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RCE Bulletin

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

In focus: RCE Rhine-Meuse's Sustainable Neighbourhoods project

by Jos Hermans

The concept of a sustainable neighbourhood is a fashionable one today and has led to the development of new neighbourhoods in many regions of Europe. But this development has been mostly in rural areas or outside city limits, while the question of urban sprawl and development of existing urban neighbourhoods remains. How can one ensure that urban neighbourhoods remain attractive? How can the physical degradation and impoverishment of urban neighbourhoods be reduced? How can they be regenerated in a sustainable way?

The Euregion Rhine-Meuse is an urban region of four million inhabitants. With the presence of major cities like Aachen, Liege, Heerlen, Verviers and Genk, urban life is lived on a daily basis in the region. But the level of habitability in some neighbourhoods is unacceptable. RCE Rhine-Meuse, therefore, aims to react and to concentrate on improvements in these deprived areas through its Sustainable Neighbourhoods (SUN) project. This is an inter-regional project expected to start this year and last until 2010. The RCE believes that an integrated and balanced approach will provide leverage points for improving the quality of life in these neighbourhoods.

Through a combined and Euregional approach to improve existing conditions, the SUN project stimulates:

- **mutual development of new concepts.** Instead of solving the problems on an individual basis, the solutions are identified at the regional level.
- **exchanges of experience in implementation.**
- **exchanges of neighbourhood inhabitants between the participating cities.** By involving people directly affected by it, the project creates broad community support and at the same time Euregional thinking.
- **revitalisation of economic activity in the Euregion.**

Jointly by working on the image of the neighbourhood, through a marketing plan, and by creating easily accessible facilities for starters, particularly those who are unemployed.

- **regional exposure outside the Euregion.** The participating cities are those that are still facing the consequences of their history as mining and industrial towns. Improved housing, green areas and economic activity contribute to changing the outlook of these places.

Goals of the project

The SUN project has one central operational goal: to foster the liveability in four deprived urban neighbourhoods in Euregion Rhine-Meuse.

The SUN consortium is conscious that the above goal can be reached only through the following activities.

- Reintroducing compatible economic activities within the urban context, particularly in former industrial areas and abandoned buildings. Enterprises working in the creative, knowledge or local service sectors, can be brought into the neighbourhoods in an integrated way. This will bring new jobs and a new economic life to derelict neighbourhoods.
- Developing a strong and positive image for these urban neighbourhoods by upgrading the physical environment, increasing the range and diversity of local services on offer, and through effective marketing.
- Stimulating the social cohesion and sense of community at the neighbourhood, town and Euregion level through inter-cultural exchanges.

The primary beneficiaries of the SUN project are the inhabitants of the most deprived urban neighbourhoods of the Euregion Rhine-Meuse. The second target group is the local authority, who is expected to lead in organising the most disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods.

The budget requirement for the project is 4.5 million euro. Fifty per cent of this comes from the European Union, 25 per cent from the regional authorities and the rest from partner organisations. The project is now in the accreditation phase, and is expected to be approved by June this year.

The University of Liege in Belgium is the lead partner of the project. The Province of Limburg, the University of Hasselt, Eco'hom Liege — an organisation that promotes housing

renovations for energy-saving, the City of Genk, the City of Liege, the City of Verviers, the City of Eupen and the investment firm SPI+ Liege are the other partners in Belgium. Partner organisations from the Netherlands are COS Limburg — the Centre for Development Cooperation, the University of Maastricht and the City of Heerlen. Smart, an organisation of artists in the Rhine-Meuse region, is also a partner, while RCE Rhine-Meuse is the initiator of the project and acts as advisor.

For more information

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RCE Incheon helps clean oil spill

RCE Incheon in Korea mobilised a group of volunteers, on 26 January, to clean up a massive oil spill that has polluted the country's environmentally rich western coast. A total of 66,000 barrels of crude oil gushed out of a Hong Kong-registered tanker when it collided with a South Korean-owned barge last December. Volunteers participating in the containing action witnessed that the spill has not only affected coastal ecology, but also the economy of the surrounding community. The RCE's activity raised awareness about the importance of environmental pollution control.



Volunteers help clean up oil spill

For more information

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Leadership training in Kazakhstan

UNU-IAS, in collaboration with the Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production based in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and with the support of representatives of UNEP-AIT Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific developed and delivered the first module of the training for national businesses on Business Strategies and Tools for Sustainable Development last month.

The 3-module training aims to provide support for enterprises in moving the country towards sustainable development.

The first module of the training, held between 15 and 17 February, was supported by Kazakhstan's Ministry of Environment. In this first module, participants discussed the implications of sustainable development, government responses, global and regional trends in sustainable development, resource productivity concepts and tools, corporate citizenship and roadmaps of strategies for sustainable businesses.

The second module of the training will be on strategies, tools and frameworks for sustainable development in the business sector, and the third on technologies and sector applications in the global market place.

For more information

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Three weeks of ESD in Kobe

RCE Hyogo-Kobe, which was launched last November, organised the campaign '3 weeks of ESD', through its newly established network, from 1-21 March. A workshop, forum and symposium on ESD were organised as part of the campaign, and one of the topics discussed was that of disaster prevention.

The RCE works in the Hyogo prefecture, which experienced a massive earthquake in 1995. One of the foci of the RCE is the creation of a disaster prevention culture.

For more information

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RCE North Texas' host institution identified

The Austin College Center for Environmental Studies will serve as host institution for the North Texas Regional Center of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (NTRCE). Dr. Peter Schulze, director of the Center and Professor of Biology and Environmental Science, joins Tim Jones as Principal Investigator of NTRCE.

Austin College, a leading U.S. independent liberal arts college, is located approximately 50 miles north of Dallas in Sherman, Texas. Founded in 1849, the 1,300 student residential college is the oldest Texas institution of higher education operating under its original name and charter.

For more information

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Change management course at the University of Graz

RCE Graz-Styria, in cooperation with the Centre for Continuing Education, piloted an annual intergenerational interactive course on 'Methods for Change Processes in Regions and Business'. An innovative aspect of this course is that students interact with professionals from outside the university on sustainability issues. These interactive sessions help exchange experiences and knowledge between generations and disciplines. Professionals contribute with their experience of daily work while students contribute with their innovative ideas and perspectives as well as scientific knowledge. Thirty participants, half of them students and half practitioners from outside the university, attended the course.

Topics discussed included global and local sustainable development, historical aspects of sustainable development, creativity and innovation, change management, networking and network analysis, stakeholder analysis, ESD and Corporate Social Responsibility. Results of the group work sessions were presented in a public event, which was transmitted online to Kirchbach, a village in rural Styria.

For more information

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Asian University Reps develop joint activities on sustainability in education

Representatives from several universities of the Asia-Pacific region met in March at UNU-IAS to discuss and formulate joint activities to promote sustainability in postgraduate education. The first meeting of these universities in November 2007 saw the creation of the academic alliance ProSPER.Net (Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network).

Broad areas of joint activities identified by the university representatives were the development of a generic model for teaching postgraduate educators and researchers in the field of sustainable development and SD curriculum development targeting primarily business and government leaders. Specific activities under each category were identified and prioritized during the meeting, and proposals for implementation were discussed. It was agreed that ProSPER.Net would be officially launched in June 2008.

The creation of the network and co-ordination of activities is currently supported by the Japanese Ministry of Environment.

For more information

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ESD activity for school students

The annual Junior United Nations Ecological Workshop (JUNEC), organised by the UNU, brings together school children from Japan and abroad to raise awareness on various globally relevant topics. One part of this workshop was held on 23 March at UNU-IAS. In this session, students learnt about sustainable production and consumption in relation to sugar, discussed the complex environmental and economic contradictions and proposed alternatives to reduce the impact on sustainability.

For more information

Yoko Mochizuki

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Symposium and conference at RCE Okayama

RCE Okayama held a symposium on 3 February to share experiences about various ESD/RCE activities taking place in Okayama and other regions. The objective of this symposium was to share achievements and challenges of ESD for further advancement of activities in the future. A hundred and thirty participants, including those from three RCEs, from within and outside the area participated in the symposium. Representatives from RCE Incheon, who participated in the symposium, said that they were inspired to mobilise their own RCE by learning how Japanese RCEs operate.



Symposium in Okayama

Coordinators of all six RCEs in Japan participated in the First Domestic RCE Conference on 4 February. Participants presented their activities and openly discussed challenges faced as coordinators. These challenges include identifying strategies for promotion and dissemination of ESD/RCE, networking and mobilization, collaboration with formal education institutions, fundraising, and various other

issues. It was an invaluable opportunity for coordinators to come together and discuss to strengthen and enhance cooperation among RCEs working towards a common goal within the country.

For more information

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Promoting health in schools

Year 2008 is being observed as the International Year of Sanitation. The latest data on the health of school children shows that sanitation-related habits and nutrition play an important role in ensuring the retention of children in schools. Understanding the urgency of promoting good health and sanitation in schools, RCE Lucknow in India with its formal partner, the Uttar Pradesh Education Department, is working on the theme of sustainable health with a focus on schools. Starting March 2008, the RCE with the State Education Department Agency - State Council of Education, Research and Training (SCERT) has organised training programmes for key resource persons at the state level. The programme aims to cover all 70 districts in the state of Uttar Pradesh through five batches of the training programme.

The training programme covers various aspects of health education such as personal hygiene, malnutrition, environmental sanitation and pollution, disease prevention, preparation for school health and sanitation plans.

Two preliminary training programmes were held with the participation of fifty district level key resource persons from twenty-two districts. This capacity building programme is the first step of a programme which expects the twenty-two participants to reach teacher trainers at the district level, who would then reach out to teachers and thus to schools. The next three batches of the programme will be held between April-May 2008.



Training programme on health for resource persons

For more information

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RCE Chubu launched

RCE Chubu held its launching ceremony on 14 January at the Chubu University in Nagoya, Japan. Major stakeholders of the RCE attended the launch, and were welcomed by Prof. Atsuo Iiyoshi, the President of the Chubu University, and Prof. Shinichi Hirano, the President of Nagoya University.

The geographic scope of RCE Chubu includes the basins of rivers that flow into the Ise and Mikawa bays in central Japan. This is the first RCE in the country whose area of work is not limited to one, but three prefectures of Aichi, Gifu and Mie.

For more information

Prof. Tsuneo Takeuchi
RCE Chubu
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RCE youth leaders meet in Sendai

RCE Greater Sendai organised a meeting of Asian RCE youth leaders, from 16 to 18 February, to create a platform for exchange and collaboration for ESD activities among youth in Asian RCEs. Youth representatives from RCE Tongyeong (Korea), Cebu (Philippines), Yogyakarta (Indonesia), Penang (Malaysia), Kyrgyzstan, all six RCEs from Japan, representatives from the Japanese Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT), UNU-IAS, and other ESD experts participated in the event.

“It is an eye-opening experience for young people to meet others working for the same cause. We hope that such meetings will be held in the future and help formulate a youth network,” said Prof. Koganezawa from RCE Greater Sendai, of the event.

For more information

Takaaki Koganezawa
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Eight new RCEs acknowledged

Eight new RCEs were officially acknowledged in March, bringing the global total of RCEs to fifty five. The recently acknowledged RCEs are Greater Mbarara in Uganda, Zomba in Malawi, Maputo in Mozambique, Swaziland, Hamburg and Nuremberg in Germany, West Midlands in the UK and Cha-am in Thailand.

For more information

Zinaida Fadeeva
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Information requests from the RCE Service Centre

The RCE Service Centre has requested information from RCEs as a build up to the International RCE Conference to be held from 2-4 July 2008. The information gathered is expected to help keep track of progress.

RCEs are requested to take note of deadlines.

Online Pre-conference Survey: to help assess RCEs' interests with regard to the conference. Contact Heloise Buckland/Cristel Linders, RCE Barcelona, cristel.linders@gmail.com by **31 March**.

Self Evaluation (for designated RCEs): Participatory, open, and consultative evaluation for which questions are set by the RCEs themselves. Send the evaluation table by 1 April and the full evaluation by **23 May to Zinaida Fadeeva or Yoko Mochizuki, rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu**.

Acceptance of Invitation for RCE Conference: For traveling/participation, self-financing is strongly suggested. If funding has proved difficult, following fundraising efforts, requests for financial support to be submitted by **11 April to Nami Akimoto, rceconference2008@ias.unu.edu**.

Annual Reporting: Annual reports from RCEs are sought to provide a snapshot of activities, achievements and challenges. Selected portions of the questionnaire will constitute an annual report of the acknowledged RCEs. Reports to be sent to Zinaida Fadeeva or Yoko Mochizuki, rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu by **11 April**.

Flagship Projects: Description of one or two of the most prominent or leading projects of each RCE. Send information to Sampreethi Aipanjiguly, aipanjiguly@ias.unu.edu by **12 May**.

Portfolio: A list of all RCE activities with brief descriptions to be sent to the RCE Service Centre, rceservicecentre@ias.unu.edu by **2 June**.

Posters for poster session: To enable presentation of each RCE and provide opportunities for interaction. **Deadline and contact to be announced.**

News/Announcements for the RCE Bulletin: The next issue of the quarterly bulletin to disseminate RCE/ESD related information will be produced in June. Send news, event and publication information and photos to Sampreethi Aipanjiguly, aipanjiguly@ias.unu.edu by **17 June**.

Press Clippings: Media/newspaper coverage of RCEs to be compiled for reference. Send when relevant to Sampreethi Aipanjiguly, aipanjiguly@ias.unu.edu.

Right Livelihood Award recipient in Graz

In January, Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish, founder of the Egyptian development initiative SEKEM and recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, also known as the Alternative Nobel Prize, spoke at an event in Graz. Over 120 people attended the event organised by RCE Graz-Styria, and directed queries on a wide range of topics to Dr. Abouleish.

Dr. Abouleish spent many years in Graz as a student of chemistry. His foundation, SEKEM, is a leading organisation in biodynamic agriculture, and its organic products and crop remedies are marketed globally.



Dr. Roberta Maierhofer, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Graz, and Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish

Photos and a video of the event are available on the RCE's website: www.rce-graz.at.

For more information
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Online textbook on energy efficiency

The Natural Edge Project (TNEP), an independent sustainability think-tank based in Australia has published an online textbook on energy efficiency. Access at

http://www.naturaledgeproject.net/Sustainable_Energy_Solutions_Portfolio.aspx

Education journal on ESD published

The 6th issue of the peer-reviewed Irish development education journal *Policy and Practice* has been published on the theme of Education for Sustainable Development.

Contributors to the issue include the Ubuntu Network, the University of Limerick, the University of Bradford and the London South Bank University among others. Papers published include those on the relationship between development education and ESD, using the UNESCO framework to embed ESD in a student learning and living experience and the challenges and opportunities for ESD.

To subscribe to the journal, write to jenna@centreforglobaleducation.com.

Contact: Centre for Global Education
capacity@centreforglobaleducation.com
www.centreforglobaleducation.com

Call for papers for ESD Journal

CEE (Centre for Environment Education), India requests RCEs to submit case studies for its peer-reviewed *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development (JESD)*. The bi-annual journal is published in English.

Contact: jesd@ceeindia.org
www.ceeindia.org/cee/callpaper.html

Articles invited for special issue on ESD

SEAMEO INNOTECH plans to dedicate an issue of its journal, first published in 1977, to ESD. The journal is published semi-annually and targets education professionals in the Southeast Asian region, although articles from outside the region are published too.

The first issue of the journal for this year will share case studies, experiences and achievements on ESD teaching and learning, research and policy, including efforts towards ESD integration in teacher education and curricula. Articles are invited for this special issue. **Deadline for submission is 15 May.**

Contact: SEAMEO INNOTECH
info@seameo-innotech.org
www.seameo-innotech.org

ESD International Forum 2008

Tongyeong City, Korea, 26-28 April

RCE Tongyeong plans to hold the ESD International Forum 2008 under the theme of Sustainable Production and Consumption this April. This annual forum is the third of its kind since RCE Tongyeong's launching ceremony in 2006.

Suggestions and inputs from RCEs are invited.

Contact: Won J Byun
tillwinwin@yonsei.ac.kr

Workshop on Sustainable Health

Kota Bharu, Malaysia, 21-22 May

A workshop of the RCE Sustainable Health network is to be held at the Health Campus of the University Sains Malaysia in Kota Bharu, to promote collaborative programmes among participating RCEs.

Contact: Zainal Abidin Sanusi
zainals@usm.my

RCE Conference of the Americas

Regina, Canada, 25-27 May

RCE Saskatchewan presents the first conference of the Americas, titled 'Knowledge and Innovation for Sustainability: Assessing and Adopting Beneficial Practices'. The conference will be held at the University of Regina and presents the opportunity to showcase ESD projects and research, to understand and identify strengths and opportunities for organisations and RCEs, and to explore the role of education in innovating for sustainable development locally and globally.

Specific areas for the conference include climate change, farming and local food production, health and healthy lifestyles, sustainable infrastructure, reconnecting to natural prairie ecosystems, and supporting and bridging cultures.

More information can be found in the "Call for Participation" section on the conference website.

<http://www.saskrce.ca/conference2008>

Fifth African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production

Nairobi, Kenya, 3-5 June

The Regional Roundtables on Sustainable Consumption and Production are forums that are promoted and supported by UNEP to facilitate information exchange and experience sharing amongst the increasing number of institutions and practitioners that are engaged in the promotion of sustainable consumption and production. The overall objective of the ARSCP-5 is to review the lessons from the on-going activities related to the African 10-year framework programme on SCP and identify the key steps that needs to be taken in order to strengthen SCP activities in the region.

Contact: Richard Sherman
Africa Regional Coverage Project
richards@iisd.org
<http://www.iisd.ca/africa>

Conference on Higher Education for Latin America

Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 4-6 June

Proposals on good examples of sustainable development from education networks, such as RCEs, in Latin America are invited for the Conferencia Regional de Educacion Superior (CRES). The conference, organised by the UNESCO office for higher education in Latin America, is open to Rectors of universities, ministries of education, researchers, student

organisation leaders, and educational networks in Latin American countries. There will also be a poster session with ninety of the best examples of university networks with private and government sectors.

Contact: Débora Ramos Torres
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www.iesalc.unesco.org.ve

3rd International RCE Conference

Barcelona, Spain, 2-4 July

To be hosted by RCE Barcelona at the Technical University of Catalonia, the conference is expected to strengthen the RCE network and its activities through discussing shared experiences. Evaluation, communications and operational issues will be part of the discussions. A pre-conference survey has been circulated to all RCEs to help determine the agenda.

Contact: RCE Service Centre
rceconference2008@ias.unu.edu

Conference - Architecture and Tourism: their role in sustainable development

Samara, Russia, 16-18 September

Papers are invited for the conference on the role of architecture and tourism in sustainable development, organised by RCE Samara with partners. Topics for discussion at the conference include town-planning for tourism development, architecture as the basis of tourism infrastructure, sustainability of tourism, multicultural and multinational aspects of tourism, among others.

Deadline for paper submission: 25 July

Contact: Nina Shvaikina
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Conference on Environmental Management for Sustainable Universities

Barcelona, Spain, 15-17 October

EMSU is an international conference series which aims to share sustainability practice in universities. EMSU 2008 is the fifth edition and aims to generate debate on the role of knowledge in five key areas of environmental and social change: climate change and resource scarcity, production and consumption patterns, governance and changing responsibilities, poverty reduction and equality, and urban systems. The conference will be hosted by the Technical University of Catalonia. RCE Barcelona is seeking RCEs with an interest in Universities and Sustainability to participate in this process.

Contact: Heloise Buckland
rcebarcelona@gmail.com
EMSU Website: www.emsu.org

ECO-Iguaçu-2008 Forum postponed

The ECO-Iguaçu forum, which was expected to be held at Foz do Iguaçu in Brazil in May 2008, has been postponed indefinitely.