

### **Session 1.1: Highlights of the RCE Community Development**

9:30-9:50, Wednesday, 23 November 2016

Presenter: Zinaida Fadeeva, Research Fellow, UNU-IAS

During her presentation, Zinaida Fadeeva included regional highlights of the RCE network, RCEs' engagement in global sustainability processes and the aspirations for development in the future. For more detailed information please refer to her presentation [here](#).

#### **African RCE Community**

There are currently 32 RCEs in Africa with 10 new candidates pending. Zinaida pointed out that their regional conferences are popular and the African youth community is particularly strong through the regional meetings and specifically youth meetings. One major challenge was to strengthen the capacities of African RCEs to deliver the SDGs and contribute to contribute to international sustainability processes and UN debates.

#### The major strategic directions for the African community were:

- Strengthen capacities of African RCEs to deliver the SDGs through ESD and effective reporting.
- Contribute to international sustainability processes and UN debates through policy-relevant research and capacity development.
- Strengthen governance mechanisms to better coordinate ESD/SD learning and actions within the RCE Community.
- Align RCE work with NEPAD and Agenda 2030 priorities.
- Empower youth as change agents.
- Strengthen competencies and capabilities to undertake collaborative and community-engaged research in ESD.

#### **Asia Pacific RCE Community**

Asia Pacific is the biggest community with 56 members. In 2016 the conference was organised in Cha-am, Thailand. Regional action plans are being developed. The region has a committee to coordinate collaborative initiatives of the community. RCEs were invited to the 8<sup>th</sup> Tongyeong International Forum. RCE Penang is currently initiating a joint research project with RCE Greater Phnom Penh and RCE Southern Vietnam. RCE Okayama organizes the yearly Okayama ESD Award with RCE Yogyakarta winning it in 2016. Centre for Environment Education (CEE) organized the very successful international conference on Education for the SDGs which engaged RCEs globally.

#### Engagements with Global Sustainability Processes for the Asian Pacific Community:

- Linking AP RCEs with ProSPER.Net activities, encouraging RCEs to participate in ProSPER.Net's Young Researchers' School, Leadership Programme, Joint Research Projects among higher education institutions of the network.

- Strengthening ties with UNU-IIGH (International Institute for Global Health) for the regional network
- Encouraging RCEs to take part in events organized by UNU-IIGH such as the Urban Thinkers Campus, which was about realizing sustainable urban development in the interest of human health and wellbeing, initiated by UN-Habitat

### **European RCE Community**

The European community stands tall with 40 members. Their 2016 meeting in London had an excellent poster presentation and introduced the European communicators Detlev Lindau Bank and Ros Wade as links to the whole European community. Major topics of discussion during the meeting were collective action. Migration may become one of the focal areas of collaboration. Future Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) conferences were also discussed. The communication will also deepen their communications with UNU-IAS such as in the form of publications.

#### Collective actions and collaborations in the European Community:

- On forced migration and refugees, a position paper is being prepared and project ideas are explored.
- Idea of (Sustainable) TVET Conference
- Finding synergies with Transition Town movement
- Curriculum development as ongoing projects show (CASE, MetESD, OPEDUCA, ACE Wild)
- Strengthening the continental collaboration, therefore two communicators have been appointed and deepen the communication with UNU-IAS (publications, resources, ...)
- Looking for synergies across Europe and on national level with other multi-stakeholder-networks (like the Baltic sea and Black Sea Circle Consortium network)

### **RCEs Americas Community**

The Community in the Americas has 21 members. Their meeting was held 3 weeks back. Priorities in this region are exchanges and more interaction between North and South America.

#### Future steps for the Americas Community:

- RCEs drafted an Action Plan on joint activities for 2017; the Plan highlights increased communication between RCEs in the region as a desired outcome
- An open call for the RCE Americas Regional Meeting 2017 will be held shortly.
- One idea held at this year's Americas Conference was to hold the next regional meeting back to back with a youth workshop on sustainable development, where local youth and those visiting from other RCEs could work on a SD project to benefit the host community.
- Mechanisms for enabling this will need to be discussed by next year's host and the RCEs of the region.
- Attendees expressed their desire to find a mechanism to offset their carbon emissions for next year's conference, including tree planting in the host community or offsetting through forests in their home communities.

### **Thematic Summary**

#### **Climate Change**

- RCEs are engaging with teaching training and curriculum design for climate change education – in all regions
- Action learning projects around climate change involve tree-planting/reforestation, work with alternative technology, on-campus activities
- Most engagement with climate change policy among RCEs is at city or sub-national level.
- RCEs Waikato, Iskandar, and Skåne attended the Climate Chance meeting in Nantes, France - an international gathering of non-state actors seeking to help implement climate action
- Cities and sub-national governments were both stars of COP21 as well as Climate Chance – this is where the action to implement the Paris Treaty is largely coming from, and RCEs should be engaged with this.

#### Future plans:

Exploring capacity development actions for RCEs engagement; alignment with ongoing activities of some major groups (e.g. cities and youth)

#### **Higher Education**

- Big emphasis on the work with departments of education on with teacher education programmes.
- Some RCEs show very good practices by engaging HEIs and communities, e.g. RCE Portland, RCE Curitiba, RCE Yogyakarta.
- Linking AP RCEs with ProSPER.Net activities by encouraging RCEs to participate in ProSPER.Net's Young Researchers' School, Leadership Programme, Joint Research Projects among higher education institutions of the network
- Engagement of Copernicus Alliance with RCEs.

#### Future plans:

Stronger alignment of RCE work with substantive work of IAU, ProSPER.Net, AASHE, and Copernicus Alliance.

#### **Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge**

- International Community to Community Learning Exchange and workshop on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS), Bangalore, India 2015 – where RCEs from Africa and India participated
- United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) – high-level event on Biodiversity and Health – Statement of Biodiversity and Health
- IPBES first Capacity Building Forum, Dehradun, India 2016 – Two RCEs participated
- IPBES Orientation Workshop, side event at Asian Pacific Regional RCE conference, 2016
- Resource institution in IPBES Capacity Building Taskforce and Indigenous and Local Knowledge Taskforce (UNU-IAS)
- MoU in progress with IPBES and UNU-IAS

#### Future Plans:

CBD-COP-13 side event on ESD and biodiversity 9th Dec, Cancun, Mexico 2016, IPBES 5th Plenary 2017, Bonn, and IPBES Capacity Building programmes for RCEs in 2017.

## **Health**

- Collaboration with UNU International Institute of Global Health (IIGH) in various events
- Urban Thinkers Campus – Cities and Health, Malaysia, 2016
- Planetary health side event at UNEA-2, Nairobi, 2016
- ASEAN Biodiversity Conference – Thematic session on Health

### Future Plans:

Closer links with UNU-IIGH and Health policy report, nearing its completion in 2017.

## **Youth**

- YUVA Meet, Delhi - 2015
- Africa Youth Virtual Conference (RCE Minna), 2016
- Youth sessions at RCE regional conferences
- Youth fellowships nominations for IPBES
- ESDG youth conference, Ahmadabad, 2016 (Indian RCEs led by CEE participated)

### Future Plans:

Youth need to be better integrated into RCEs' structure, and RCEs to appoint a youth focal point for. National/regional focal points to coordinate reporting of youth networks in a given country/region. Scale up action by youth working on a common project with tangible outcomes. Plan for more effective communication. Regional Facebook pages feeding into the Global Youth RCE page and Africa Youth RCE page. What'sApp group established.

## **Sustainable Consumption and Production**

- A large number of RCEs is engaged with SCP activities
- A number of RCE stakeholders are a part in the 10YFP global coordination processes
- Across-RCE collaboration on sustainable and locally –driven TVET

### Future Plans:

Focused learning from RCEs engagement with SCP and livelihood strategies.

## **Assessment**

- Hybrid Assessment Methodology is developed
- A number of RCEs are getting ready to engage in the assessment processes

### Future Plans:

Create and facilitate a processes that would make assessment from a onetime exercise into an on-going assessment-driven process of learning and documenting.

## **Engagement with Global Sustainability Processes**

- RCEs are engaged in strategic planning of GAP at the national level
- A number of RCEs are members of the Multi-Stakeholder Partner Networks under the five Priority Area of GAP

### Future Plans:

- Contribution of RCEs into the capacity development process at the sub-national level – GAP priority area 5.

- Strengthening the partnership with the IPBES Secretariat, 10YFP, ASEAN Secretariat, IAU and other university networks.
- Building capacities of RCEs on the mechanisms, tools, policy development processes.
- RCE learning cases to be used for ASEAN+3 Leadership Programmes on SCP and other leadership programmes.
- Form concrete joint projects among RCEs contributing to the GAP and SDGs based on the regional action plans.
- Build a follow-up and monitoring mechanism for RCEs for joint projects run by RCEs themselves.
- Follow-up with RCEs interested in implementing an RCE Assessment.
- Capacity development
- Research and documentation
- Systematic engagement with global sustainability processes towards SDGs