

Regional workshop of UNESCO Natural Sciences related Centres and Chairs in Asia and the Pacific

**Strengthening Interaction and Knowledge Exchange
between UNESCO Natural Sciences related Centres
and Chairs in Asia and the Pacific to promote South-
South Cooperation**

29 - 30 November 2017

Penang, Malaysia

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Background

The current year 2015 is a critical moment globally for the transition into the Post-2015 Development Agenda as new framework for global development efforts. With the mandate to promote international cooperation in education, the sciences, culture, communication and information, UNESCO's contribution to the Agenda 2030 is essential. UNESCO is mobilizing all its strengths for building the sustainable, inclusive, knowledge societies needed for the century ahead.

The draft of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 'outcome document' includes 17 goals and 169 targets, where the universality of Science and its critical role for poverty eradication and sustainable development has been highlighted. As stated by the UNESCO Director-General in the High Level Segment of ECOSOC, "*investment in science is investment in food and water security, renewable energy, disaster risk reduction and resilience to climate change. It is about peace and prosperity for all.*" Moreover, networking will be critical in the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, since the proposed SDG no. 17 refers to "strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development".

The programmes of UNESCO in Natural Sciences have been able to expand their cooperation beyond the network of the traditional intermediaries – what may be called the "UNESCO Natural Sciences family": National Commissions, UNESCO Chairs, Category 2 Institutes and Centres, clubs and associations, National Committees of intergovernmental programmes and specialized networks, such as the Associated Schools Project Network. Within this variety of partners, Category 2 Centres and Chairs play an important role as they expand the capacities and effectiveness to carry out activities, promote the outreach, impact and visibility at all levels, broaden the support base and mobilize resources, and create synergies among all communities of UNESCO.

UNESCO Category 2 Centres and Chairs are independent of UNESCO and are associated with the Organization through individual arrangements, as approved by the UNESCO governing body - the General Conference -. These Centres and Chairs perform research, advanced training, contribute to the execution of UNESCO's programmes, and increase the participation of national and regional institutions in UNESCO's work.

In Asia-Pacific region, the Category 2 Centres and Chairs have the capacity to provide a tangible contribution towards the realization of not only Natural Sciences' objectives and priorities as

stated in the UNESCO Medium Term Strategy but also towards the implementation of the SDGs in the Post-2015 framework. The Category 2 Centres and Chairs can contribute by expanding and strengthening the UNESCO's global and regional outreach, and providing an collective impact, given that the competencies, scope of expertise, as well as training opportunities that they offer. Their dissemination is also an added value to strengthen North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

In 2015, UNESCO Office, Jakarta, in cooperation with Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE), International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre for South-South Cooperation Under the Auspices of UNESCO (ISTIC), and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) organized a Regional Workshop of UNESCO Natural Sciences related Centres and Chairs in Asia and the Pacific, in Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA. The workshop recommended:

1. The UNESCO Natural Sciences related Category 2 Centres and Chairs in Asia and the Pacific Region are highly encouraged to build a strong regional science network to promote interaction, knowledge sharing and joint activities.
2. The network of UNESCO Natural Sciences related Category 2 Centres and Chairs in Asia and the Pacific region will encourage active links with Africa to strengthen the South-South and triangular cooperation in STI.
3. The UNESCO Regional Science Bureau for Asia and the Pacific will continue to mobilize and provide necessary support to the UNESCO's Natural Sciences family in the region for the successful delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Post-2015.

In response to the above recommendations, UNESCO Office Jakarta will facilitate UNESCO Natural Sciences related Centres and Chairs in Asia and the Pacific through a workshop to strengthened the Interaction and Knowledge Exchange as well as to promote South-South Cooperation with centres in the African Region.

Scope of the workshop

This workshop is organized in order to strengthening South-South cooperation between Natural Sciences Category 2 Centres and Chairs in the Asia-Pacific region as well as other region. A strong and efficient Science network in the region will be critical to support the implementation of the Agenda 2030 in the upcoming years.

The following actions will be the outcomes of the workshop:

- Strengthened cooperation and collaboration among Natural Sciences Category 2 Centres and Chairs in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Strengthened the South-South Cooperation through networking and collaboration among Natural Sciences Category 2 Centres and Chairs in the Asia-Pacific with the other region such as Africa.
- Action and implementation plan on partnership and knowledge exchange on science research and sustainable development among Natural Sciences Category 2 Centres and Chairs.

This workshop is organized with the valuable support of the Malaysian Funds-in-Trust.

Workshop details

The workshop will take place on 29-30 November 2017 in Penang, Malaysia

The workshop aims to bring together around 60 participants, including international scientists from the Asia Pacific and African region and National Commissions for UNESCO of the cluster office.

Workshop Program

The tentative programme will be elaborated according to the availability of participants.

Proposed sessions:

1. UNESCO Medium Term Strategy and Regional Bureau's Science Support Strategy
2. UNESCO Science Family Actions in Asia Pacific in the framework of SDGs
3. Strategic plan for South-south Cooperation
4. Strategic plan to support Agenda 2030

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