

Coming back from Japan we took with us new hope, meeting all them people believing in and working on ESD. Also the RCEs coming from all over Europe, whether older or bright new, smaller or larger in size, brought with them and shared great value; there is a fantastic potential.

Looking forward, we all now have the most promising outcomes of the UNESCO Conferences and our own RCE-Okayama-Declaration. All point in the same direction, present basics that were also in our European Positioning Paper and that already form the base of the OPEDUCA Project, thus far the largest (inter-)continental cooperation of RCEs on exactly those aspects now stipulated as key priorities in UNESCO's GAP. We are most positive with regard to the potential of the RCEs for the 2015-2020 era, a potential yet to be further developed and fully unleashed.

The RCEs of Bretagne, Graz, Hamburg, Rhine-Meuse, Munich, Tyrol, Albania as well as Ruhr and Nurnberg, warmly invite your RCE to join the collective effort, share your thoughts, then to work forward together on those aspects and goals we all share. It is not unification we strive for, but togetherness based on diversity, to from thereon see where all our roads cross in order to come forth with a basic joint strategy and programs that can proudly be presented to stakeholders and energize all those believing in and working on ESD.

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From DESD to GAP clean sheet and lessons learned

From Japan we also carry with us a weary feeling and disappointment with regard to the manifestation and progress of the cooperation of RCEs in Europe. Our formal scheduled meeting during this 9th Global Conference on Wednesday morning did not meet our expectations. Where up until the summer of 2013 RCEs in Europe got closer step by step, created joint projects, raised the European RCE Alliance, developed a strong Positioning Paper and had several most productive continental meetings, since then energy on the continental scale diminished. The meeting in Japan made this most clear, in our opinion it was not successful. Therefore RCEs Graz and Rhine-Meuse took the initiative to all sit together again after Wednesdays last session to look each other in the eye. During that meeting sparks of cooperation were still visible and before taking a group photo we promised each other we would try to take up the democratic cooperation process again; picking up what we left behind mid-2013.

The informal coordination working fine that far has never been acknowledged by UNU-IAS, which led to some tensions. Concerning several communicational and organizational aspects Jos Eussen had constructive and positive talks with the UNU-IAS Director, Mr. Takemoto, as well as with Mr. van Ginkel, the initiator of the whole RCE-idea back in 2004. It came out most clear that the 'flat', democratic way of organizing cooperation is still highly to be preferred compared to a hierarchical model. Also the outcomes of the joint RCE-work in Europe during previous years was highly valued, although some vague impressions and misunderstandings had to be cleared first. To put it short; we were on the right track.

We can and want to move forward where we left behind summer 2013 in a most positive way and invite your RCE to enter the 2015-2020 era together.

We are ready for GAP.

Very much looking forward to your erelong response, if possible in first version before December 5th.

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