

SUMMARY
8th World Environmental Education Congress
Gothenburg, Sweden
29 June- July 2, 2015



Background

- The **8th World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC7)** took place in Gothenburg, Sweden from June 29- July 2, 2015;
- The theme for WEEC7 was “*Planet and People- how can they develop together?*”, and included 11 thematic areas;
- Over 800 participants from different countries globally who either worked or had an interest in Education for Environment and Sustainable Development attended the congress;
- The Congress was hosted by **University of Gothenburg** and **Chalmers University of Technology** through the **Centre for Environment and Sustainability** together with the **WEEC Permanent Secretariat**;

GUPES Related Events

- **Opening Ceremony and Opening Plenary:** Mr. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, sent a video message that was played during the opening ceremony of WEEC 8. He emphasized on taking action on what we learn to achieve sustainable living;
- **GUPES Partnerships Forum (Side Event):** EETU organized a side event on GUPES, which featured 50 participants, and included presentations by UNEP members and representatives from academia and other organizations from Africa, Latin and North America, Asia-Pacific and Europe. The forum also featured interactive discussions with 8 panelists, GUPES strategic review and **Greening Universities Toolkit Vol 2** presentations;
- **International Training Programme on ESD in Higher Education (Workshop):** EETU organized a workshop on developing a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on ESD through

South- North Collaboration through the International Training Program, which was moderated by Mariam Osman, Environmental Education Specialist, EETU;

- **Sustainable Campuses: Universities Walking the Talk (Symposia):** EETU organized a GUPES symposia that focused on discussions and share best practices on sustainable campuses, as part of whole institution approaches under the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development;
- **GUPES Steering Committee Meeting:** The third meeting of the GUPES Steering Committee was held in the evening of 28 June 2015. Representatives from 5 GUPES regions were present. An update on GUPES progress over the past year was presented, with focus on 3 pillars: education, training and networking. The meeting called for complete transformation of the GUPES network in terms of management, networking and activities;
- **Closing Plenary:** Mahesh Pradhan, Chief of the Environmental Education and Training Unit (EETU), participated in the closing plenary session held on 2 July 2015. The main topic of the plenary session was *"The end of the Decade for Sustainable Development."* The six panelists evaluated the progress of WEEC 2015 and their thoughts on the achievements after the end of the decade and the outlook post decade. Mr. Pradhan highlighted the regional role in promoting Education for Sustainable Development and importance of partnerships/networks to promote environment education such as GUPES.

Follow-up

- **WEEC Permanent Secretariat:** The 9th World Environmental Education Congress will take place in Vancouver, Canada in 2017. EETU to follow up / liaise for this Congress;
- **GUPES Steering Committee:** The next steering committee will be held on Sept 14, 2016 in Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston;
- **Eye on Earth Summit 2015:** The summit will take place in Abu Dhabi, UAE, on 6-8 October 2015. EETU will present updates on GUPES, and regional networks in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Also, have a session on Green campus during which the Greening Universities Toolkit Vol 2 will be launched.
- **Higher for Sustainable Development Initiative (HESI) Event 2015:** It will be held in Marseille France on Oct14, 2015. EETU to follow up on GUPES involvement

