

**11th Global RCE Conference: Education for the Sustainable Development Goals
7-9 December, 2018, Cebu, the Philippines**



**Opening Remarks
7 December, 2018, Cebu, the Philippines**

Presenters:

- **Prof. Maria Rosario Piquero-Ballescas (RCE Cebu)**
- **Prof. Cynthia Rose Banzon-Bautista (Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of the Philippines – video message)**
- **Attorney Liza Corro, Chancellor (University of the Philippines Cebu)**
- **Dr. Hiroaki Takiguchi (Project Director, UNU-IAS)**
- **Mr. Michiharu Kono (Ministry of the Environment of Japan)**

Prof. Maria Rosario Piquero-Ballescas (RCE Cebu)

Prof. Maria Rosario Piquero-Ballescas (RCE Cebu) extended a warm welcome to everyone in attendance on behalf of RCE Cebu, and stated that together with UNU-IAS, the University of the Philippines system, its staff and volunteers, and local and global partners, wished everyone a very fruitful, inspiring, and productive conference. She asked everyone to consider it as a celebration of local and global partnership, and that upon leaving Cebu, hoped everyone will remember the culture, joy of partnership, and laughter shared together. She then explained that RCE Cebu started off as a multi-sectoral network designed to strengthen partnership and collaboration among all partners working for ESD at all levels, and that the focus now is on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Prof. Cynthia Rose Banzon-Bautista (Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of the Philippines)

Prof. Maria Rosario Piquero-Ballescas then read out a message on behalf of Cynthia Rose Banzon-Bautista (Vice President for Academic Affairs), University of the Philippines (UP) Cebu. She warmly welcomed everyone, before going on to explain that UP Cebu is the youngest of the eight constituent universities in the UP system. Multi-sectoral collaboration is essential to achieving the SDGs, but must be adapted to national and local contexts. As primary producers of knowledge, universities are important linkages towards the SDGs. In 2005, UP, through UP Cebu, then known as the University of the Philippines Visayas Cebu College, looked into becoming an RCE. The creation of RCE Cebu in 2006, the first in the Philippines, was an excellent opportunity for the university to realise not only its mission of teaching and research, but also of community engagement by creating a multi-sector network of partners for the promotion of ESD. She concluded the address by mentioning that around the world there is now more recognition of universities and how they contribute and deliver to the SDGs.

Attorney Liza Corro, Chancellor (University of the Philippines Cebu)

Dr. Jonnifer Sinogaya, a Dean from the College of Science at the University of the Philippines Cebu, then delivered a message on behalf of Attorney Liza Corro, Chancellor (University of the Philippines Cebu) to welcome everyone to the 11th Global RCE Conference. He expressed that RCE Cebu is greatly honoured as the co-host of the conference, to explore the theme 'Education for the SDGs'. RCE Cebu started in 2005 as a multi-sectoral collaboration designed to strengthen partnership and collaboration for ESD, and in 2006 was accredited by UNU-IAS as the first RCE in the Philippines. This conference is significant that all 17 of the SDGs will take centre stage, and the diversity within the network means projects cover everything from curriculums for schools to hands-on training provided by higher education institutions. He then spoke about the SDGs in the context of disasters, noting that the Philippines suffers from a great number of disasters, such as earthquakes, typhoons, and landslides. During Typhoon Yolanda, neighbouring cities and areas were devastated, resulting in deaths and homelessness. Just recently, Naga, Cebu experienced a disaster in the form of a landslide, which claimed the lives of 78 people, and leaving thousands of displaced victims. With the onset of global climate change, it can be seen that natural disasters are becoming more common. He mentioned it is a challenge in terms of how these can be integrated in their framework of sustainable development, and particularly, in the design of curriculum. In the Philippines, their K-12 program that was implemented is now having its first batch of K-12 graduates, though climate change impacts have not been integrated within the curriculum. Now, the National Climate Change Commission of the Philippines is tasked to coordinate with the Department of Education so that it gets integrated in the K-12 curriculum. Dr. Sinogaya closed his address by stating he was hopeful that the conference would be fruitful and that problems identified could be given solutions.

Dr. Hiroaki Takiguchi (Project Director, UNU-IAS)

Dr. Hiroaki Takiguchi (Project Director, UNU-IAS) then presented his opening remarks, expressing his great pleasure and honour to welcome everyone to the conference. He thanked RCE Cebu for their efforts and hospitality in hosting the conference, as well as his sincere appreciation to the Government of the Province of Cebu and the Ministry of the Environment (Japan) for their kind support. He noted the remarkable growth of the RCE community, in which RCEs themselves have successfully demonstrated and delivered actions. With more than a decade of experience, RCEs are in a good position to scale up their actions, and can in turn play a vital role between global perspectives and local actions. Dr. Takiguchi once again thanked RCE Cebu for making the conference a reality and wished both the organisers and participants a successful conference.

Congratulatory Message**Mr. Michiharu Kono (Ministry of the Environment of Japan)**

Mr. Michiharu Kono (Ministry of the Environment of Japan) presented a congratulatory message, expressing his great honour to be present, and on behalf of the Ministry of the

Environment Japan, extended his gratitude to UNU-IAS for engagement with this flagship program involving RCE partners. Regarding the conference theme, Mr. Kono spoke about education's strong linkage to other goals, and the fact that it is cross-cutting to all 17 goals. To achieve a sustainable society, action is needed now to broaden environmental education and decrease our environmental impact. Mr. Kono concluded his congratulatory message by wishing the participants many fruitful discussions, knowledge exchanges, sharing of best practices, and lessons learnt from the field trips, before thanking RCE Cebu for organising a successful event.