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Education for Sustainable Development: Words into Actions

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United Nations University

- **Mission**

Addressing pressing global problems that are the concern of the UN, its Peoples and Member States

- **Key roles**

- International community of scholars
- Bridge between UN and academia
- Think-tank for the UN system
- Capacity building for researchers
- Platform for dialogues and creative ideas



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Core Values of UNU

- as a university:

“without fear or prejudice” to deal with issues
with full integrity and objectivity based on
institutional autonomy and academic freedom
guaranteed in UNU’s Charter



Core Values of UNU

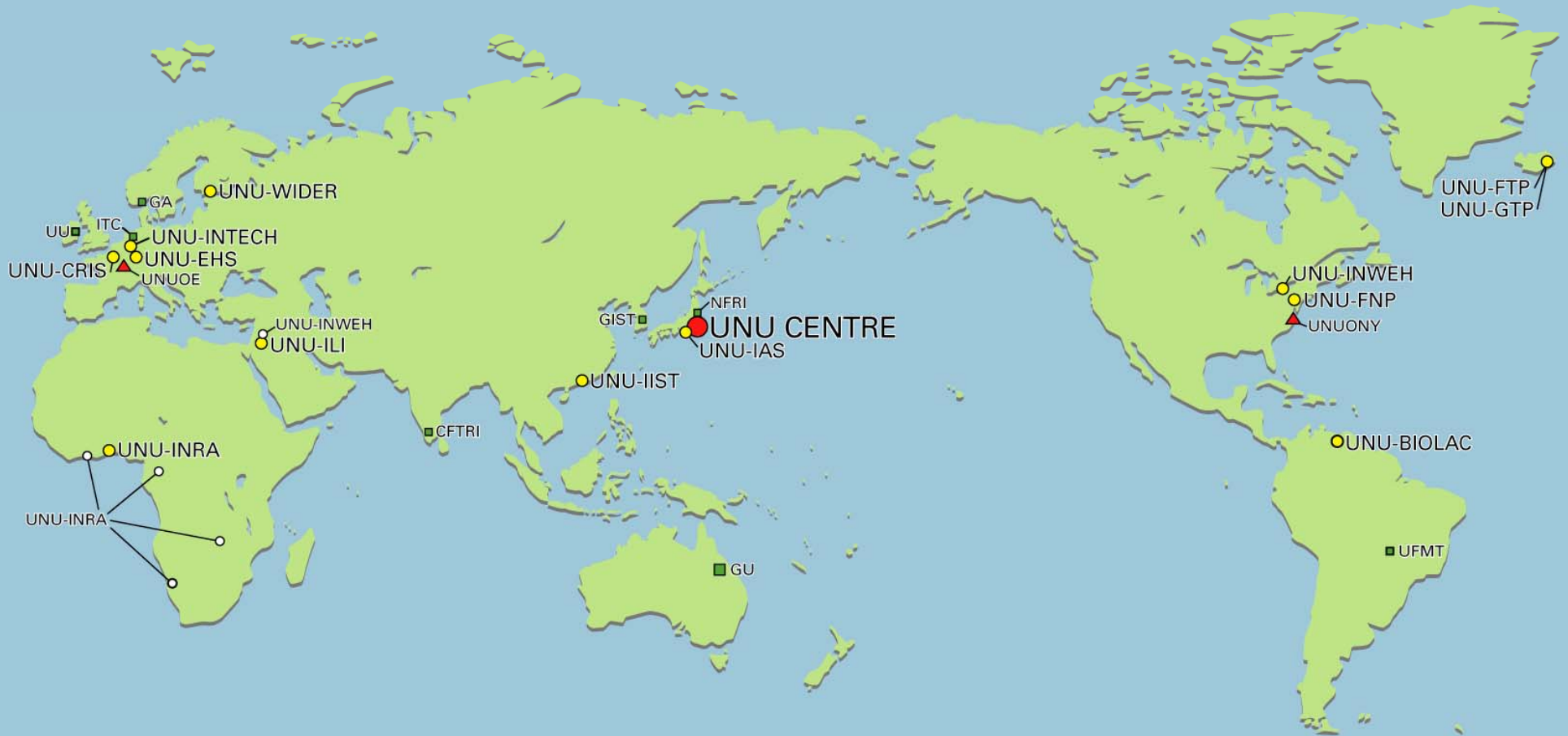
- as a UN organization:

to deal with issues in an open, constructive and forward-looking manner, focusing on UN's agenda to "promote peace and progress" as indicated in UNU's Charter



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UNU WORLDWIDE



● RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTRE/PROGRAMME

■ ASSOCIATED INSTITUTION

○ OPERATING UNIT

▲ UNU LIAISON OFFICE



Four Major Thrusts of EfSD (as defined by Chapter 36, Agenda 21 and confirmed in Johannesburg, WSSD)

- Improve access to quality basic education;
- Reorient existing education programmes to address sustainable development;
- Develop public understanding and awareness on sustainable development; and
- Provide training programmes for all sectors of private and civil society.



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WSSD and Ubuntu Alliance

- During the WSSD, UNU coordinated an international initiative on education for sustainable development called the Ubuntu Alliance
- Partnership between the major education and the science and technology organisations of the world
- The basis of the initiative is the Ubuntu Declaration that commits its members towards strengthening education and S&T for sustainable development.





Ubuntu Declaration

- Signed by 11 of world foremost educational and scientific/technological institutions at the Johannesburg Summit in 2002.
- Main goals include:
 - To strengthen collaboration between science & technology researchers and educators;
 - To better integrate science & technology into educational programmes for sustainable development (all subjects - all levels);
 - To strengthen cooperation between formal, non-formal and informal education.



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Ubuntu Alliance

- International Council for Science (ICSU)
- Academy of Sciences for Developing World (TWAS)
- Science Council of Asia (SCA)
- African Academy of Science (AAS)
- World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO)
- Global Higher Education for Sustainability Partnership (GHESP)
- International Association of Universities (IAU)
- Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF)
- Copernicus-Campus
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations University (UNU)
- New members: UNEP, IUCN since 2006



Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), 2005-2014

- Proposed in Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in 2002
- Adopted by UN General Assembly in December 2002
- The International Implementation Scheme (IIS) for DESD was approved in September 2005.
- Governments are invited to consider the measures to implement DESD in their educational strategies and action plans.





UNU's DESD Vision

- Creation of Global Learning Space -

- Create a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transition (Global Learning Space)



What is Education for Sustainable Development (EfSD)?

- Broader concept than environmental education.
- Not sustainable development education, but education for sustainable development
- It is an education to enable all people to better contribute to sustainable development of their own and other societies



What is EfSD ? (cont'd)

- EfSD should enhance the capacity for critical thinking:
 - To understand complexity
 - To consider values and norms
 - To contribute in practical ways to promote sustainable development
- EfSD is not a topic that can be taught in a few weeks just at a certain age
- EfSD should be integrated in all sectors of education, and at all levels in relation to relevant, already existing subjects.



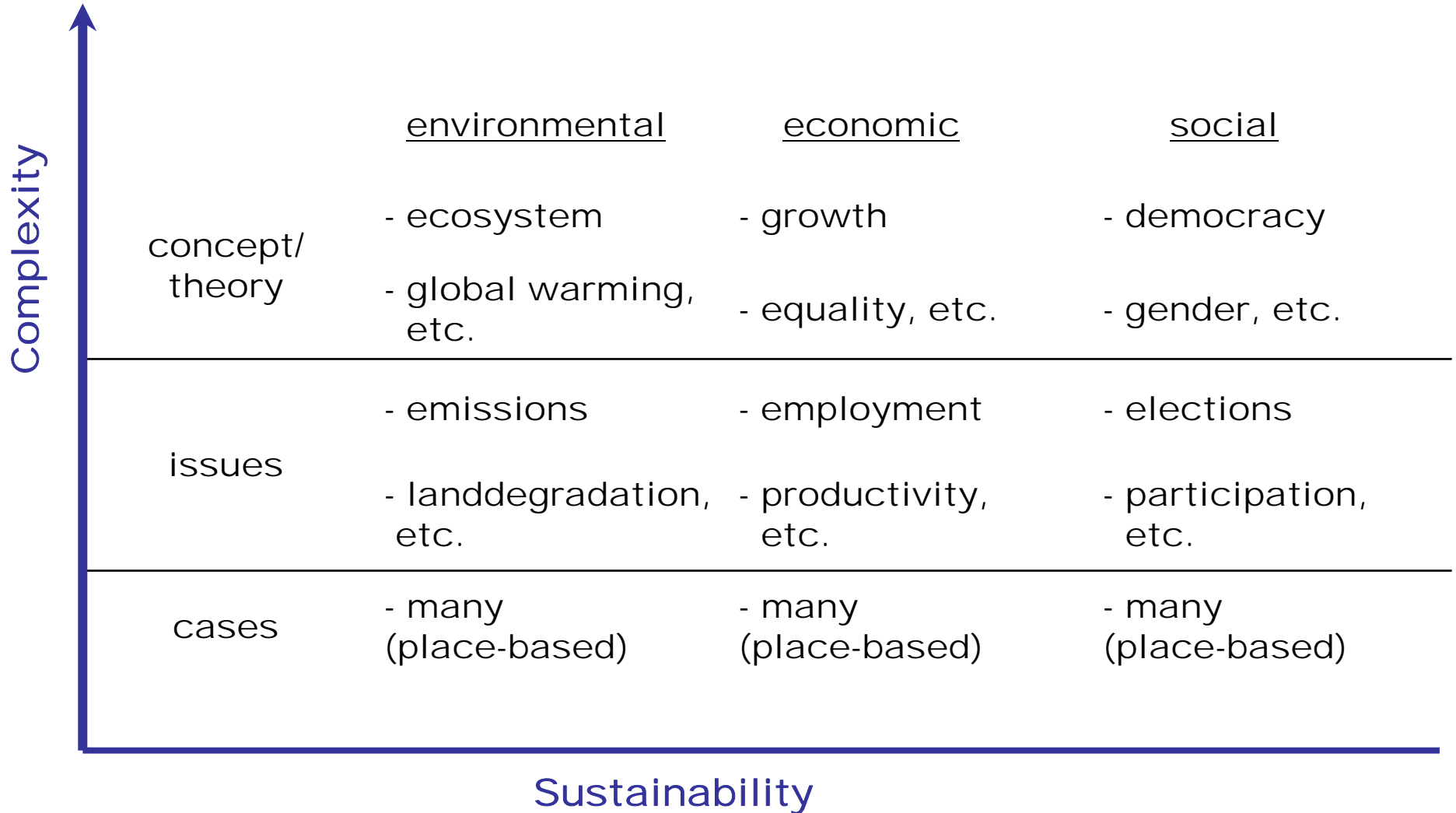
Core Questions to be Answered by Research

1. What are the crucial concepts/theories/issues that must be part of all ESD?
2. What is the most appropriate structure in which these concepts/theories/issues should be incorporated in the educational programmes ?
3. or: What should be taught ?
Where and When and in What form (in 4-24) ?
4. How to develop integrated projects, appropriately related to the SD-elements in regular subjects?
5. How to stepwise phase in such renewals in regular education?



Dimensions of EfSD

1. Sustainability / Substance
 - environmental
 - economic
 - social
2. Complexity/ Abstraction
 - concepts
 - issues
 - cases
3. Knowledge process
 - generation
 - management
 - customization
 - transfer
4. Age/Level
 - formal
 - non-formal
 - informal





DESD and Other Initiatives

DESD can only be successful together with other UN initiatives, such as:

- Millennium Development Goals (MDG)
- Education for All (EFA)
- UN Literacy Decade (UNLD)
- Climate Change Initiatives
- Culture of Peace/Dialogue among Civilizations

∴ In fact EFA and ESD are two sides of the same coin.



UNU Strategy to Promote EfSD

To contribute to the creation of a Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development through :

1. Advocacy and dissemination of EfSD and the DESD;
2. Promotion of regional centres of expertise on EfSD (RCEs) and their regional and thematic networking;
3. Strengthening of EfSD activities of higher education institutions;
4. Further development of on-line learning for EfSD;
5. Training of teachers and trainers on EfSD.



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Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development

Rimington states that a Global Learning Space is the:

- "combination of global reach using modern communication technologies, with global perspectives;
- achieved through the interaction of students and faculty living in different geographic locations with diverse cultural backgrounds, to produce the "global graduate."

There are two important precursors to create this Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development



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First Precursor for the Global Learning Space for EfSD

- Tied into a network of nodes and hubs.
- UNU is, therefore mobilizing Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on Education for Sustainable Development under the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.





What is an RCE?

- A building block/anchor of the GLS proposed by United Nations University
- A network of institutions of formal, non-formal and informal education which are mobilized to deliver EfSD to a regional (sub-national) community.
- RCEs aspire to achieve the goals of DESD by translating its global objectives into the context of the regions, in which the respective RCEs operate.



Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on *EfSD*

Formal education

(Research centers)

Universities

Universities

Secondary
Schools

Secondary
Schools

Primary
Schools

Primary
Schools

Non-formal education

*Knowledge-related
institutions*

(Science) museums

Botanical gardens

Nature parks

Local Governments

Community leaders

Media

Local businesses

Local NGOs

Vertical links

Lateral
links

Horizontal links



Tasks for RCEs

- RCEs will create a platform for dialogue among regional/local EfSD stakeholders and contribute to developing collaboration among different regional EfSD stakeholders;
- RCEs will develop a relevant regional knowledge base.
- RCEs will assist in promoting vertical alignment of curricula from primary through university education and in linking the formal and non-formal sectors of the education community.



Characteristics of RCEs

- RCEs should not be too small, but not too big as well.
- We expect a few key institutions, including higher education institutions, to take a leading role in the RCE activities.
- RCEs would facilitate collaborative activities among different stakeholders.



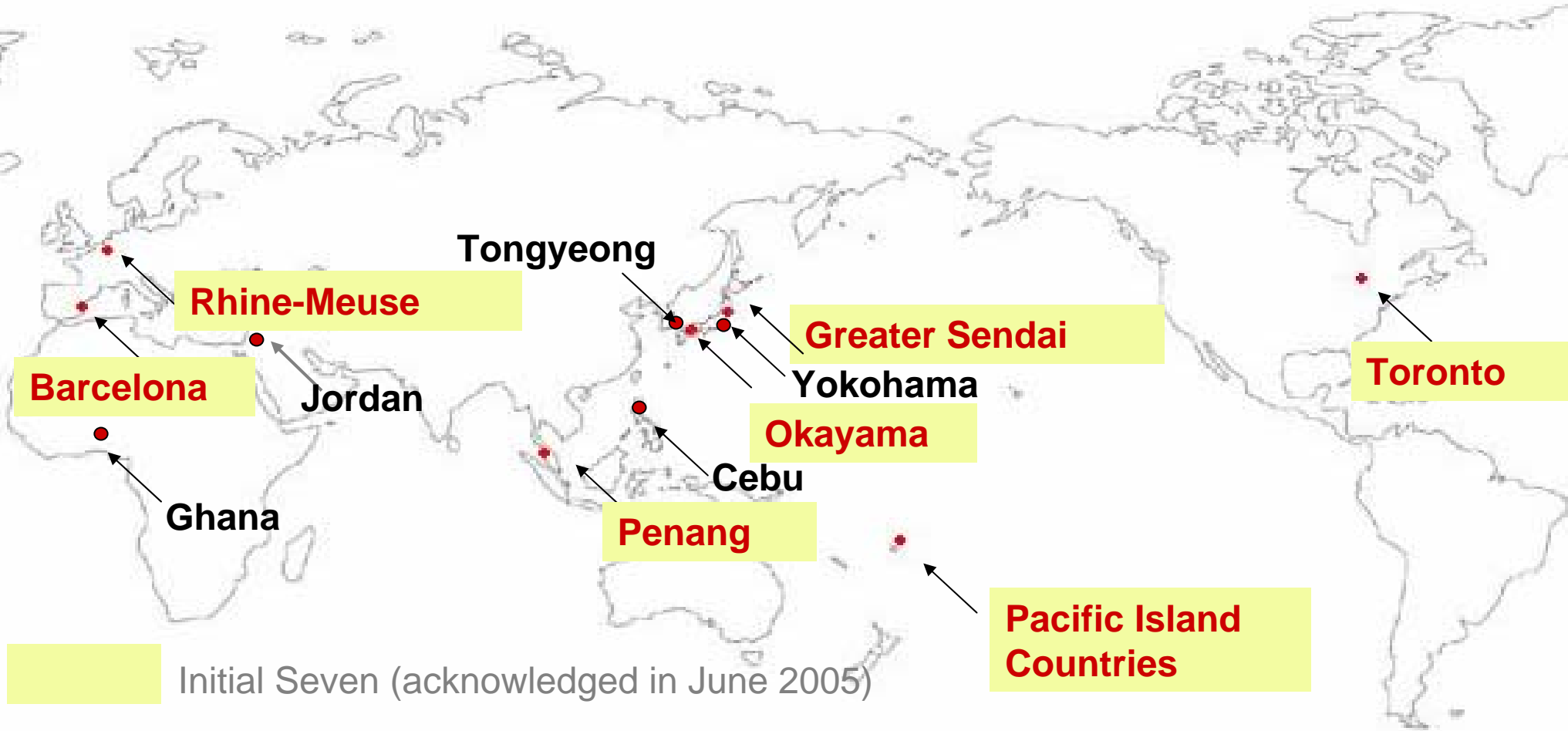
Role of Higher Education Institutions/Expert Institutions in promoting RCE activities

- Higher education Institutions/Expert Institutions are expected to play key roles for developing and implementing RCE activities;
- They should bring the best of knowledge from natural and social sciences as well as the humanities;
- They should further integrate this knowledge into the best of educational practices of their community and partners in other regions.



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12 RCEs acknowledged by April 2006



Initial Seven (acknowledged in June 2005)

Pacific Island
Countries



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35 RCEs in July 2007



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RCEs in Asia Pacific



Previously Acknowledged RCEs:

1. Greater Sendai
2. Okayama
3. Penang
4. Pacific
5. Tongyeong
6. Cebu
7. Yokohama

New RCEs:

1. Anji, China
2. Beijing, China
3. Guwahati, India
4. Kodagu, India
5. Lucknow, India
6. Pune, India
7. Bogor, Indonesia
8. Kitakyushu, Japan
9. Kyrgyz Republic
10. Incheon, Republic Korea
11. Trang, Thailand



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RCEs in Europe

Previously Acknowledged RCEs:

1. Rhine-Meuse
2. Barcelona

New RCEs:

1. Southern North Sea
2. Hamburg, Germany
3. Munich, Germany
4. Skane, Sweden
5. East Midlands, UK





RCEs and the Global Learning Space for EfSD

- RCEs together and their mutual relations would contribute to the Global Learning Space (GLS) for sustainable development – a visible output of DESD
- UNU commits to promote RCEs and their networking throughout DESD and established the Global RCE Service Centre in UNU-IAS.



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Second Precursor for the Global Learning Space

The Global Learning Space will evolve out of a wide range of thematic networks and online learning projects that promote collaboration between a diverse range of institutions.



Online Learning Projects

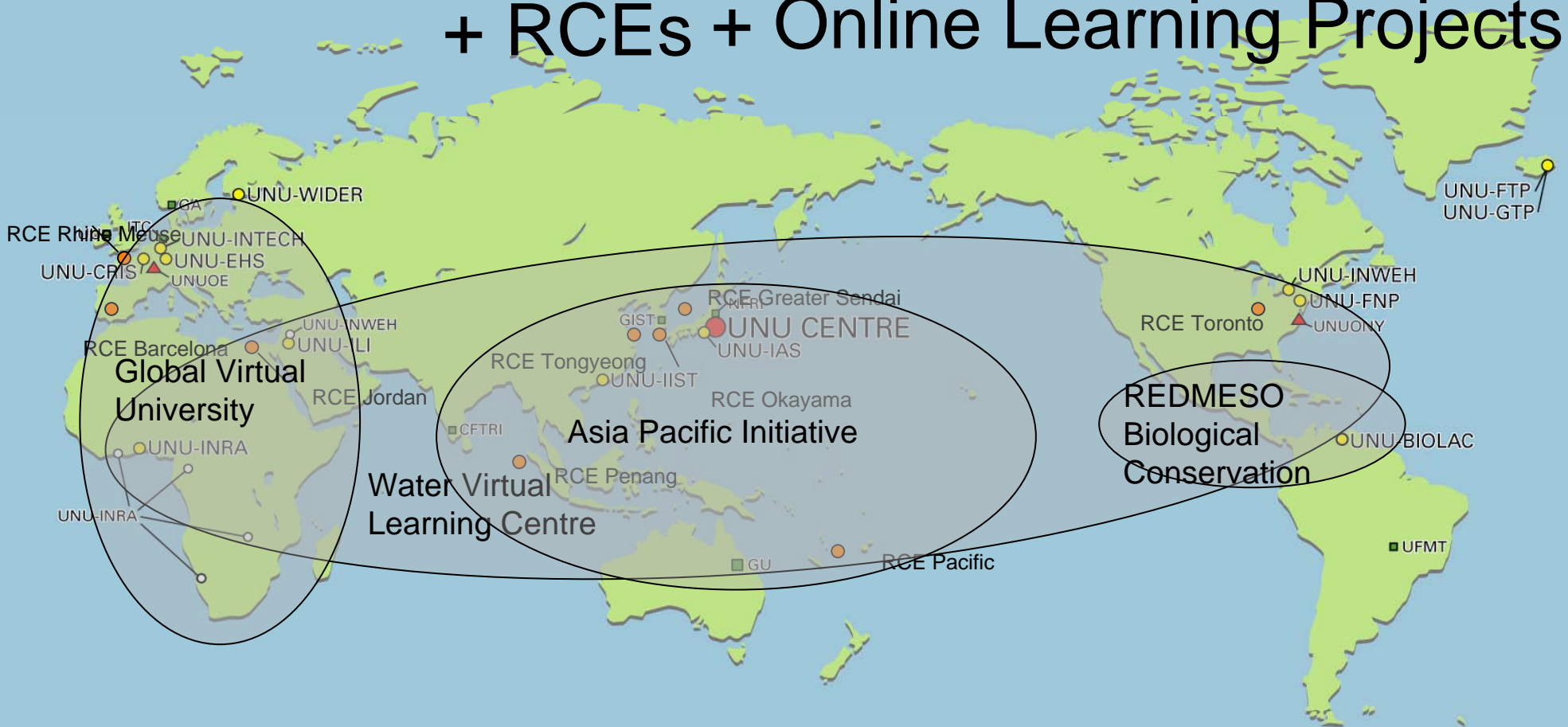
- UNU Global Virtual University was launched at the WSSD in 2002 and focuses especially on linking African and European universities.
- Asia Pacific Initiative: Linking universities in the US, Japan, Fiji, Samoa, India and Thailand.
- UN Water Virtual Learning Centre: open to all, but linking in particular universities in Canada, Ghana, Thailand and Fiji.
- REDMESO: Collaboration with 25 public universities in Mexico, Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Honduras and Guatemala in particular preparing e-cases.
- IUCN-UNU Alliance to support the World Conservation Learning Network.




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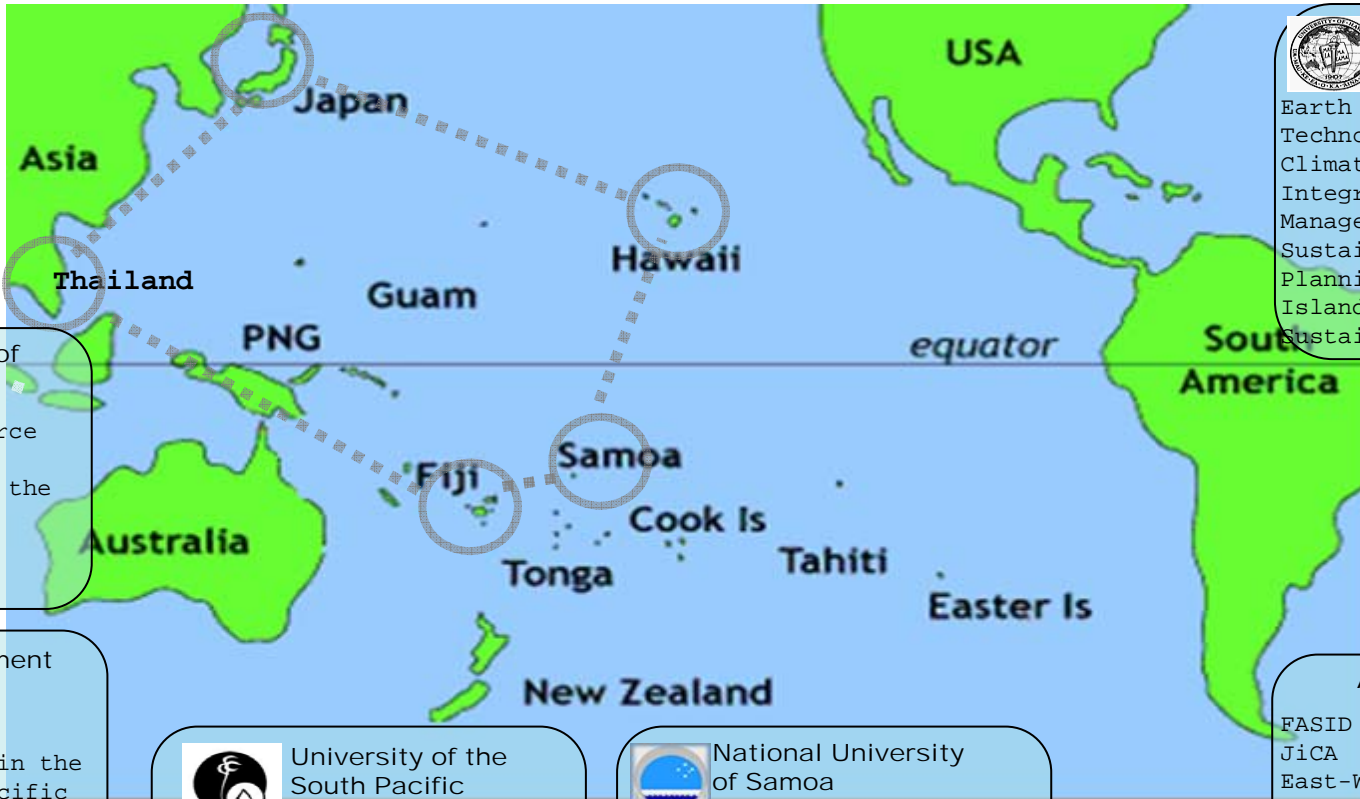
+ RCEs + Online Learning Projects




United Nations University
 Human Development & Environment
 MEAs & Environmental Governance
 Water Resource Managm't
 Sustainable Agriculture

 Keio University
 Curriculum Introduction
 Kyoto Protocol:
 Negotiations & Impacts


 University of Ryukyu
 Coral Reef Management
 Landscape Diversity and Ecosystem Functions of Coral Reefs
 Coastal Zone Planning




 University of Hawaii
 Earth Observing Technologies
 Climate Change
 Integrated Coastal Zone Management
 Sustainable Development Planning
 Island Land Use Planning
 Sustainable Agriculture

 Asian Institute of Technology
 Integrated Water Resource Management
 Poverty Alleviation in the Greater Mekong

 Asian Development Bank
 Economic Development in the Greater Mekong and Pacific Islands
 Water Resource Management

 University of the South Pacific
 Terrestrial, Freshwater and Marine Biogeography
 Sustainable Fisheries
 Community Based Marine Conservation

 National University of Samoa
 Land and Marine based
 Chemical Pollution
 Waste Water and Solid Waste Management
 Sustainable Agriculture

Additional Lectures
 FASID
 JiCA
 East-West Center
 Research Institute for the Sub-Tropics
 Pacific Is. Global Ocean Observing System
 Int'l Society for Mangrove Ecosystems1



Conclusion

UNU focuses on:

1. mobilization through RCEs;
2. communication to establish the GLS;
3. programmatic developments in EfSD, both through the RCEs and group(s) of experts within the Ubuntu Alliance;
4. good cooperation with all who are prepared to contribute; in the UN system: UNESCO and UNEP.



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Thank you very much