



THE 6TH AFRICAN REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE (RCE) CONFERENCE: Nairobi-Kenya

24th to 26th August 2016

VENUE: Kenyatta University Conference Centre (KUCC) - Nairobi, Kenya

THEME: *“Developing Capacities of African RCEs for the implementation of the Global Action Programme on ESD and the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals”.*

BACKGROUND

Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) in Africa are playing a useful role in addressing local and regional sustainable development challenges through education for sustainable development (ESD). Within the framework of the implementation of the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, African RCEs are providing platforms for mobilisation of local communities around priority sustainable development challenges. This is essential in accelerating sustainable solutions at the local level as highlighted in Priority Action Area 5 of the GAP. Through their flagship ESD projects, RCEs in Africa are opening new opportunities for collaboration, linking action across multiple scales (local, regional and global) and facilitating rapid learning and efficient knowledge transfer. As multi-stakeholder partnerships for learning to address local and regional sustainable development challenges, RCEs on the continent have started playing a vital role in developing competences and capabilities needed for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Developing capacities of African RCEs to deliver the SDGs within the framework of the GAP on ESD is fundamental to placing the continent on a path of sustainable growth. Such efforts will support the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and the programme of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). It is against this backdrop that the 6th African RCE Conference is being held from 24 to 26 August at Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya.

The 6th African RCE Conference will draw participants from the entire RCE African network as well as local (national) participants. The conference will bring together experts in the area of ESD from African RCEs to deliberate and reflect on the fundamental role of ESD as a crosscutting mechanism for achieving the SDGs at the local level. It will be hosted by RCE Greater Nairobi in collaboration with the National Environment Management Authority of Kenya (NEMA) and United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS). Since 2011, African RCEs have been holding annual continental meetings to deliberate issues related to capacity development, community-engaged research and implementation of collaborative ESD projects. In the previous meeting (5th African RCE Conference) that was held in Entebbe, Uganda delegates reflected on the successes, challenges and opportunities of implementing ESD within a post-2015 agenda. This year’s conference will build on the momentum set to formulate strategies on how to develop capacities of African RCEs to implement the GAP and achieve SDGs on the continent. The 6th African RCE Conference is being organized to coincide with the Sixth Tokyo International Conference for African Development (TICAD VI) that takes place on 27-28 August in Nairobi.

CONFERENCE THEME:

The theme for the 6th African RCE Conference is **“Developing Capacities of African RCEs for the implementation of the Global Action Programme on ESD and the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals”**. This theme will be addressed with reference to GAP priority action area 5 on accelerating sustainable solutions at the local level and SDG4 on ensuring provision of inclusive and equitable quality education. The theme hinges on the need to enhance the capacities of African RCEs



to initiate, implement and report collaborative ESD activities at the global RCE portal. RCEs in Africa have been implementing activities related to priority action area 5 of the GAP but have not put in place clear mechanisms for assessing and reporting the impact of these activities.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

The 6th African RCE conference seeks to further increase the visibility and relevance of RCEs across Africa through an open conference with a wider global stakeholder participation. It aims at building a common agenda for African RCEs and to chart a common vision on implementing the Global Action Programme on ESD and SDG4. The conference provides a platform for African RCEs to develop concrete and achievable joint action plans and opportunities for sharing ESD experiences as part of social learning. It will be a build-up and preparation for the forthcoming 10th Global RCE Conference that is scheduled for 23-25 November 2016 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

The specific objectives of the conference are to:

- (i) Develop an action plan for implementing GAP in African RCEs.
- (ii) Share strategies on implementing ESD as a mechanism for achieving SDGs at the local level.
- (iii) Develop mechanisms for assessing and reporting RCE activities as part of social learning.
- (iv) Share activities and challenges faced by African RCEs in the implementation of the GAP and SDGs.
- (v) Explore opportunities for engaging the youth in RCE activities.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- (i) Joint action plans and common agenda for implementing GAP through African RCEs
- (ii) Strategies on implementing SDGs through ESD
- (iii) Enhanced capacities on assessing and reporting RCE activities
- (iv) Conference report and article for RCE Bulletin
- (v) Increased engagement of the youth in RCE activities

FORMAT OF THE CONFERENCE

The conference will comprise plenary sessions with key note addresses on the role of African RCEs in implementing the Global Action Programme of ESD and the SDGs. Plenary sessions will also feature paper presentations and panel discussions. There will be a panel discussion on the role of the youth in RCE implementing ESD through RCEs. Paper presentations will focus on how RCEs are implementing the GAP and SDGs through their flagship projects. A closed meeting to develop a road map for African RCEs will form part of the conference as well as poster exhibitions from participating RCEs and institutions.

THE VENUE

The conference will be held at the Kenyatta University Conference Centre (KUCC) that is approximately 27 Kilometres from Nairobi Central Business District (CBD). Kenyatta University is currently the Secretariat of RCE Greater Nairobi. The venue is an excellent university facility which can



offer accommodation for the intended number of 100 delegates. Kenyatta University Conference Centre is 30 minutes' drive from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Towards the end of the ESD decade RCEs committed themselves to implementing the Global Action Programme to generate and scale up concrete actions on ESD. African RCEs are committed to implementing the GAP and the SDGs through their flagship projects. The conference organising committee invites paper presentations to highlight how RCEs through their flagship projects are implementing the GAP and SDGs. Paper presentations may address any of the following sub themes (GAP priority action areas):

1. **Advancing policy:** Mainstream ESD into both education and sustainable development policies, to create an enabling environment for ESD and to bring about systemic change.
2. **Transforming learning and training environments:** Integrate sustainability principles into education and training settings.
3. **Building capacities of educators and trainers:** Increase the capacities of educators and trainers to more effectively deliver ESD.
4. **Empowering and mobilizing youth:** Multiply ESD actions among youth.
5. **Accelerating sustainable solutions at local level:** At community level, scale up ESD programmes and multi-stakeholder ESD networks.

Should you wish to make oral and/or poster presentations on any of the five GAP priority areas, please indicate as such on **Registration Form**. All oral presentations other than key note addresses will last 15 minutes. The participants of poster presentations are advised to bring printed posters.

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS.

- **15 July 2016:** Deadline registration for those applying for fund support. *Please note that incomplete or delayed applications may not be counted as candidates for the fund support.
- **25 July 2016:** Announcement of the selection result for the fund support
- **31 July 2016:** Deadline for case abstracts for those who do not need fund support

CONTACT (S):

Conference Secretariat: send registration forms to the following email addresses: National Environment Management Authority: edeche@nema.go.ke, mmamo@nema.go.ke, Global RCE Service Centre: rceservicecentre@unu.edu