

6th Asia-Pacific RCE Meeting and International Symposium on Sustainable Lifestyles

RCE Kitakyushu hosted the 6th RCE Asia-Pacific Meeting and International Symposium on Sustainable Lifestyles from 20-21 October 2013. Over 70 participants from 14 RCEs and one candidate RCE gathered in Kitakyushu, Japan and discussed various thematic as well as strategic issues including how to further strengthen inter-RCE collaboration and enhance ESD towards 2014 and beyond.

Ms. Katae Terasaka, President of Kitakyushu ESD Promotion Council (RCE Kitakyushu), which consists of 71 organizations and 37 individual members and Mr. Kenji Kitahashi, Mayor of Kitakyushu City opened the meeting with warm welcome. The programme of the first day included two-hour thematic discussion which allowed participants to share their ongoing activities on Youth, Community, Schools, Biodiversity and Disaster Risk Reduction and discuss common challenges that they face in the course of implementing the activities.

The second day was dedicated to envisioning the roadmap towards 2014 and beyond. Dr. Anwar Al-Said, Head of the Education Unit, UNESCO Office in Jakarta was invited to share the development of the post-2014 ESD Framework (Global Action Programme on ESD: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002223/222324e.pdf>) and the preparation of UNESCO World Conference on ESD which will be held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan in November 2014. Mr. Kazuhiko Takemoto, ESD Programme Director of UNU-IAS made a brief presentation in which he posed a crucial question for the following open discussion on how the RCE network can contribute to the effective implementation of the Global Action Programme. All sessions served as a trigger to the preparatory discussion for the forthcoming Global RCE Conference in Nairobi, Kenya.

The International Symposium on Sustainable Lifestyles was organized in conjunction with the Asia-Pacific RCE Meeting in the afternoon of 21 October. The objectives of the symposium was to share good learning cases on ESD by RCE members; to discuss issues on enhancing ESD in local communities in view of multi-stakeholder partnerships and community empowerment; and to identify the significant role of ESD for creating sustainable societies. 6 RCEs from Kyrgyzstan, Penang (Malaysia), Greater Phnom Penh (Cambodia), Greater Sendai (Japan), Srinagar (India) and Kitakyushu (Japan) presented their projects from the perspective of how ESD can possibly bring better changes to the communities.

The two-day meeting was of great success thanks to kind support of a number of volunteer staff from local universities and community-based organizations. Participants enjoyed various occasions of cultural exchange as well as the field visits to ESD Manabito Station (Manabito refers to 'leaner' in Japanese), symbolic sites of environmental model city such as local recycling facilities and a local primary school.

All the presentation materials and meeting minutes will be available soon at the UNU-IAS website.