

# RCE E-Bulletin

March 2013

## Message from the Global RCE Service Centre:

Dear colleagues and friends,

With the growth of the RCE community, we have seen the growth and maturation of its systems of coordination. More RCE members and stakeholders are facilitating various activities, assisting new members, participating in strategic development and in network expansion. While the days of us all being in regular and direct touch with each other have passed, we hope that as a community we are cultivating a system that keeps us all together.

This system, which is still evolving, is very familiar to some but might be new to others and so we would like to take this opportunity to introduce the people and organizations who help us create maximum synergies of action at the international level. Among them:

**The Ubuntu Committee of Peers** – Members of international, educational and scientific organizations review new RCE candidates and make recommendations on their acknowledgement to UNU. They also provide advice on strategic directions for development and other required support. More info by [clicking here](#).

**Regional Advisors** – Jos Hermans (Europe), Chuck Hopkins (Americas), Mario Tabucanon (Asia-Pacific) and Goolam Mohamedbhai (Africa) assist the RCE community in various ways, ranging from information-sharing and providing networking opportunities with regionally located organizations to addressing individual RCE concerns. Regional advisors are appointed by UNU-IAS and are chosen for their ESD expertise and their long institutional memories of the RCE community in their respective regions.

**Regional Coordinators** – Selected by the RCEs in their respective regions, Regional Coordinators help coordinate inter-RCE activities, including information exchange, identifying joint actions, and engagement with other regions. Won Byun (RCE Tongyeong) works with a Coordinating Committee made up of various RCE members to help coordinate efforts in the Asia-Pacific region, Detlev Landau-Bank (RCE Oldenburger Munsterland) and Jane Claricoates (RCE Wales) facilitate RCEs in Europe. Dick Kachilonda (RCE KwaZulu Natal) supports RCEs in Africa. Regional Coordinators work closely with Regional Advisors and the Global RCE Service Centre on different across-RCE activities.

The coordination of the RCE community is – and will always be – under development, with more regions forming their strategies and defining engagement approaches and with more people taking charge of thematic and strategic activities. This is a sign of the vitality and resilience of the consortium.

You may have noticed in previous bulletins that we have started sharing interviews with our Regional Advisors, including Charles Hopkins in this issue. We will continue to share stories about our Regional Advisors, Coordinators and all members of the RCE community in bulletins to come. Should you need any further information or would like to contact our Advisors or Coordinators directly, please email: [rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

With much appreciation,

The Global RCE Service Centre

## Featured RCE Member: Charles Hopkins

### Regional Advisor for the Americas



#### **1. Where does your passion for ESD come from?**

It grew out of my involvement in outdoor education, which eventually led to the invention of environmental education. I soon realized however, that environmental education didn't have the strength or the numbers to be able to accomplish what needed to be done. So when the idea came about to engage all of education, instead of trying to add something to existing education, I saw hope for this new approach of education for sustainable development and became more involved. Right now I'm extremely encouraged and hopeful about the link between ESD and the whole concept of a quality education for all. Now what I'm doing is linking together Ministries of Education and those that are seen as successful education systems, and together we're looking to see how addressing social, economic and environment issues that are relevant to the students is improving the quality of their education.

#### **2. What do you enjoy most about your role as an RCE Regional Advisor for the Americas region?**

Learning! Everywhere I go I try to listen to the wealth of knowledge and the good-heartedness of people who really want to contribute to building a more sustainable future. I find that so rewarding. I would never be able to learn what I've learned by reading books or taking a university course. Instead I get to sit down and have a beer with someone, often from another culture, and they're willing to share their experience and knowledge with me to try and improve a small piece of the world.

#### **3. What is the greatest opportunity you see for RCEs in the Americas in the coming year?**

There is tremendous trust, friendship and bonding happening here in the Americas region now that we've had our second meeting. There is also a great desire to learn from one another because while we are really quite diverse culturally yet we have many things in common: all of our communities have people living in poverty, we have common issues around the education of indigenous peoples, we're almost all resource-based economies. Coming together like this is a real opportunity – we have issues in common and we have vastly different political views but if one believes in cultural diversity and biological diversity, maybe we can also approach seeking economic diversity with respect.

#### **4. What are your personal ambitions for the year ahead?**

My real ambition at the moment is to push on with this link between ESD and quality education, which is a global project. I'm also extremely interested in how we improve education for indigenous people because I think what we learn there will also serve other students in our school systems that we're under-serving and under-educating. Right now our world's education systems favour those whose preferred learning style is reading – if you aren't of that category there's very little chance of you going to university and unfortunately today university not only means extra income, it also has a huge impact on a person's well-being, self-esteem and so on. That's really where I'm focusing my attention now.

#### **5. Tell us something about yourself that most people in the RCE network don't know.**

Probably what most don't know is that during my 15 years as a principal, every teacher in my staff was given the power of veto over anything that happened in the school. The teachers knew our budgets and policies, and they knew they could change it all if they wanted to. The power of veto was exercised only three times during all my years as a principal and when I look back now, I realize the person who used the veto was right. I really felt the school belonged to the teachers and to the students. I didn't give the students the veto, but for the teachers it was a way for them to feel pride and ownership in their work and what they were doing. It really was about us as a collective.

## Upcoming Events:

### 8<sup>th</sup> Global RCE Conference

The 8th Global Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on Education for Sustainable Development Conference will take place from 26 to 29 November 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Conference will be hosted by RCE Greater Nairobi in collaboration with other African RCEs. The venue of the Conference will be the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Gigiri, Nairobi.

### European RCE Regional Meetings

There are two European RCE Meetings planned for 2013. The first European meeting will be held in Kerkrade, the Netherlands on 15 and 16 May 2013. The second meeting will be held in St. Petersburg, Russia from 5 to 7 June 2013.

The main topic of the European RCE-meeting will be:

- \* Reports from the RCEs and the national programs
- \* Strategies and activities for the post-decade-era
- \* Participation in the UNESCO-world-activity-programme
- \* Assessment of RCE-work
- \* Preparations for the Global RCE-Conference in Nairobi
- \* Funding

Interested RCEs from across the globe are encouraged to share their thoughts and feedback on any of the topics to be discussed. This can be shared directly with the European RCE community through Detlev Lindau-Bank at [detlev.lindau-bank@uni-vechta.de](mailto:detlev.lindau-bank@uni-vechta.de) or via the [RCE Communications Portal](#).

### Japanese RCE Meeting 2013

RCE Hyogo-Kobe will host an annual meeting for Japanese RCEs on 28 March. The meeting has been held annually since 2008 to strengthen collaboration and network among Japanese RCEs. It provides a great opportunity for Japanese RCEs to share information on each RCE's activities as well as to discuss potential collaborative actions and projects. In so doing, they have created a joint brochure and inventory to be used for information-sharing as well as for the promotion of RCEs and ESD activities nationwide at any events organized by the RCEs. In addition to the meeting, a special lecture on ESD and RCEs will be given by Mr. Kazuhiko Takemoto, Director of the ESD Programme, UNU-IAS.

### Invitation to IICF 2013

The SUPPORTArts and Crafts International Centre of Thailand (Public Organization) cordially invites all to the International Innovative Craft Fair 2013 (IICF 2013), 2-5 May 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand. IICF 2013 promotes innovative arts and crafts products together with trading and networking amongst importers, exporters, manufacturers, traders, retailers, designers, distributors, wholesalers, merchandisers, and other associates from lifestyle businesses, such as restaurants, hotels, etc. To promote participation of international buyers and exhibitors, SACICT offers sponsorship packages such as free commercial booth, airfare, accommodation, etc. See details in the attached information. There are limited numbers of sponsorship packages, and they are subjected to the receiving order and Fair Committee's assessment.

### 6th GUNi International Barcelona Conference on Higher Education

The Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi) is organizing the 6th International Barcelona Conference on Higher Education, "Let's Build Transformative Knowledge to Drive Social Change" from May 13 to 15, 2013. The Conference will provide visibility and will critically examine one of the most significant trends: the growth of the theory and practice of engagement as a key feature in the evolution of higher education. For more information, please visit the [GUNi Conference website](#). To download the flyer and press release, [click here](#).

Several RCEs from across the globe will be joining an RCE/COPERNICUS Alliance side event that will take place in Barcelona prior to the GUNi event. The side event is aligned to a UNU publication on sustainability in higher education and the Rio+20 People's Treaty on Higher Education. If you are interested in participating or would like further information please contact Daniella Tilbury ([dtilbury@glos.ac.uk](mailto:dtilbury@glos.ac.uk)) or Ingrid Mula ([imula@glos.ac.uk](mailto:imula@glos.ac.uk)).

## Latest News:

### Americas RCE Regional Conference

RCE Lima-Callao hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Conference for RCEs in the Americas in Lima, Peru, from 27 February to 2 March 2013. Presentations from the meeting and a press release are available for download on the [UNU-IAS website](#). One of the participants, the Honorable George K. Heartwell, Mayor of Grand Rapids and head of RCE Grand Rapids in Michigan, shared his views on leadership in sustainability on the eve of the conference. You can read his full speech by [clicking here](#).

### Post-DESD Proposal for Action by Americas RCEs

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Americas Regional RCE Conference, RCEs based in the Americas were invited to share their thoughts on a post-DESD framework of action. The brief submission captures in part the discussions at the Regional Conference. As the proposal notes, one focus of the gathering was on strategically aligning the important sustainable development tools included in education for sustainable development (ESD) in the post 2015 realignment of the development goals and initiatives. The second focus was learning from and avoiding the mistakes of the twenty nearly lost years of the post-Rio decades. Please click on the links below to view the posted proposal.

#### [World We Want 2015 - Education](#)

E-Discussion FOUR – Week 1&2 Questions - GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING OF EDUCATION  
<http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/308000#comment-48251>

#### [World We Want 2015 - Environmental Sustainability](#)

E-Discussion Week 4: (25 Feb-3 Mar) – What are the topic areas where a consensus is evolving and where further dialogue is needed?  
<http://www.worldwewant2015.org/comment/reply/312705/48252>

### RCE Greater Western Sydney: Update from Alive!

RCE Greater Western Sydney and the Hawkesbury Environment Network Incorporated (HEN) recently launched the Alive! project and so far it's shown good success. Alive! engages young people in Hawkesbury by empowering them to identify and address a local environmental issue. The project is innovative and unique as the environmental issues that the young people work on are identified by them and they therefore have ownership over the solutions they help create. You can read more about the project on [the HEN website](#).

As part of the project, 13 short documentaries were made of each project done by University of Western Sydney media students. The videos were produced in collaboration with the students and community members of RCE GWS, including HEN. The videos are a fine example of presenting change using the voice of the next generation of leaders. We encourage you all to view the videos and share them widely: <http://www.youtube.com/AliveProjectHEN>

### Update from UNECE Secretariat

The UNECE Steering Committee meeting and the UNESCO-UNECE regional consultation meeting on the assessment and follow up of the UN Decade on ESD are both taking place in early 2013. A hard copy of a publication on "learning for the future", which was made possible thanks to generous support from the Netherlands, will be distributed in hard copy form at the meeting. A PDF of that document is attached. Additionally, the document "Empowering Educators for a Sustainable Future: Tools for policy and practice workshops on education for sustainable development competences" was distributed to all Steering Committee members as an official UN document in three languages ECE/CEP/AC.13/2013/4. This document is attached and is also available in the UN library catalogue. For 2013 UNECE also received clearance to produce a UNECE publication on the tools for policy and practice workshops in three languages. A draft version of that publication is attached as well.

### Advancing the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda

RCE Middle Albania participated in the "[Advancing the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda](#)" conference in Bonn Germany 19-22 March. The conference brought together key actors in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development discussion, helping them to exchange information, learn from each other benefiting from our sector's diversity and agree on joint demands and strategy where possible. An online platform is opened for communities to write their comments and thoughts and to contribute in forming UN development goals: <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/Bonn2015>

## RCE Call for Applications

The United Nations University is now calling for applications for new RCEs. Those organizations interested in becoming an RCE are requested to send expressions of interest to UNU-IAS by Monday, 15 April 2013. RCE candidates are then requested to submit an application and an application summary by Monday, 3 June 2013. The Secretariat will communicate with the applicants in July and August, so that applications can be developed in time for the Meeting of Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCE which is scheduled in late November. For more information regarding guidelines for applications and for further information, visit our [Call for Applications page](#).

## Film-making Workshops for Youth

The Great Debate, RCE North East NECTER and Great North Festival are delighted to announce the launch of a new programme of documentary-making workshops for young people not in employment, education or training. This is a great opportunity for those in the region to learn about film-making, whether you are interested in camera work, sound, editing or presenting. The free workshops will run weekly on Monday afternoons and some help with travel expenses is also on offer. For more information e-mail [rcenortheast@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rcenortheast@hotmail.co.uk).

## New Publications and Resources:

### 7th Global RCE Conference Brochure

The 7th Global RCE Conference was held in Tongyeong, the Republic of Korea, from 21 to 24 September 2012. The Conference looked to the end of the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development in 2014 and beyond, providing a vision for the future and generating the momentum needed to make that vision a reality. It also served as the launching pad for a series of local, regional and global initiatives. Read all about the events that took place by downloading the official conference outcome document [here](#). You can download presentations and the full minutes of the conference [on the UNU-IAS website](#).

### Sustainability Demystified!

RCE Grand Rapids member Norman Christopher has just published a practical guide detailing the steps necessary to create business success. His book cuts through the politics and mystery around applied sustainability best practices to deliver concrete examples of how businesses of all sizes can improve their bottom line while being good stewards of the environment. Organized as businesses are, by department and function, the guide helps business owners, executives and departmental managers learn how to maximize their bottom line by creating an environment of sustainable business practices that provide cost savings, create value, and improve competitiveness. A 2-page brochure about the book is attached. You can download the book at [Amazon.com](#) or via the publisher's website [Principia Media](#).

### New Online Guide to 'Quality and Education for Sustainability in Higher Education'

The University of Gloucestershire has led a unique sector wide research project, which aimed to change the face of the higher education curriculum to make it more relevant to global sustainability challenges. Funded through the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) Leadership Governance and Management Fund, it is the largest national project to deal with sustainability as a curriculum and whole-of-institution priority. The online guide contains video clips, insights, tips and adaptable tools for institutions, to support them in embedding EfS through quality assurance and enhancement systems.

At institutional level, five pilot universities (University of Gloucestershire, Aston University, University of Brighton, University of Exeter and Oxford Brookes University) developed curriculum change projects to connect EfS with their current approaches to teaching and learning quality. The experiences and lessons from the pilots are embedded in the [resource](#).

### Former UNU Rector Hans van Ginkel Lecture

The founder of the RCE movement and former rector of United Nations University, Hans van Ginkel, recently delivered a lecture at the UNU Institute of Advanced Studies. During his lecture he noted how *Regional Centers of Expertise on Sustainable Development*, based on the principles of the *Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development*, could serve an important function in acquiring information, in planning and in decision-making around sustainable development issues. Thinking about education for sustainable development beyond 2014, he highlighted how it would be important to further promote and strengthen the mobilization of people and knowledge

for sustainable development through such centres. The full lecture will soon be available in the [multimedia section of the UNU-IAS website](#).

## Thoughts on Sustainable Agriculture

RCE Greater Dhaka member and Director of the Centre for Global Environmental Culture at the International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, Mohammed Ataur Rahman, has shared his thoughts on sustainable agriculture. To download a copy of his work, [click here](#).

*(posted 25 Mar)*

## Transdisciplinary Approaches in Higher Education

Professor Russ Volckmann, PhD from Integral Leadership Review, and co-author (with Sue L.T. Mc Gregor, PhD) of [Transversity: Transdisciplinary Approaches in Higher Education](#) recorded a [YouTube presentation](#) to share with all RCEs. For further information please contact Professor Volckmann at [russ@leadcoach.com](mailto:russ@leadcoach.com) or [russ@integralleadershipreview.com](mailto:russ@integralleadershipreview.com)

## RCE Munich: Recommendations for Research and Education

Colleagues at RCE Munich would like to share a video lecture on education and research for transformation, which may prove useful. It is the last part of the lecture «World in Transition- A Social Contract for Sustainability» offered by members of the [German Advisory Council on Global Change](#) (WBGU). The WBGU is an independent, scientific advisory body to the German federal government. The lecture, 11 [Recommendations for Research and Education](#) by Prof. Dr. Reinhold Leinfelder Institute of Geological Science Berlin, highlights: strong cooperation between science and society; inter- and transdisciplinarity, as well as participation are important structural requirements for research and education supporting transformation; problem analysis and communication is a major issue for the transformation; research and education for the transformation are strongly interconnected; and new ways for education and research would demand new curricula, courses and institutions.

RCE Munich is also sharing a video course on ESD for German speaking colleagues: <http://va-web.zmml.uni-bremen.de/va/index.php/video?id=19&x=1>

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Please send your comments, suggestions and materials to [rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu](mailto:rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu)

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