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**Engagement with Policy Makers**

**RCE Community Position Paper**

**1. Introduction**

**‘**Engagement with Policy Makers’ as a strategic issue for the global RCE community was discussed at the 6th Global RCE Conference in 2011. This paper is a reflection of last year’s discussion, and it is envisaged that it evolves as the RCE community continues to discuss leading to the 7th Global RCE Conference.

**2. Needs and Challenges**

The RCE mission and actions, being part of the global response to the UNDESD, should be mainstreamed into the global development agenda involving policy makers. This would give a clear message and enhance awareness on the virtues and values of RCEs, and could pave ways for getting resources. RCEs contributions are demonstrations of moving from policy to action, and along this line there is a need to train and build decision making capacities of policy makers – those in government, private and public organizations, and higher education institutions - on sustainability.

RCEs are challenged by how to formulate concrete and doable projects as well as secure resources. There may also be changing political environment where the successor is less enthusiastic than the predecessor on RCEs due to competing interests and varying priorities. RCEs need to be used appropriately and wary not be taken and used in a derogatory fashion. RCEs should consistently engage policy makers.

**3. Opportunities and Strategies**

 Opportunities can be harnessed through proper timing and by applying multi-stakeholder approach. Special events, elections of public servants through candidate platforms, and the like, may be capitalized to promote ESD. Developing community learning centers using existing policies and programs, and to actually engage policy makers in these endeavors, could be pursued.

 Timing and talking the language of policy makers would be advantageous. RCE leadership by example, demonstrating expertise and success stories as learning case studies, and use of the media are worthwhile strategies. It is also important to create assessment tools and reporting responsibility as part of the RCE strategy.

**4. Actions**

The identified actions are: (1) Immediate and strategic engagement with Ministries of Education; (2) Create opportunities around special events; (3) Engage with UNESCO national commissions; and (4) Embed the work of the RCEs in official national strategies. Other more general actions suggested were as follows: Embed in global official strategy or initiative; Media profile visibility; Keeping politicians informed; Branding; Engaging legal aspects; and a ‘Nobel prize’ in ESD.

**5. Follow-up Actions**

RCEs are asked to share what they have done with respect to the actions identified at

 the 6th Global RCE conference.

For the 7th Global RCE Conference, the group is asked to come up with a consensus decision on the following two points:

1. What are the key issues/challenges facing RCEs currently in the aspect of ‘Engagement with Policy Makers’; and
2. What are the top three things the group feels need to be discussed in person at the 7th Global RCE Conference?