[rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

## University Appraisal for diversity, innovation and change towards sustainable development

Promoting the strengthening of ESD activities in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) is a focus of the ESD programme at UNU-IAS, and a session was organised at the 5th Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI) Conference on Higher Education in Barcelona on 24

November 2010 by the institute in this capacity. Several panelists were invited to discuss university appraisal schemes that foster ESD, in view of the need to approach current complex and interconnected problems with a holistic and systemic perspective, to innovate and to be creative in terms of finding solutions that accommodate different needs.

If innovative approaches, pedagogies and methodologies of HEI are to be stimulated and disseminated, mechanisms that provide tools for HEI to further develop this process need to be strengthened or put in place. HEI assessment is one of those mechanisms. Various assessment exercises that exist today often lead to ranking that disregards the diversity of HEIs' missions, objectives and contexts in which they operate. They may, as a result, hamper the transformative role of HEIs on the road to sustainable development.

Within this context, eight panelists including representatives from UNU-IAS and UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), shared their visions as to whether and how university appraisal may facilitate changes in HEI and society as a whole. They were invited to provide comments on three aspects that influence ESD and SD activities and strategies of HEI: relevant national and regional policies and strategies, synergies between different roles and functions of HEI and compatibility with sustainable development agenda, and characteristics of university appraisal schemes. The session aimed to provide an overview of where HEI stand within different contexts and their influence in establishing strategies, how HEI are ultimately contributing and relating their activities and practices to our modern reality and finally, how appraisal schemes may reward and guide transformations within HEI.

**For more information**  
**Zinaida Fadeeva**  
**ESD Programme, UNU-IAS**  
[prospernet@ias.unu.edu](mailto:prospernet@ias.unu.edu)

## NEWS FROM RCES IN AFRICA

### Sustainability commons at Rhodes University

The Makana and Rural Eastern Cape RCE has taken a practical, hands-on approach to environmental education and community engagement. The Environmental Learning Research Centre (ELRC), in partnership with the Wild Life Society of South Africa (WESSA), built a *commons* on its new research premises at Rhodes University. The open-air space will serve as a public classroom for non-academics and members of the community to explore environmental education and sustainable technologies in an interactive and engaging way.

Each invention or sustainable idea will be linked to a research project done by a Rhodes University Master's or PhD student, and will fall under one of five key areas: biodiversity, agriculture, water, energy or health. The projects will examine the common risks within each area and offer alternative options to ways of doing things. Addressing the problem of water quality and shortages, for example, the commons has installed a rain water tank with a first-flush system and a ceramic filter – expressing a sustainable alternative.

The aim of the commons is to show the public that sustainable solutions can meet their needs while improving quality of life, reducing environmental impact and restoring ecosystems. "Our purpose is to enhance livelihoods and sustainability through new ways of doing things that makes practical common sense," insists Prof Rob O'Donoghue of the ELRC.

**For more information**  
**Heila Lotz-Sisitka**  
**RCE Makana & Rural Eastern Cape**  
**h.lotz@ru.ac.za**

## NEWS FROM RCES IN THE AMERICAS

### RCE to undertake sustainable urban design charrette in Vancouver

RCE British Columbia/North Cascades (BC-RCE) will be undertaking a community urban design charrette in Vancouver's Historic Area neighbourhoods. With funding support from the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia, the BC-RCE will deliver the innovative neighbourhood planning process over the course of one week in the summer of 2011.

The goal of the charrette is to set targets for population density and build-out according to 2040 growth projections, and work with the local community to create the most socially, economically and environmentally sustainable method to reach the long-term development targets. Over several days of workshops and dialogue, participants will literally sketch out (through architects) a sustainable built environment for the inner-city heritage district.

The charrette is part of the BC-RCE's Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood Network (SUNN) project, which aims to develop a more open, efficient, and cost-effective protocol to plan livable and sustainable urban neighbourhoods. Rather than taking 2-3 years and spending up to one million dollars to create a typical local area plan, the BC-RCE plans to deliver a more comprehensive and detailed urban code for Vancouver's inner-city in less than a year and for a fraction of the cost.

It is hoped that this new planning protocol will be scalable to any urban neighbourhood in the world interested in planning for long-term sustainable development.

**For more information**  
**David Samis**  
**Project Coordinator, Walking the Talk**  
**The B.C - RCE**  
**wttcoordinator@gmail.com**

### Information requested for RCE Curitiba's ESD magazine

RCE Curitiba-Paraná is to launch an ESD magazine in the near future to share information on good practices at schools and at universities, including news on greening. The aim of the magazine is to continue to motivate international exchanges and cooperation for ESD among the global RCE community. It is also expected to promote interactions among university and elementary school teachers and pupils on ESD. The RCE requests the global RCE community to send in information on sustainability-related activities in schools and in communities.

RCE Curitiba-Paraná is to have a new base soon to be hosted in the Green Office of the Technological University, UTFPR, whose new sustainable building will be inaugurated in May 2011. Design and construction of the building is coordinated by Eloy Casagrande. A one day ESD workshop/seminar will take place to promote the continued ESD interactions and sustainable development during the opening.



*RCE Curitiba-Paraná's new base*

The RCE has also nominated members for the RCE's managing committee for 2011: Eloy Casagrande, UTFPR representative; Marcia Brunetti, PUC-Pr. representative; Marcco Areias Secco, SENAI-FIEP representative; and Marcelo Errera, UFPR representative.

**For more information**  
**Ziole Zanotto Malhadas**  
**RCE Curitiba-Paraná**  
**ziolezm@matrix.com.br**

## Environmental forum in Bogota, Colombia

The Environmental Education Network and RCE Bogota organised five forums on the environment in 2010, developed within the framework of the DESD. Students, researchers and all interested citizens participated in the events. The first forum in March was on the importance of biodiversity in Colombia, the second in April looked at a sustainable organisational culture, the third in September focused on traditional medicine, and the fourth, also held in September, on analysing the Environmental School Projects (PRAE) in urban and rural settings.

The fifth Forum was organised by Santo Tomas University on 3 November on cultural adaptation to climate change. The event provided an opportunity for the audience to explore responses developed by the regional and local communities to mitigate and cope with climate change.

The first Pedagogic Workshop of Environmental Education was also organised by the RCE on 19 November. Researchers, students, NGOs and citizens participated in the event, which looked at the necessity of considering environmental ethics within all educational projects and programmes that are developed in the country.

### For more information

**Olga Maria Bermudez Guerrero**  
RCE Bogota  
olgaber@gmail.com

## RCE Guatemala's knowledge-related activities

RCE activities in Guatemala have followed two main lines of work in the autumn: talks on universal and local knowledge and courses for indigenous students.

Three talks on universal and local knowledge were developed with the aim of promoting changes in university curricula. These talks have involved the faculties of Agronomy and Law at the Northern University Centre. About 150 professors from these two faculties have actively participated in these talks, which are conducted by a specialist who presents a short essay, based on empirical research or analysis of documents and personal reflections, which serves as a basis for defining a joint strategy for integrating indigenous knowledge and universal knowledge. The aims of the talks were to start a debate within all academic units of the university on the hegemonic articulation of knowledge with indigenous knowledge in the various programmes, disciplines and curricula, and to define strategies to operationalise agreements, rules and declarations related to cultural pluralism and multiculturalism in the San Carlos University Strategic Plan - 2022.

As part of the RCE activities, the Indigenous Student Support Programme has implemented courses on the

Mayan calendar and workshops on research project design to support indigenous academic performance.

### For more information

**Eduardo Enrique Sacayon**  
Director, Instituto de Estudios Interétnicos  
Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala  
RCE Guatemala  
edsacayon@yahoo.com

## Tour of Sustainability in Saskatchewan

Charles Hopkins, ESD expert and holder of the UNESCO Chair on Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability at York University, visited the communities of Nipawin, Saskatoon, Craik, and Regina in Saskatchewan for a series of meetings highlighting work on ESD in the region from October 12-15, 2010. Contributions of higher education institutions and other partners of the RCE Saskatchewan towards the United Nations Decade of ESD (2005-2014) were profiled.

The Tour of Sustainability engaged experts, students and the public at large in dialogues on the importance of ESD. It highlighted outreach and partnering of higher education organisations with schools, communities, and the public and identified opportunities for leadership by educators and the important role of technological innovation for sustainable development.

A public forum on *Re-orienting Post-secondary Education to Address Sustainability* was organised at the University of Regina on 14 October as part of the tour. Speakers at the event were Charles Hopkins; Shauneed Pete, the President of the First Nations University of Canada; Robert McCulloch, President and CEO of the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology; Audrey Roadhouse, Deputy Minister of Education, Saskatchewan; Gerald Farthing, Deputy Minister of Education, Manitoba; Bob Willard, speaker and author of resources for Sustainability Champions; and Malcolm Wilson, Director of the Office of Energy and Environment at the University of Regina. Speakers shared insights on how institutional practices can help reorient research and learning for sustainability.

### For more information

**Lyle A. M. Benko**  
Co-ordinator, RCE Saskatchewan  
lyle.benko@sasktel.net

## Actions towards sustainability in Craik, Saskatchewan

The Craik Sustainable Living Project (CSLP), a founding member of RCE Saskatchewan, has continued its leadership in diverse areas of ESD within a small town rural setting. Recent activities fall within the areas of culture, health, and waste minimisation.

In partnership with Multi-Faith Saskatchewan, CSLP volunteers completed phase 2 of the *Designated Sacred Space Project* during the autumn of 2010 with a celebration on 30 October 30 to mark its completion. Visitors of various faiths met at the site to participate in the event. The project was initiated to provide a touchstone for people of all faiths that demonstrate the message of unity in diversity, interdependence, and interconnectedness. It recognises that sustainability for present and future generations and being mindful of how we take care of the earth is common to the scriptures of all the world's faiths. Fund-raising for the last phase has begun with the official opening of the site scheduled for 30 July 2011.

An update of the CSLP Health Committee Action Plan working within the social pillar of sustainable development was also completed. This plan includes a variety of initiatives dedicated to provide community members opportunities to practise healthy lifestyles. The *Craik Community Pedometer Challenge* designates specific weeks for residents to measure their distance walked. Participants in the *Craik Community Walking Programme* may use the Craik school gymnasium for one hour each weekday. Planning has been completed for the annual Family Winter Fun Day as well. Healthy lifestyle partners include the regional Health District and local health care providers.

The *Craik Waste Minimisation Project* has been designed and implemented within the town of Craik in collaboration with several partners. The goal is to divert as much organic waste from the landfill as possible through a composting programme. A central collection bin is available in town and residents have been supplied with appropriate pails for the collection of organic waste. To date, significant tonnage has been eliminated from conventional landfill-based waste disposal. The project models effective collaboration featuring local government, the private sector, and volunteer organisations and provides opportunities for citizens to assume enlightened ownership of their own home and garden waste management practices.

More about these and other projects is at [www.craikecovillage.com](http://www.craikecovillage.com)

**For more information**

**Glenn Hymers**

**CSLP and RCE Saskatchewan representative**

**[glennandbrenda@sasktel.net](mailto:glennandbrenda@sasktel.net)**

## NEWS FROM RCEs IN ASIA-PACIFIC

### Forum by Japanese RCEs at CBD-COP 10

The 10th Convention of the Parties (COP10) of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) was held at Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture in Japan from 18 to 29

October, 2010. During the COP, six Japanese RCEs – Chubu, Greater Sendai, Hyogo-Kobe, Kitakyushu, Okayama and Yokohama – organised a collaborative forum on 20 October. The joint forum by Japanese RCEs was entitled *The Role of ESD in Biodiversity Conservation: Networking of UNU's Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development*, and focused on the CEPA (Communication, Education, Public Awareness) aspect of biodiversity. It attracted an audience of about 150 people.

The programme was opened by Atsuo Iiyoshi, Chairperson of RCE Chubu, and introduced RCE activities related to biodiversity conservation. This was followed by reports of biodiversity activities from Japanese RCEs such as the revitalization of Satoyama landscapes, biodiversity conservation in rice paddies, and the Biodiversity Cyber Dialogue Project. Participants discussed further collaboration among RCEs at the workshop led by RCE Okayama. RCE Chubu plans to continue with the Cyber Dialogue project, which aims to provide a web-based platform for the discussion of biodiversity among RCE members and a wider network of interested and engaged stakeholders around the world.

**For more information**

**Reita Furusawa**

**RCE Chubu**

**[reita@isc.chubu.ac.jp](mailto:reita@isc.chubu.ac.jp)**

### RCE explores links between traditional knowledge and resource management in Kyrgyzstan

A project of RCE Kyrgyzstan on traditional knowledge and its links to sustainable management of resources was funded by the US Embassy in the country recently. The project, which ran from June to November 2010, involved experts from RCE Kyrgyzstan and local communities from the Naryn region in southeastern Kyrgyzstan. The traditional understanding of sustainable development in Kyrgyzstan comes from centuries'-old experience of nomadic lifestyles and livestock management. It takes into account seasonal and vertical migration in the mountains, use of alternate grazing of cattle and small livestock and hunting to control predators (wolves, snow leopards and bears). RCE Kyrgyzstan's project showed that the social institution *Jeti ata* is a mechanism of change management in virtually all areas of social life of the Kyrgyz, but has not been utilised to the best extent possible. *Jeti ata* or Seven Ancestors is a tradition that dictates that each Kyrgyz should know the names of their ancestors up to seven generations ago, know who they were and consider them as role models. This system helped avoid marriage among close family members, gave an important role to community elders in decision making, negotiations and commodity circulation, all of which ensured security for the nomadic people. The project aimed to explore the possibilities of adaptation of the *Jeti ata* for democratic

governance, human rights and introduction to education for sustainable development.



*A family in the Naryn region of Kyrgyzstan*

**For more information**  
**Chinara Sadykova**  
**RCE Kyrgyzstan**  
**sadykova@gmail.com**

## Mindanao energy crisis: in search of a sustainable solution

The emerging energy crisis in Mindanao, Philippines, as projected by the energy sector, the business community and the concerned public, has become a point for discussion among local leaders, industry players, the media and the academe. The Mindanao Power Crisis Forum was therefore organised by the Research and Social Outreach (RSO) of the Xavier University, in partnership with STEAG State Power Corporation (STEAG) on 16 September 2010 at the Little Theatre of Xavier University, in Cagayan de Oro City.

RCE Northern Mindanao, a member of the RSO Cluster of Xavier University, led the organisation and mobilisation of forum participants. Amparo Vedula-Dinagsao, the RCE Coordinator, in opening the event, remarked that the event was an opportunity to discuss sustainable and renewable energy sources for Mindanao. Representatives from the Department of the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines, from the Department of Energy and from the Energy Regulatory Commission were some of the speakers at the event. Workshop sessions looked at developing strategies to ensure energy security and using energy in an environmentally-friendly manner.

The Mindanao Energy Crisis is an effect of a combination of human-related and natural factors. An energy reform agenda calls for energy security, better pricing and a sustainable plan which addresses poverty reduction, social equity, grassroots development and facilitation of public services to reduce the cost of power, to assure environmental security and increase local productivity. The

recommendation from the forum calls for transparency measures, empowerment of consumers, diversification of energy sources, a public information drive, and integration of energy conservation measures in curricula among others.

**For more information**  
**Amparo Vedula-Dinagsao**  
**RCE Northern Mindanao**  
**adinagsao@mail.xu.edu.ph**

## ESD forum and workshop in Mindanao

The RCE Northern Mindanao network, Philippines, held an ESD forum and workshop on 28 September 2010 at Xavier University Little Theatre in Cagayan de Oro City. The event promoted the exchange of learning, experiences and information on current efforts among participants from various academic institutions. Teachers of science and social studies, student activity moderators and student leaders from grade school, high school and college level, religious spokespeople and district officials discussed sustainable development issues. Presentations on sustainable development were followed by a workshop for in-depth discussion among participants on current unsustainable practices, initiatives addressing sustainable development issues and action plans. The working groups presented their action plans during a plenary at the end of the day.

**For more information**  
**Amparo Vedula-Dinagsao**  
**RCE Northern Mindanao**  
**adinagsao@mail.xu.edu.ph**

## NEWS FROM RCES IN EUROPE

### 4th European RCE Meeting

The 4th annual European RCE meeting took place from 1 to 3 December 2010 in Munich and was hosted by BenE Munich (*Bildung für eine nachhaltige Entwicklung* — Education for Sustainable Development in German). The Munich conference was attended by about fifty percent of the European RCES.

Participants enjoyed meaningful discussions on various important agenda items on current ESD issues as well as on strategic and organisational questions within the European RCE community. Valuable external input was given by Roland Zieschank who held an evening lecture on the title *Beyond GDP: Measuring Welfare in a Sustainable Economy*.

One of the focal points of the conference was the first formal contact between RCES and the European Union, represented by Pernille Andersen, the EU Policy Coordinator for Lifelong Learning: 2020 Strategy, EC Directorate General for Education and Culture. European RCES will henceforth work to develop productive working contacts with the EU initially within the framework of the new EU Strategy 2020.



Participants at the meeting of European RCEs

See [www.bene-muenchen.de](http://www.bene-muenchen.de) for a full report.

**For more information**

**Jos Hermans**

**Advisor, European RCEs**

**[Jos.Hermans48@gmail.com](mailto:Jos.Hermans48@gmail.com)**

**Constanze Berendts**

**Coordinator of BenE Munich**

**[constanze.berendts@bene-muenchen.de](mailto:constanze.berendts@bene-muenchen.de)**

## 10th issue of Education and Sustainability published

The latest issue of RCE Barcelona's Education and Sustainability magazine (ES) focuses on **Money**. Who gave you your first coin, when did you open your first bank account – who with, and why? How we learn about money – how to spend it, where to invest it, how to save it (or not) – is complex and of course has multiple environmental and social implications. Are our values compatible with the way we make decisions about money? If not, why not?

This latest edition focuses on how we learn about money, finance and the economy – from childhood psychology, to business school curricula, school projects, community markets and alternative currencies. Serge Latouche questions whether education and degrowth really are compatible; Viki Johnson and Faiza Shaheen from the New Economics Foundation explore the idea of Green Jobs to combat financial crisis; Penny Shepherd, director of UKSIF, the sustainable investment and finance association, proposes a new curriculum for adolescents' financial literacy and we explore the motivations of Muhammed Yunus, the founder of the microcredit bank Grameen. Other pieces focus on alternative currencies, service learning, ethical finance, socially responsible investment, community banks, the relationship children have with money as well as a range of other educational projects from around the world. As with every issue we include a full compendium of teaching resources, recommended books, films and other ideas for educators and parents.

The Swedish version of ES, led by RCE Skåne and other partners has now published three issues on Cities, 2.0 Learning and Biodiversity and will shortly be publishing an

issue on Health. Please get in touch with your stories and news for upcoming issues!

**For more information**

**Heloise Buckland**

**RCE Barcelona**

**[www.es-online.info](http://www.es-online.info)**

**[es@rce-barcelona.net](mailto:es@rce-barcelona.net)**

## RCE Crete initiates programmes on ICT-enabled ESD and on reorienting curricula

A new project entitled *ICT-enabled Education for Sustainable Development* led by the University of Crete, the lead organisation of RCE Crete and UNESCO Chair ICT in ESD, with the involvement of RCE Graz-Styria and five other European universities has been selected for funding support from the Life Long Learning ERASMUS-Virtual Campus programme. The project aims to develop a joint online Master's degree programme in ICT in ESD, which will be offered in English. The course will target experienced practitioners in schools, community education, NGOs, government bodies and development agencies, who are engaged in applying ESD. A training kit addressed to university staff who want to infuse ESD into their teaching and/or apply virtual tutoring methods, will also be developed to support the programme.

Another project of RCE Crete and the UNESCO Chair ICT in ESD at the University of Crete is the Tempus project entitled *Reorienting University Curricula to address Sustainability*. Other partners in this project are six universities from Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon as well as five European universities. The UNESCO Regional Office in the Arab States is also involved along with RCE Cairo/SEKEM and two other NGOs.

The overarching goal of the project is to help partner Higher Education Institutions infuse ESD into their curricula and teaching methodology through capacity building of university staff. The key question is how to best advance curriculum change towards ESD, given the regional priorities and the need to modernise curricula to address ESD. This cannot be achieved without well-prepared and committed staff to lead curriculum reform and innovation towards ESD.

The project integrates a wide range of activities to develop resources, revise and develop new curriculum initiatives, build capacity and strengthen national and regional networks.

This process entails six key components.

- Develop ESD competences for Higher Education students contextualised to the EU and Arab region.
- Evaluate ESD student competences in participating Higher Education Institutions.
- Establish new models of professional development in ESD.
- Revise education and certification requirements to include

ESD and align these revisions to correspond to student competences and the Bologna process.

- Apply and evaluate the revised education curricula with respect to ESD student competences.

- Promote reorienting Higher Education towards ESD as a viable avenue for institution-wide curriculum reform, research and teaching across all Higher Education Institutions in the Arab region.

**For more information**  
**Vassilios Makrakis**  
**RCE Crete**  
**University of Crete**  
**makrakis@edc.uoc.gr**

## RCE Açores wins prize for education work

Blue Flag Europe, an eco-label awarded to beaches and marinas, awarded second prize to the city of Angra do Heroísmo for the project Walking Tour for Biodiversity Observation on the coast of Prainha. The competition was held to recognise environmental education projects on biodiversity in aquatic systems and was open to organisations in Portugal.

The winning walking tour was created by Angra do Heroísmo's outreach office Culturangra and the University of the Açores, both active RCE member organisations. The tour includes storytelling and interpretation of natural and cultural history and highlights the local uses of aquatic and coastal plants and animals. Visitors to Angra's city beach, Prainha, were taken on the walk by Culturangra throughout last summer's year of biodiversity. Educators from three Azorean islands explored this walking tour as part of a workshop hosted by RCE Açores in September and are encouraged to make use of the printed guide to take their own students on the tour. The guide, in Portuguese, is available on the RCE Açores website.



*On a biodiversity walk along the Azorean coast*

**For more information**  
**Alison Neilson**  
**Coordinator RCE Açores**  
**alison.neilson@gmail.com**  
**http://rceazores.ning.com**

## Article: SEKEM – Humanistic Management in the Egyptian Desert

An article authored by Clemens Mader of RCE Graz-Styria was recently published in the book *Humanistic Management in Practice*, an edition of the Humanism in Business Series by the publishers Palgrave Macmillan. (Kimakowitz et al.: *Humanistic Management in Practice*, Palgrave Macmillan. New York, p. 204-214.)

The case study investigates the humanistic approach of the SEKEM Group to business. SEKEM started as a community aiming at the development of biodynamic agriculture in the desert of Egypt and is now a group of companies related to food, pharmaceuticals, textile and IT, and has a number of development initiatives on schools, health care centres, adult training and higher-education in place to promote a sustainable vision for the region and world. Since 2008, Sekem and Heliopolis Academy are hosts of RCE Cairo to promote ESD in Egypt.

*Humanistic Management in Practice* is a collection of business cases from all corners of the globe, in a variety of industries and sizes. What unites this group of businesses is that all of them are highly successful market actors in a competitive environment and yet they consider their ultimate *raison d'être* as the generation of societal benefit rather than maximum profit.

**For more Information**  
**Clemens Mader**  
**RCE Graz-Styria**  
**clemens.mader@uni-graz.at**  
**www.rce-graz.at**

## New logo for London RCE

The London RCE has been working with organisations based and concerned with ESD in London since December 2009. The aim recently has been to widen the types of organisations that are concerned to see sustainability embedded in formal and informal educational programmes of communities and organisations throughout London. A logo for the RCE has been designed to assist in promotion.

Building on longstanding flagship projects concerned with ESD programmes in universities, colleges, schools and adult distance learning, the LRCE is making links with London's business and community networks to explore the scope for the contribution the RCE can bring. Opportunities have included an invitation in November 2010 to speak on the work of RCEs in the House of Lords and senior staff of the Olympic Legacy Company, the body responsible for the Olympic site after the Games in 2012.

**For more information**  
**Lynn Vickery**  
**Director, London RCE**  
**vickerl@lsbu.ac.uk**  
**www.londonrce.kk5.org/**

## Student project contest in Nizhny

### Novgorod

A competition of student projects on the theme of *Economy and society: social adaptation for sustainable development in Nizhny Novgorod* was organised by the Volga-Vyatskaya Academy of Public Administration (VVAGS, founder of RCE Nizhny Novgorod), RCE Nizhny Novgorod, the NGO Social Rehabilitation and NGO Deft-TV, in the framework of the Nizhny Novgorod Reintegration Programme.

The project *Technology incubator for disabled persons: training, job placement, career*, by students A. Vlasova, V. Zharkova, A. Alexeeva under the supervision of S.V. Sokolova, won the first prize. The same project was also a winner of the 4th All-Russian contest of talented youth National Property of Russia in Moscow. The main goal of the project is to help disabled persons to integrate well in society by assisting them find gainful employment. This is a challenge as there are very few jobs that are suitable and available for disabled people. The *technology incubator* is easy to access, simple to use and does not require the physical presence of applicants when searching or applying for jobs, while the traditional and official method of applying for jobs involves standing in lines over fairly long periods of time. The success of the project will be determined by the number of disabled persons who have been placed in jobs, and by the establishment of a system of hiring and training for such people.

In the second place was the project *Marketing of services for people with limited mobility* by students O. Egorova, D. Ivanov, E. Krasnova, E. Logunova, A. Khitrova, under the supervision of G.A. Morozova, and I.A. Artashina. The main goal of the project is to research into the issue of integration of people with disabilities into society. The social and environmental conditions and possibilities for people in wheelchairs were researched. This involved studying the social reception of disabled persons in public places and identifying problematic areas. Facilitating integration of people with disabilities involves identifying their needs with regards to the service sector, measuring buildings and facilities against specifications and regulations and social attitudes towards such people. A set of recommendations were prepared, as the project outcome, to help speed up the process of rehabilitation of disabled people in society.

**For more information**  
**Igor Arzhenovskiy**  
**RCE Nizhny Novgorod**  
**igor.arzhenovskiy@gmail.com**

## Results of RCE Graz-Styria's course on sustainable consumption

RCE Graz-Styria led a course on sustainable consumption of products and goods from developing countries from

October 2010 to February 2011. Most of the products that people consume in their daily lives have their origins in foreign countries. Human rights, working standards, transport and environmental protection are often neglected when purchasing these products. Nineteen students investigated rice from Thailand, cotton from Egypt and coffee from Brazil through life cycle analysis (LCA) and the results were presented during a public event in January. A film was also produced by the students on the topic. A full report, in German, is now available on RCE Graz-Styria's website.

**For more information**  
**Mario Diethart**  
**RCE Graz-Styria**  
**mario.diethart@uni-graz.at**  
**www.rce-graz.at**

## Joint kids club project of IKEA and RCE Nizhny Novgorod

A joint project of MEGA IKEA, a large shopping centre of the IKEA group, and RCE Nizhny Novgorod helped children of 6 to 12 years of age get acquainted with principles of sustainable development, with a focus on the environmental component. Environmental workshops were organised for the Kids Club of MEGA IKEA Nizhny Novgorod, during which children made a doll a day representing each month of the year while receiving information about the distinctive features of each month. In another activity, children decorated a life-size doll symbolising a season using materials typical for the time of year. Children also created a summer landscape on a large podium outside the club. The project is expected to continue in the future and to spread through all the MEGA IKEA children's club network in Russia.

**For more information**  
**Nataliya Tsvetkova**  
**Project Coordinator**  
**RCE Nizhny Novgorod**  
**n.tsvetkova@yahoo.com**

## Action research on sustainable schools in Porto

Sustainable Schools is an action-research project developed by RCE Porto with several local, regional and national organisations and 13 pilot-schools (basic and high schools) with the coordination of the regional office of the Ministry of Education, the Portuguese Catholic University and the Porto Metropolitan Area Coordination. It aims to test a method to reduce environmental impact and lower the overhead costs of schools while improving the quality of the setting for learning and working, and exploring the potential of schools as genuine living laboratories. The project started in January 2010 with the establishment of a working group and had its public kick-off in March 2010 with the conference *Sustainability at Schools* attended by

80 teachers and representatives of the schools' board of directors. Voluntary pilot-schools are currently collecting primary data on consumption, the discussion on data collection methods and a template will continue until June 2011, and a training session and workshop for teachers is foreseen. The implementation of best practices will start in October 2011 and the final report will be available in July 2012.



*At the kick-off conference of Sustainability in Schools*

**For more information**  
**Marta Pinto**  
**RCE Porto**  
**mspinto@intervirmais.pt**

## Saving architectural heritage in Samara

RCE Samara initiated a joint action project in the autumn with the public action group Kitchen-Factory to save the architectural heritage of Samara. A Soviet architecture bike tour around the city on 26 September gathered several dozen participants and garnered substantial media coverage. Working with heritage groups can potentially lead to other projects on local and regional scales.

Ongoing activities include working on several possible joint projects with RCEs around Europe on social adaptation of migrants. The Marketing and Social Research Centre at Samara State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering, a partner of RCE Samara, is involved in this work.

**For more information**  
**Andrey Kirillov**  
**Coordinator, RCE Samara**  
**rcesamara@gmail.com**

## RCE Severn Christmas Lecture

The first RCE Severn Christmas Lecture was held on 14 December at the University of Gloucestershire. Homo Sapiens Report, the Future of Humanity was a very enjoyable and thought-provoking talk supported by eye-catching slides presented by Oscar-winning Michael Wadleigh.

The lecture focused on providing an objective view of us humans and the complex problems we face in the coming centuries. More about the Homo Sapiens Foundation is at [www.hsfound.org](http://www.hsfound.org).

**For more information**  
**Carol Rabbette**  
**RCE Severn**  
**rcesevern@glos.ac.uk**

## RCE Severn - Sustainable Transport Forum

*Getting There; Exploring the challenges, opportunities and best practice in higher and further education* was the second in a series of national forums designed to tackle key sustainability issues organised by RCE Severn and the University of Gloucestershire. It was held on 30 November 2010 and was very well attended by those working in the field of sustainable transport in universities and colleges across the UK. Delegates heard about a range of innovative transport projects and strategic approaches to travel planning and were able to share their experiences of introducing sustainable transport measures.

The feedback from the event was extremely positive, with 92 per cent of attendees saying that the event was very or extremely useful. Delegates commented that they were taking away considerable learning about best practice initiatives and how to develop and implement sustainable travel plans, as well as useful new contacts from the event. More on the event is at [www.glos.ac.uk/vision/sustainability/unurce/Pages/sustainabletransportforum.aspx](http://www.glos.ac.uk/vision/sustainability/unurce/Pages/sustainabletransportforum.aspx)

**For more information**  
**Carol Rabbette**  
**RCE Severn**  
**rcesevern@glos.ac.uk**

## RCE Wales pilots themed approach to ESD – Global Citizenship

RCE Wales now has over 200 stakeholders in Wales, and connects with almost 300 more worldwide. The RCE's Secretariat, based at Swansea University, acts as a hub via which news about events connected specifically with ESD, including Global Citizenship (ESDGC), is distributed to stakeholders.

RCE Wales has begun to pilot a themed, multi-stakeholder approach to ESDGC. The first themed stakeholder expert working group has been established, focusing on Food as the theme and vehicle for ESDGC. This development is expected to reap in situ ESDGC-focused learning and products.

**For more information**  
**Jane Claricoates**  
**RCE Wales**  
**J.Claricoates@swansea.ac.uk**