



Chair: Mario Tabucanon  
Rapporteur: Hanna Ståhlberg

Mario Tabucanon introduced the session by mentioning that this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> round-table discussion in this form, the first one having taken place in Tongyeong, Korea. He followed by introducing the speakers and commentators, who gave their talks and comments from different perspectives.

**Speakers giving local perspectives:**

- 1) Masao Omori (Mayor, City of Okayama)
- 2) Monika Bodil Mansson (City of Malmö / RCE Skåne)

**Speakers giving national perspectives:**

- 1) Soichiro Seki (Vice-Minister for Global Environment Affairs, MoE Japan)
- 2) Ayub Macharia Ndaruga (Director Environmental Education, Information & Public Participation, National Environment Management Authority (NEMA))

**The international perspective:**

Anantha Kumar Duraiappah (Director UNESCO, MGIEP/Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development)

**Commentators**

Alexander Leicht (Chief, Section ESD Division for Teaching, Learning and Content, UNESCO)

Hans van Ginkel (Former Rector, UNU)

Eunkyung Park (Chairperson, Tongyeong Education Foundation for SD / RCE Tongyeong)

The discussion issues at hand were based on the Global Action Programme and Education for Sustainable Development with the first priority area being advancing in policy.

The Mayor of Okayama, Mr. Masao Omori, introduced the local perspective. He referred to the achievements and projects in Okayama and the RCE vision. RCE Okayama had initiated a partnership project with the city as well as introduced community-based learning. Stakeholders had come together to talk about ESD, with 37 local communities on board and a continuous local policy in place. There was plenty of university support and participation of multi-stakeholders and citizens. Okayama could be a model for ESD.



There were diagonal links between formal and non-formal education. The achievements between 2005 and 2013 were an increase in Kominkan (local communities of 12 to 37), 51 ASPnet schools and 219 acknowledged organisations (from originally 49).

Mr. Omori introduced a case study in an elementary school where pupils were encouraged to think of community sustainability issues in terms of agriculture. Last October the Kominkan-CLC international world conference on ESD was organised to emphasize community-based learning, and the Okayama Commitment 2014 was adopted. In future, Okayama hoped to promote ESD for five more years, with a commission in place to implement the ESD Project Master Plan. An ESD Citizens Activity Center had been established in collaboration with NGOs, to further strengthen the role of the Kominkan.

Monica Bodil Mansson presented the 'Learning for doing' city project. The city of Malmö, had dramatically changed from a heavy industrial city to a city dominated by the private sector with 175 different nationalities and 147 languages as well as a population of 48% younger than 35. The RCE worked together with HUT, an umbrella organization of sustainable businesses. They operated in three dimensions, ecological, economical, and social. In the former they were very present with strong political support far reaching on a national and even sometimes international level. They had ambitious goals and one of them was to bring citizens on board. She emphasized the need to be more open for local initiatives and to delegate responsibility to citizens.

The public sector, universities, NGOs, and the business sector all worked together with citizens. The RCE was very useful in linking the different parties. ESD in Malmö was broad in terms of learning. In future, they planned to use pedagogics, and use the city as a classroom. They had developed the Horizon Classroom together with the city of Copenhagen, to work on ESD. A second initiative namely 'Global Malmö' worked on global issues. Further the RCE was promoting young people as traders. At a local level, it was wonderful to work, where results were seen quickly and making impact was possible. The key was to have a strong national and international framework.

Mr. Seki (Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Japan) introduced policy actions on Environmental Education in Japan with the most recent ESD projects and the policy plan beyond 2014.

The ESD Photo Communication Project was an initiative, to change behaviours by learning, thinking and implementing ESD it in the daily life of people. All this was achieved via photos that communicated different thoughts. Professional



ESD photos and messages were exhibited and the ESD Photo Communications Award was developed for public photo entries. He showed several examples, for example in relation to the energy dependency of Japan. Out of 1300 photos, the winner was a picture of a young child holding the hand of an elderly, showing ESD between generations with a view into the future. Round-table discussions had been held in March to July 2014, to develop a proposal on how to promote environmental education beyond 2014. They defined three key areas: capacity development, development of learning materials, and collaboration to develop a support system.

Mr. Ayub Macharia Ndaruga (Director, Environmental Education, Information and Public Participation, National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), Kenya) presented a second national perspective. He showed lessons learned in Kenya, with ESD policy interventions through the different RCEs. The Kenyan Constitution mentions SD as a national value and every Kenyan has the right to a clean environment. The Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA 1999) mandates NEMA to be the principal agent. National ESD policy implementation had been finalized in 2007, with a vision for 2030 for ESD policy and curriculum reorientation. Further, public mandatory environmental sustainability targets had been set. In 2014 another national ESD policy was developed. Here NEMA mapped, directed and regulated RCEs and encouraged new RCEs. RCE was mainstreamed in NEMA's corporate strategy and work plan.

ESD policy was implemented in so called sessional papers. Reporting guidelines were being developed and there was a launch of a green universities network by January 2015. NEMA also advised on how to position RCEs and fund RCEs. It applied project realignment to ensure RCEs were active as well as mentoring. Once a year they met with the RCEs. RCE governance was a network of stakeholders. Problems included how to act more local, that activities were often too technical, and management issues. ISO- Standards of Procedures had been developed. Post 2015 plans included the mainstreaming of policy actions.

Mr. Anantha Kumar Duraiappah introduced the international perspective by emphasizing the sheer amount of international environmental agreements (>300) with however very little coherence between them. He thought ESD could not be called successful, with the majority of countries still using economic growth as the indicator, which in turn was the one that drives everything else related to SD. The UN Secretary General had a solution for this problem in place, which would be proposed during the UNESCO Conference.

The bad news was, that all this was driven not because of sustainability per se, but because lifestyle was threatened as was the financial system. So how do we



do systemic change? There had been great initiatives at the national and international level. But how does a system of SD create jobs? Here everyone seemed to hit constraints. Every leader talked about job security, so there was a strong argument for SD if it lead to sustainable jobs.

A decade was short in a 200-year paradigm to change our lifestyle. Much had been done in 10 years. There was a lot of horizontal glue linking like-minded people together. Now was the time for vertical gluing, i.e. linking with other organizations, for example the World Economic Forum. In 2012, in Rio very few head of states had been present, they were all at the Economic Forum. RCEs and ESD related actors should be involved in the core of the related discussions. It was no longer about GDP, but about human development.

For example in IPBES (Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) the conceptual framework was very strong and was endorsed by 140 countries, making it a strong document linking the social and environmental components. RCEs could use that. The first annual meeting was held in January 2014, the next one will be in January 2015. There were multiple assessments; one being the regional one, where RCEs could contribute. Another entry point, and UNEP was the driver, was that UNESCO has signed up for IPBES and after the science part now, education is next on the agenda.

This completed the panel of speakers, which was followed by the panel of commentators.

Alexander Leicht, identified threads, which were in common with the DESD report, on which he had worked for two years. The value of political leadership was very important at a local, regional and national level. There is much value in having a policy framework in ESD. Having the DESD officially in the background has served for many as a soft policy instrument that has helped national stakeholders to claim funding. Now the issue seemed to be linking policy practice to communities and citizens. An integrated approach meant it was not enough to target education policies, but it was equally important to integrate education in other ESD related policies. Policy reform on education and on the sustainability side were necessary.

Hans Van Ginkel (Former Rector UNU) mentioned the importance of having a concept of subsidiarity, where decision-making takes places appropriately at the different levels. School programmes were not adapted enough to ESD. Decision-making processes at the regional level were of essence. Disaster Risk Reduction for example was a very local ESD point. UNU –IAS could be the link between the different topics. The Johannesburg meeting was so far the best, since more



concrete terms had been mentioned including specific topics such as water and energy.

Eunkyung Park (Chairperson, Tongyeong Education Foundation for Sustainable Development / RCE Tongyeong) finalized the comments section by mentioning her representation for RCE Tongyeong and as Vice Chair of UNESCO. When talking about policy, one needed to look into the different cultural backgrounds. Korea had a centralized policy making process. But it is of essence to understand the historical and structural background. In Tongyeong 40 NGOs were involved and there was a project namely Project 'Bridge to the World' which sends high school kids around the globe to other RCEs. RCEs could use new technologies to become a true global network.

The chair summarized the presentations by mentioning the great inspiration from Okayama that was introduced by the mayor. The specific issue of citizen involvement and the role of local governments in Sweden as supporters of pilot projects and further at the national level, the good example of how citizens can be included in ESD using the photo project in Japan. Kenya had always been inspiring in championing RCEs and trying to facilitate new RCEs.

From the international comments, it had become clear how important it was to go beyond GDP and other economic indicators that influence policymaking. It was useful to think of ESD in terms of job creation. Additionally the findings of UNESCO were very much in tune with what had been said around the table. Further having the right policy at the right level was important and the historical background played a role in policy-making decisions.

**Most comments during the discussion are listed below:**

- ✓ The IAU (International Association of Universities) highlighted the need of coordinated actions. Policy frameworks should be linked to RCE activities. The IAU network allowed universities to flourish, so links were not only encouraged with UNESCO, but also other networks.
- ✓ IPBES was an important process, but the implementation was not ready yet. Stakeholder meetings prior to IPBES would take place 10-11 of January in Bonn, and RCEs were invited to join as were any universities who were not yet involved.
- ✓ Another platform, where RCEs could participate was the Communication and Awareness UN Programme.
- ✓ Alexander Leicht highlighted the importance to work with university networks, as UNESCO already does. Suggestions on how this can be expanded were welcome.



- ✓ Anantha Kumar Duraiappah mentioned that engagement via IPBES would probably have to be on national focal points. Up-scaling is something that IPBES was familiar with so input from the RCEs that would be very welcome. Hans Van Ginkel agreed that RCEs could work at this level and help up-scale the process. However, he called for caution when mentioning universities and networks since one never knows who the university actually was and was very much dependent on the leadership of the university.
- ✓ Ayub Macharia Ndaruga added two important points: the issue of continuity and the understanding of priorities.
- ✓ The mayor of Okayama mentioned that media was an important contributor to promote the role of RCEs.
- ✓ In the audience RCE Waikato mentioned the discrepancies between the RCEs' focus and the governmental focus on economic development. It would be useful to hear examples of how policy can be influenced. One did not touch the real issues if the real economic interests are not being taken into account.
- ✓ Monika Bodil Mansson added that RCE Skane was very much interested beyond GDP and often 'well being' was used instead as an indicator. Using a social commission, to do in-depth studies on certain issues had resulted in 134 ideas, one of them had been how to measure 'well being'. So an independent body developed different recommendations on how social investment funds could be used to improve living conditions.
- ✓ The chair added that the RCE Global Service Centre could play a role in sharing best practices via the RCE portal and the e-bulletin
- ✓ Goolam Mohamedbhai said that not much has been heard on how RCEs can promote multi-racial, and multi-cultural issues. RCEs could be of great help to policy makers and vice versa. A member of RCE Waikato mentioned the work they did with Maori, when it became clear that they were learning from them rather than the other way around. Their knowledge systems should receive more recognition leading to the heart of New Zealand policy to be more of a partnership with Maori rather than an inclusion.
- ✓ Anantha Kumar Duraiappah mentioned the ASPNet programme. Kids from different countries were involved. After talking with educational psychologists, they developed a summary on different perspectives of ESD and how this changes with region, i.e. spatial, then region, then national and across states. They tried to see how the perceptions changed and in turn peer-to-peer behavior changed.
- ✓ A member of the audience from Nigeria added terrorism as a discussion point. The same could be said on health issues such as Ebola. Peace through ESD could be a new dimension.
- ✓ Mario Tabucanon, the chair, said this was a new contribution for the future. He explained that working for the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) was an enriching experience for him, because originally it was established to





promote peace via education. It promoted students who later became leaders that continued with the idea of peace and tolerance. Hans Van Ginkel added that Japan at that time had been the major supporter of AIT boosting Higher Education in Asia and dealing with many important ESD-related issues such as urban development.

- ✓ UNESCO was quite clear on the topics that RCEs should address with intercultural relationships being important components of Sustainable Development (SD). Too much was focused on natural sciences. Even the sustainability goals set were mostly discussed from the poverty perspective. It was necessary to talk about SD from the human perspective. There was too much focus on the environment.

Mario Tabucanon closed the meeting by emphasizing the importance of political will, and the role of universities. In fact, universities ran the majority of RCEs. Leadership and coordination were important points, as was the sharing of examples and best practices. Finally, new topics such as peace had been introduced for ESD. Post-2014 seemed to be more about its people and the quality of life in general, rather than just the environment.