

Education for Sustainable Development Programme



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

UNU-IAS

Institute for the Advanced Study
of Sustainability

ABOUT US

The United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) serves the international community by offering valuable and innovative policy oriented solutions to sustainability challenges. In response to the UN resolution on the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD: 2005-2014), UNU-IAS launched the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Programme with support from the Ministry of the Environment, Japan.

The Programme focuses on contributing to international Sustainable Development (SD) and ESD processes through developing multi-stakeholder networks and higher education alliances, enhancing leadership and capacity development, and advancing knowledge through policy-relevant research. Upon the completion of the DESD in 2014, the Programme is committed to further generating, accelerating and mainstreaming ESD by implementing the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, and through these activities, contributing to the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the ESD Programme is to bridge the gap between learning and development through research and actions which advance partnerships for ESD across geographic, knowledge, and sectoral boundaries. To this end, the Programme will synergize its objectives with the actions of its partner networks to make a tangible contribution to the post-2015 development and education agendas. The Programme aims to realise this goal by meeting the following objectives:

- **Accelerating local and regional solutions to sustainability issues**
- **Re-orienting higher education for societal transformation into SD**
- **Developing SD and ESD competences and capabilities as well as a science-policy interface**

These objectives comprise the cornerstone in developing strategies, strategic partnerships, and actions for addressing key areas of sustainable development.

ESD PROGRAMME STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

GOAL and OBJECTIVES:

Contribute to SDGs in bridging the gap between learning and development through:

- Accelerating regional and local solutions
- Transforming higher education institutions
- Developing SD and ESD competences and capabilities as well as science-policy interface

STRATEGIES:

- Further develop and strengthen the networks of RCEs and ProSPER.Net
- Enhance leadership and capacity development of the decision makers
- Take lead in international SD and ESD debates and processes, utilizing policy-relevant research and capacity development

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER
NETWORKS

INTERNATIONAL
SUSTAINABILITY PLATFORMS

HIGHER EDUCATION
ALLIANCES

ESD PROGRAMME PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS:

- Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD
- Sustainable Consumption and Production
- Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
- Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction
- Higher Education-driven Initiatives

UNU-IAS THEMATIC AREAS:

- Sustainable Societies
- Natural Capital and Biodiversity
- Global Change and Resilience

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

FACILITATING MULTI-STAKEHOLDER NETWORKS

The ESD Programme assists in the creation, coordination, and development of multi-stakeholder networks with a focus on **Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on ESD**. An RCE is a regional network of existing institutions and individuals, committed to using education and learning as tools for building a sustainable future. As of June 2015, UNU has acknowledged 138 RCEs worldwide.

During the UN Decade of ESD, RCEs have:

- Created strong thematic networks in diverse research areas
- Engaged policymakers as key partners at local, national and international levels
- Undertaken joint projects, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation
- Identified outstanding ESD practices through the RCE Recognition Awards
- Developed learning cases and the RCE Portal for sharing and learning

RCEs are ideally positioned to translate global sustainable development policy and vision into local realities and undertake actions that are sensitive to contexts from local to global levels. Because RCEs develop innovative modalities for action, education, and research, they can serve as the driving force to implement and synergize the GAP Priority Action Areas and ESD Programme focus areas.

ALIGNING HIGHER EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Through collaboration with higher education networks and initiatives around the world, the ESD Programme is advancing innovative research, learning methodologies, and pedagogies that strengthen the science-society-policy interface in line with international SD and ESD processes. A focal point of collaboration is **ProSPER.Net (Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network)** – a growing

alliance of higher education institutions in the Asia-Pacific region. ProSPER.Net's goals are to develop curriculum for SD and ESD, create leadership on sustainability, and respond to a wide variety of sustainable development challenges through joint research and capacity development. As of June 2015, there are 34 members in the network. ProSPER.Net members are committed to contributing to the GAP Priority Action Areas, in particular, transforming learning and training environments by disseminating ESD knowledge, promoting innovative research, and influencing policy for higher education.

ENGAGING INTERNATIONAL PLATFORMS AND PROCESSES

RCEs and ProSPER.Net will work in tandem, as well as with other global sustainability networks and alliances, to link local and regional initiatives to international SD and ESD platforms and processes. In particular, the ESD Programme will put priority on areas such as sustainable consumption and production, biodiversity and ecosystem services, climate change and disaster risk reduction, and higher education-driven initiatives. Multi-stakeholder network actions will align with a number of international platforms, including:

- The Global Action Programme (GAP)
- The 10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP on SCP)
- The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Convention on Biological Diversity
- Article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030
- Higher Education-driven initiative such as Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), Future Earth, and the Rio+20 Treaty on Higher Education



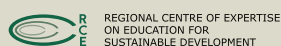
RCE Greater Western Sydney



RCE Kakamega Western-Kenya



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UNU-IAS: <http://ias.unu.edu/en/>

RCE Portal: <http://www.rce-network.org/portal/>

ProSPER.Net: <http://prospernet.ias.unu.edu/>

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