

# GLOBAL UNIVERSITIES PARTNERSHIP ON ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY (GUPES)

*Enhancing the quality, policy, practice and relevance of university education globally in the context of sustainable development-taking into account UNEP's priority thematic areas and the emerging paradigm of Green Economy*



## GUPES

is a flagship networking programme of UNEP's Environmental Education and Training Unit (EETU).

### GUPES Overall Goal

To promote the integration of environment and sustainability concerns into teaching, research, community engagement, the management of universities, greening of university infrastructure/facilities/operations, as well as to enhance student engagement and participation in sustainability activities both within and beyond universities.

### Developmental objective

To enhance the quality, policy, practice and relevance of university education globally in the context of sustainable development, taking into account the emerging paradigm of Green Economy.



## CONTACT:

Environmental Education & Training Unit (EETU)  
Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI)  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
P.O. Box 30552,  
00100 Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: +254-20-7624101;  
Fax: +254-20-7623917  
E-mail: env.edu@unep.org



## GUPES Objectives

- To provide a strategic platform for the mainstreaming of environment and sustainability concerns into university systems across the world, and to facilitate inter-university networking on sustainability issues with emphasis on South-South and North-South tertiary partnerships;
- To build, through university education systems, a professional capacity and leadership needed for the prevention of and responses to environmental issues, risks and associated sustainable development challenges;
- To contribute to revitalizing the global higher education system and enabling it to address current sustainable development challenges with emphasis on UNEP's six thematic priorities;
- To contribute to the knowledge generation within UNEP's six priority thematic areas and other contemporary environmental and sustainability issues, risks and challenges;
- To optimize development opportunities provided by ecosystem services in a sustainable manner in line with the principles of "Green Economy" and in the context of sustainable development;
- To help prepare the world for the projected impacts of global *climate change, disasters and conflicts, harmful substances and hazardous wastes*, as well as to assist in reversing and mitigating these and other negative environmental and sustainability trends.

## GUPES Pillars

The programmes, projects, activities and initiatives of GUPES are guided by the pillars of the Environmental Education and Training Unit (EETU) namely: *Education, Training and Networking*



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## GUPES strategic approach in the Regions

GUPES seeks to build on and partner with other existing regional higher education networks in pursuit of its objectives. It recognizes the following regional networks among others:

- Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in African Universities (MESA) partnership
- Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in Caribbean Universities (MESCA) partnership
- Asia Pacific Regional University Consortium on Environment for Sustainable Development (RUC-AP) among others.

GUPES is also seeking partnerships with other regional and global higher education movements which have concern for environment and sustainability.

### GUPES governance structure and instruments of governance

#### *The GUPES interim steering committee*

GUPES is currently governed by an interim steering committee that was constituted on November 19, 2010 at the consultative forum in Nairobi. The steering committee is headed by the interim chair – Prof. WU Jiang, Vice President of Tongji University, and 2 regional representatives from each of the UNEP regions as follows:

**Africa:** Prof. Heila Lotz-Sisitka and Prof. Samuel Ndonwi Ayongbe;

**Europe :** Dr. Ing. Rolf Bauer and Prof. John Holmberg;

**Latin America & the Caribbean :** Prof. Marceline Collins-Figueroa and Mr. Waldo Montecinos;

**Asia - Pacific:** Prof. Lawrence Surendra and Prof. M. Sivakumar;

**North America -** Prof. Nay Htun and Prof. Peter Blaze Corcoran; and

**West Asia:** yet to be identified.

Dr. Akpezi Ogbuigwe (the immediate former head of the Environmental Education and Training Unit at UNEP was nominated as the advisor of GUPES.

#### *The GUPES instruments of governance*

The GUPES Charter (draft).

The GUPES By-laws (draft).

### Achievements and milestones of GUPES todate(2012)

#### a). Network of universities around the world

GUPES currently has a network of 116 universities and 10 partners distributed across the various UNEP regions as follows: Africa – 82; Asia – Pacific - 7; West Asia – 2; Europe – 6; Latin America and the Caribbean – 11; North America – 8.

#### b). Meetings and conferences

GUPES has successfully held the following meetings:

- The GUPES Consultative meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya from 18 – 19 November 2010
- The GUPES high level planning, sharing and learning meeting held at the Universidad Andrés Bello, Santiago, Chile from 5-6 September 2011.
- The GUPES Green Room Event held on 22 February 2011 on the Margins of the UNEP Governing Council in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The GUPES Green Room Event held on 22 February 2012 on the Margins of the UNEP Governing Council in Nairobi, Kenya.

#### c). Publications

- Higher Education guidelines for curriculum review and reorientation towards Sustainable Development;
- Source Book for a masters level curriculum on Ecosystems Management;
- Source Book for a masters level curriculum on the Green Economy;
- Greening Universities Toolkit;
- Report of the GUPES high level Planning, Sharing and Learning Meeting (Santiago, September, 2011);
- Report of the GUPES Consultative Meeting (Nairobi, November, 2010);
- Draft Implementation Strategy of the GUPES (Nairobi, November, 2010);



**Why join GUPES?** *Network, Share, Consult, Learn, ...and together contribute to sustainable development through innovations in higher education.*

**How to join GUPES:** *Simply submit an expression of interest to the Environmental Education and Training Unit (EETU) at UNEP.*





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