

### 1. Summary

This research proposal aims to examine the current policy and institutional frameworks for promoting stakeholder empowerment and capacity development in the context of pursuing environmental management and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. It intends to analyse the impacts of such policies and activities. It is designed to explore effective policies and measures for empowering stakeholders and forging social capacities.

This research proposal is intended to provide an overarching and cross-cutting framework for undertaking research work on stakeholder empowerment and capacity development components for major thematic and inter-disciplinary issues. In this context, this proposed research shall be undertaken maintaining close linkages with the other research projects and activities of IGES to the extent that they are related to such components.

The proposed research focuses on the elements that are vital in empowering stakeholders and enhancing capacity development in the context of sustainable development, namely (i) access to environmental information, (ii) stakeholder empowerment, partnership building and capacity development, and (iii) environmental education/education for sustainable development. Under the proposed research, relevant policies, measures and institutional issues shall be analysed in terms of three sub-components. At the same time, the proposed research is intended to draw generic factors and co-relations in the domain of human resource and social capacity development through integrating the three sub-components. The aim is to explore conditions and mechanisms conducive to enhancing people's knowledge in a way to catalyse their behavioural changes and to improve environmental performance. Inductive analysis of empirical studies should provide perspectives for future actions required not just at the national level, but also at the regional and international levels.

Access to environmental information is a strategic policy tool for changing people's behaviour toward achieving sustainable development. Under this sub-component on access to environmental information, general policies on information disclosure and access shall be analysed. It is intended to examine the impacts of information on people's perceptions and behaviour as well as their implications for environmental performance. From an international perspective, a comparative analysis will be conducted of regional and sub-regional collaboration for promoting access to environmental information taking into account the current status in Asia and the Pacific, as well as other regions. Based on such regional and sub-regional policy reviews and comparative analysis, elements of a regional action plan will be suggested to facilitate regional collaboration on the promotion of access to environmental information.

Informed individuals may not be able to make positive contributions to improving environmental management and pursuing sustainable development unless they organise themselves and establish mechanisms and partnerships for creating collective actions toward achieving such policy goals. Communities and stakeholder groups need to be better organised in order to operate efficiently. There have emerged a number of innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships in specific sectors. Several cases shall be reviewed and analysed to draw key factors to successful partnership building. Based on such case studies, models will be developed of key factors to multi-stakeholder partnership activities for promoting environmental

management and sustainable development, and to indicate a general direction of policy and institutional reforms for the region.

Education remains an underlying factor in promoting stakeholder empowerment and capacity development. Countries in Asia and the Pacific have not yet reoriented educational practices, systems and structures to promote ESD (education for sustainable development). It also remains vital to build upon the convergence of formal, non-formal and informal education with a view to enhancing the overall effectiveness of ESD. Particular attention shall be given to the regional centres of expertise for ESD (RCEs), specifically established for supporting the activities within the framework of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. RCEs are expected to provide innovative platforms for sharing information and experiences, and promoting dialogue among regional/local stakeholders through partnerships for sustainable development.

An overall goal of this proposed research is therefore to examine the operation of policy measures for improving people's knowledge and creating enabling frameworks for stakeholders to undertake collective actions in partnership toward pursuing environmental management and sustainable development. Education and human resource development should be thus linked with information measures and partnership building. These factors constitute a social capacity that shall be assessed and bolstered in an integrated manner to achieve sustainable development. This research aims provide analysis and recommendations for fostering overall social capacity in the pursuit of sustainable development.

## **2. Background**

Stakeholder empowerment and capacity development are prerequisites to achieving sustainable development, as is underlined in Agenda 21 of 1992 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of 2002. In the Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific of 2005, it was reaffirmed that sustainable development shall be encouraged as a component of education at all levels and that public awareness shall be enhanced in this respect. In this connection, access to information plays a complementary role to education. Partnership building is another aspect that is important to promote capacity development for sustainable development. For these reasons, three sub-components are proposed for this research as follows:

### Access to environmental information

Access to environmental information is a strategic policy tool in changing people's behaviour toward achieving sustainable development. The provision of information on environment and sustainable development will enable stakeholders to enhance their ability to understand, decide, act and review issues on the environment and sustainable development. People must have accurate information based on the best knowledge at the time in order to reach optimal decisions on natural resource management and livelihood development.

Many countries in Asia and the Pacific do not have proper legal or institutional frameworks for promoting access to environmental information as assessed by the World Resource Institute (WRI) under The Access Initiative (TAI). Appropriate policy and institutional frameworks therefore need to be developed in the region in order to deliver proper information in a timely and equitable manner. Symmetric information provision is a fundamental basis for enabling stakeholders to reach optimal decisions on the management of natural resources and the

environment.

The information to be addressed in this sub-component can be divided into three categories, namely, (i) information possessed by government, (ii) information possessed by the private sector, and (iii) information that is already in the common realm. Local people must be able have access to, for instance, an environmental impact assessment (EIS) report on mining projects in timely manner and the government must make available such a report to the public promptly. At the same time, the mining company must disclose, for instance, information on the level of pH, SS and heavy metals.

Consumers are increasingly vigilant to the contents/components and production/processing methods of various products. Private companies are also encouraged to report not only on financial statements, but also on environmental and social aspects of their operations. The information already in the public domain needs to be shared properly for all who need it in a timely manner.

Building upon the national analysis, comparative analysis of regional or sub-regional collaboration for promoting access to environmental information will be undertaken taking into account the current status in Asia and the Pacific, and the specific regional initiatives in other regions such as Europe, and the Americas. European countries collectively pursue such policy goals under the framework of the Aarhus Convention. So do Latin American and Caribbean countries under a regional strategy adopted under the auspices of the Organisation of American States. Such a region-wide policy framework doesn't yet exist in the Asia-Pacific region even though some reporting requirements emerge in the context of implementing multilateral environmental agreements. Based on such regional, sub-regional and inter-regional policy reviews and comparative analysis, we aim to explore elements of a regional action plan to be suggested for facilitating regional collaboration on the promotion of access to environmental information.

#### Stakeholder empowerment, partnership building and capacity development

Education for environment/sustainable development and access to environmental information needs to be promoted in holistic ways that look beyond their respective thematic issues in order to enhance the overall social capacity for effectively pursuing environmental management and sustainable development. Educated and informed individuals may not be able to make positive contributions to improve environmental management and to pursue sustainable development unless they organise themselves and establish mechanisms and partnerships for collective actions toward achieving such policy goals. Communities and stakeholder groups need to be better organised in order to be operational efficiently. They need to collaborate, for instance, with local governments, business and NGO groups. There emerge a number of innovative modalities for promoting stakeholder participation and multi-stakeholder partnerships in specific sectors such as waste management, sewage treatment, water supply, eco-product development, renewable energy development, local transport system development and ecosystem management. Several cases shall be reviewed and analysed to draw key factors in successful partnership building. Based on such case studies, models of key factors in multi-stakeholder partnership activities will be developed in order to promote environmental management and sustainable development, and to indicate a general direction of policy and institutional reforms for the region.

#### ESD

Education in the context of promoting environmental management and sustainable development has been undertaken, first, as environmental education (EE), and thereafter as education for sustainable development (ESD) that broadly covers environmental and socio-economic issues. Building upon EE models, ESD has been undertaken mainly in three forms: formal education (formal school education), non-formal education (educational programmes/activities outside of formal school education), and informal education (educational activities by households, communities and media). Each has its own strengths, distinctive roles and demonstrated achievements while each encounters its own challenges. At the same time, all three forms of ESD create an inseparable basis for overall human resource development.

Countries in Asia and the Pacific need to facilitate the development and implementation of ESD action plans as recommended by the UN General Assembly resolution on the UN Decade of ESD in GA resolution 57/254 adopted in December 2002. ASEAN has been facilitating sub-regional collaboration for promoting environmental education over the past years through the sub-regional action plan, and the ASEAN leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen sub-regional collaboration for promoting educational activities at the 12<sup>th</sup> Summit, held in Cebu, Philippines in January 2007. UNESCO's assessment of ESD in Asia and Pacific is that the countries in the region still lack national policies or guidelines for environmental education; and have not incorporated broad social, economic, political and environmental aspects of sustainable development. It remains to be seen how they integrate ESD into priority policies and enhance the overall impacts of ESD activities at the national level. The progress also needs to be examined with respect to the implementation of internationally supported programmes, projects and networks for ESD in Asia and the Pacific such as NETTLAP (the Network for Environmental Training at Tertiary Level in Asia and the Pacific), UNEP Tongji Leadership Programme (UNEP-Tongji Institute for Environment and Sustainable Development in Shanghai, the People's Republic of China), and the Asia Environmental Journalist Network. The United Nations University and several other institutions are experimenting with e-learning programmes. Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES) of Macquarie University (Sydney) provides useful frameworks for reviewing policy performance on ESD.

As institutional frameworks for ESD, the Regional Centres of Expertise on ESD (RCEs) have been established in a number of countries within the framework of UN Decade of ESD. 11 RCEs have been established since 2005, of which 7 are located in Asia and the Pacific. The RCEs aim to (i) re-orient education towards sustainable development, (ii) deliver training programmes for all levels of society and to develop methodologies and learning materials, (iii) lead advocacy and awareness-raising efforts on the importance of educators and ESD and (iv) promote the long-term goals of ESD, such as environmental stewardship, social justice and improvement of the quality of life. The United Nations University (UNU), particularly the UNU Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS), provides guidance and support to RCE operations. As many countries in Asia and the Pacific are to establish RCEs for promoting ESD, it is now the time to carry out a preliminary assessment of the current RCEs' performance and to provide lessons to newly established RCEs. Specific questions shall be addressed under some hypotheses in conjunction with the ESD sub-component.

#### Integrated approach to stakeholder empowerment and capacity development

The overall approach to this proposed research is to examine the operation of policy measures for improving people's knowledge and creating enabling frameworks for stakeholders to

undertake collective actions in partnership toward pursuing environmental management and sustainable development. Human resource development and stakeholder empowerment shall be thus linked with information measures and partnership building. These factors constitute social capacity that shall be assessed and bolstered in an integrated way so as to achieve sustainable development. This research proposes to provide analysis and recommendations for fostering overall social capacity in the pursuit of sustainable development.

### **3. Objectives**

The main objectives of the proposed research are to examine the current policy and institutional frameworks for promoting stakeholder empowerment and capacity development in the context of pursuing environmental management and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, to analyse the impacts of such policies and activities, and to explore effective policies and measures for empowering stakeholders and forging social capacities toward achieving such policy objectives. In undertaking activities under this proposed research, consideration shall be given to priority policy issues and needs for capacity development and education in the sectors that include climate change, air pollution, deforestation, forest destruction, river and water pollution, and others. The following objectives under this proposed research will be pursued:

- (i) Presenting a policy mix for effective human resources and social capacity development for environmental management and sustainable development through examining the policy and institutional frameworks, their operation and impacts on stakeholders, their implications for environmental performance and contributions to sustainable development objectives
- (ii) Articulating on enabling policy frameworks and social conditions for effectively promoting access to environmental information by examining the implementation of information measures and freedom of information acts for promoting access to environmental information in selected countries
- (iii) Delineating modalities for stakeholder participation and partnership building that are effective in making changes concerning people's behaviour, resource use patterns and involvement in environmental management and sustainable development
- (iv) Identifying a set of factors essential to the successful operation of RCEs and other institutional mechanisms for promoting ESD through analysing the operation of representative RCEs and other leading institutions for promoting ESD, their interactions and collaboration with major actors and stakeholder groups, their impacts on people's perceptions and behaviour, and implications for environmental performance and sustainable development,
- (v) Developing prototypes that consist of key elements required for effectively promoting stakeholder empowerment and capacity development for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific
- (vi) Exploring possible frameworks for regional collaboration on education and capacity development for sustainable development

### **4. Expected outcomes**

Under the proposed research, it is intended to pursue the following outcomes:

- (i) Synthesis reports on stakeholder empowerment and capacity development in Asia and the Pacific, which may be synthesised under the components or sub-themes. A regional report on access to environmental information shall be prepared as an input to TAI. An ESD regional report shall also be prepared in collaboration with other partner institutes. Succinct documents on partnership activities shall be developed to show good practices and recent case studies in thematic or inter-disciplinary areas
- (ii) Case studies on stakeholder empowerment and capacity development in Asia and the Pacific. Policy research papers shall be prepared for this purpose, demonstrating the impact of improved access to environmental information on people's behaviour, cost-benefit sharing mechanisms in partnership programmes and activities, and resource mobilisation and the development of self-reliant financing mechanisms for ESD
- (iii) Inter-regional comparative study on stakeholder empowerment and capacity development. Innovative practices in other regions shall be reviewed with a view to exploring the replication of such successful practices in Asia and the Pacific. The implementation of the Aarhus Convention and the Kiev Protocol in Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers would be an important point for such a review. RCE operation in Europe shall also provide useful information
- (iv) A set of recommendations and prototypes as a basis for pursuing effective capacity development and ESD in Asia and the Pacific. Findings and recommendations shall be shared at TAI and ESD meetings and others relevant to this research
- (v) Model documents for developing regional action plans to promote access to environmental information and model documents for regional strategies on ESD. Such model documents shall be used as part of the documents for regional policy dialogue. ,

## **5. Research questions/hypotheses**

<Hypotheses>

The main hypotheses for the proposed research are the following:

### Generic

- (i) There is a different level of impacts, effectiveness and efficiency concerning the content of information and education, and delivery systems, particularly in terms of improving people's knowledge and perceptions, and catalysing changes in people's behaviour toward achieving sustainable development

Quality control of information and education content and delivery mechanisms is thus important in inducing people and communities to effectively pursue sustainable development objectives.

### Access to environmental information

- (ii) The convenience of information providers and information users remains a critical threshold in determining the information content and delivery methods. The approach to making information content and delivery methods friendly to information users shall maintain a prevailing priority over the convenience of information providers in the long

run. The timing of information delivery – immediacy or expediency – is of the utmost importance. Enabling policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms are also vital in ensuring access to information in a way that is more effective in influencing people’s perceptions and catalysing their behavioural changes toward achieving sustainable development.

#### Partnership

- (iii) There can be generic factors important for successful partnership building and partnership activities, such as enabling policies and institutional frameworks, even though such partnership activities encompass various sectors and different scales and levels. The articulation of such key factors shall be useful in devising partnership activities. Cost and benefit sharing mechanisms carry significant weight in ensuring long-term success of such partnership activities.

#### ESD

- (iv) The extent to which the ESD activities will influence people’s perceptions, behaviour and their impact on the environment depends on how ESD activities are designed and delivered. To prompt behavioural changes toward achieving better environmental performance and sustainability, ESD activities need to be designed and delivered with clear visions and concepts. It is necessary to determine what is important in determining the right approach in terms of seeking results and setting a timeframe. It is deemed desirable not to impose on stakeholders the unilateral value judgements of education providers, but rather to provide them with knowledge and information to enable them to make their own judgement and actions.

#### Regional and international perspectives

- (v) There is a fundamental policy gap at the regional level compared with other regions in promoting effective education and capacity development for environmental management and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. The absence of regional policy instruments is a significant setback to promoting regional collaboration toward achieving such policy goals. A regional approach should be given a more prominent role to play in catalysing national level activities.

Taking into account the aforementioned hypotheses, the following research questions shall be addressed under the proposed research:

<Research questions>

#### Generic

- (i) What are the incentives and disincentives for stakeholders and organisations to be involved in educational activities and human resource development for environment and sustainable development? What are the effective and equitable mechanisms?
- (ii) What are mechanisms for evaluating policy performance on stakeholder empowerment and capacity development for sustainable development? What are the key benchmarks and indicators, and applicable methods?

#### Access to environmental information

- (iii) Are stakeholders assured access to information in an effective way for them to make optimal and timely decisions? What is the verification mechanism for information? Isn’t it now time to develop a regional action plan for promoting access to environmental

information?

#### Stakeholder empowerment, partnership building and capacity development

- (iv) How can enabling policy frameworks and conditions be created to promote stakeholder empowerment, partnership building and capacity development? What are the effective intervention measures in catalysing the mobilisation and organisation of stakeholders?

#### ESD

- (v) Have RCEs succeeded in mainstreaming sustainable development in education? Have they produced qualified leaders and trainers for ESD? What specific roles have major players and stakeholders been playing so far in ESD? Have they built a long-term self-reliant operational basis to operate under enabling policy frameworks and conditions? What would be a mid-term regional evaluation of ESD implementation in Asia and the Pacific? What would be an appropriate regional strategy for effective ESD implementation?

### **6. Project components**

- (i) Research on policies and institutional frameworks for promoting access to environmental information in Asia and the Pacific (Environmental information access component, or component 1) (36 person months)
  - (a) Review and assessment of current policy and institutional frameworks and their performance in promoting access to environmental information in Asia and the Pacific. Priority setting shall be undertaken at an early stage in the research activities as described in the following sub-paragraph (b)
  - (b) Thematic analysis of information measures. Priority consideration shall be given on a preliminary basis to environmental impact assessment (EIA), strategic impact assessment (SIA), labelling, certificates and reporting, particularly by private companies in environmental reports and governments as required for multilateral environmental agreements. Some case study countries shall be selected for this purpose as suggested in sub-paragraph (d)
  - (c) Empirical analysis of some concrete cases and development of key elements for successful policy and institutional frameworks on the promotion of access to environmental information on the issues highlighted in the preceding sub-paragraphs (a) and (b)
  - (d) The undertaking of pilot projects and activities to examine the impacts of information access in facilitating behavioural changes and improving environmental performance in collaboration with partner institutions in Asia and the Pacific

It is proposed to conduct research on policy processes and pilot activities in Bangladesh in collaboration with the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association (BELA). As an integral part of the WRI's TAI, BELA intends to work in collaboration with IGES and others to assess the current policy and institutional framework of access to environmental information in Bangladesh, to provide advice during the process of developing a draft law for a freedom of information act (FOIA), to develop a plan on supporting institutional mechanisms, and to experiment with concrete information

measures and examine their impacts.

The implementation of FOIA shall also be reviewed in other countries, such as Indonesia, India, Philippines, Thailand, Republic of Korea and Japan. The status of access to environmental information and the feasibility of enacting FOIA will be examined in other countries such as Viet Nam and Cambodia as and when accommodating a few additional countries becomes possible..

Analysis will be undertaken of the green consumer initiative in the Republic of Korea in collaboration with the Korea Eco-Product Institute and the Korea Environment Institute. Japanese green consumer initiatives can also be reviewed as supplementary inputs.

- (e) Regional policy and programme development for enhancing the policy and institutional performance of promotion of access to environmental information in Asia and Pacific: Asian inter-sub-regional comparative analyses and inter-regional comparative analyses shall be undertaken as supplementary inputs.

The Aarhus Convention, PRTR (Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers), RoHS and other related policy instrument implementation shall be examined for these purposes, including the responses taken by Asian governments and companies to these European regulations.

- (ii) Research on empowerment, multi-stakeholder partnership building and capacity development for environmental management and sustainable development (capacity development component or component 2) (48 person months)
  - (a) Review of major policies, programmes and initiatives for promoting stakeholder participation and multi-stakeholder collaboration in environmental management and sustainable development. Priorities shall be set based on the modalities of partnership activities, for instance, those undertaken by communities, private corporations and media, educational activities with clear objectives such as reducing wastes, planting trees or any other concrete behavioural changes.
  - (b) Examining the approaches, modalities and impacts of pilot initiatives and social innovation in better promoting environmental management and sustainable development, including those related to the provision of modern scientific information and technology through external mediums as they appear prominent through observational regional reviews.
  - (c) Analysis of specific cases and pilot projects that aim to promote public-private and private-private partnership (PPP) and multi-stakeholder collaboration water supply, sewage treatment, waste management and renewable energy development in order to achieve higher environmental performance and sustainability. Supportive policies of aid agencies shall be also reviewed.
  - (d) Developing a set of benchmarks and indicators for performance assessment of stakeholder empowerment and partnership building and partnership activities.
  - (e) Pilot projects that intend to promote a multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration

in achieving higher environmental performance and sustainability.

- (f) Develop models of PPP for community-based natural resource management and sustainable development in Asia.
  - (g) Exploration of trans-national or regional platforms for partnership building and partnership activities for promoting environmental management and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.
- (iii) Research on education for environment and sustainable development (education for sustainable development component - component 1) (54 person months)
- (a) Review and assessment of policies, measures and institutional set-ups for facilitating ESD, including formal, informal and non-formal education: performance in Asia and the Pacific. Major pedagogies and tools shall be examined including the use of ICT. Priorities shall be set based on the modalities of ESD, for instance, those undertaken by communities, private corporations and media, educational activities with clear objectives such as reducing wastes, planting trees or any other concrete behavioural changes
  - (b) Analysing the operation of selected RCEs and their performance: review will be conducted on RCE in Cebu, Philippines and the University of the Philippines in Visayas. Cebu College is a focal point and also the secretariat of the Cebu RCE.

Further review and analysis shall be undertaken of other RCEs such as University Sains Malaysia (Penang), Miyagi University of Education (Sendai, Japan), and Yokohama City Government (Japan). The operation of the Centre for Environmental Education (CEE) of India shall also be reviewed as one of the model institutes for ESD.

- (c) The role played by various actors such as schools, media, communities, business and industry shall be analysed. The general perceptions of sustainable development held by actors or stakeholder groups shall also be examined with regard to potential perceptual changes through ESD activities.
- (d) With respect to particular stakeholder groups, consumer groups shall be chosen for close examination, their behaviour changes shall be analysed and cross reference shall be made with access to information sub-component research work to the extent appropriate.
- (e) Pilot projects for promoting a multi-stakeholder approach in ESD.
- (f) Assessment of a need for and feasibility of developing an Asia-Pacific regional strategy on the RCE/ESD network in Asia and the Pacific.

## **7. Methodology**

The proposed research is intended to analyse, in particular, various functions played by multiple actors on multiple themes and inter-disciplinary issues. It examines the interface of policies, institutions and civil society and explores the optimal development of social capacity for promoting environmental management and sustainable development. It analyses the continuum of knowledge acquisition, perceptual changes, behavioural changes and their impacts on

environmental performance. In this context, the proposed research intends to employ a number of methodologies that include the following. In principle, they are commonly applied to three components while the methodologies for each particular component will be weighted differently in terms of importance.

- (i) Literature review – to analyse major trends and key features of policies, programmes and activities for promoting stakeholder empowerment and capacity development aimed at promoting environmental management and sustainable development. Research methodologies on perceptual and behavioural changes must be better developed at the initial stage of research work.
- (ii) Workshops and stakeholder dialogues shall be convened to take stock of policy processes and activities, case study analysis shall be undertaken with a view to examining the impacts of improved access to information, partnership and ESD. Careful consideration shall be given to policy performance and impacts, and to future challenges and actions. A PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle approach may be applied if the research work cycle permits.
- (iii) Questionnaire surveys and interviews shall be conducted to scrutinise further details of policy performance and impacts. Questionnaire development methodologies must be better refined in order to draw useful analysis; questions for interviews need to be better refined likewise.
- (iv) Pilot initiatives and social innovation shall also be supported in collaboration with other partner intuitions to analyse perceptual and behavioural changes and potential implications for sustainability. The elements catalysing behavioural changes must be highlighted.
- (v) In evaluating policy performance and impacts, an appropriate set of benchmarks and indicators shall be set and applied to present such evaluation in a quantifiable manner. It is important to differentiate between inherent characteristics and post-facto effects. Other relevant analytical methods shall be employed, such as integrated policy assessment, social capacity assessment, multi-criteria assessment, and benefit-cost analysis.
- (vi) Preliminary research findings and outcome shall be presented at appropriate meetings to receive feedback from partners and experts. Particular emphasis shall be given to the co-relations between the modalities of policy implementation and their impacts.

## **8. Four Criteria**

### **8a. Policy relevance**

The findings and other outputs of this proposed research can be submitted as inputs to various policy processes that can include:

- (i) TAI (The Access Initiative) propelled by the WRI, TEI, and other collaborative research institutes for facilitating the promotion of access to environmental information

- (ii) Follow-up processes to the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, particularly on the development and implementation of national sustainable development strategies (NSDS) coordinated by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)
- (iii) Network activities such as FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) network, Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN) and Privacy International
- (iv) Relevance and possible involvement in the processes of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005-2014
- (v) Japanese and Asian regional ESD processes such as those promoted by ESD-J (Japanese group for promoting ESD)
- (vi) Information disclosure and national/international reporting activities under multilateral environmental agreements such as Stockholm Convention on POPs, Rotterdam Convention on PIC, Basel Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity/ Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, PRTR(Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers), GRI (Global Reporting Initiatives)
- (vii) Involvement in activities on information access, education, and capacity development by UNESCAP, UNU, UNEP, ADB and GEF

#### **8b. Added value**

- (i) The proposed research intends to target major actors and stakeholders, their interface with governments and their policies and initiatives
- (ii) It identifies access to environmental information and ESD as a strategically useful policy tool for stakeholder empowerment and capacity development aimed at environmental management and sustainable development
- (iii) It is geared to support pilot initiatives and social innovation, to induce lessons from case studies and to extract universally applicable factors and case-specific variables
- (iv) It intends to examine partnership building as a multiplier for forging stakeholder empowerment and capacity development
- (v) It proposes to analyse a cycle of information and knowledge acquisition, perceptual and behavioural changes, and environmental performance improvement
- (vi) It undertakes experimental activities and pilot projects to conduct empirical analysis as well as case studies

#### **8c. External Funds**

- (i) WRI has pledged co-financing of several components of the TAI along with other donor agencies such as the Swedish Government and the European Commission, as well as

other partner institutions in developing countries that have pledged in-kind contributions

- (ii) It is proposed that IGES contributions shall be channelled through the APFED/Showcase Programme for the project on the promotion of access to environmental information for the initial stage while efforts shall be continuously made to seek additional funds within IGES and from its partners
- (iii) Funding opportunities shall be explored with the Japanese government (e.g. Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Education, Japan Centre for Intellectual Exchanges, JICA's training programmes), foundations and organisations as well as other overseas organisations for supporting activities on information access and ESD
- (iv) Linkages can also be pursued with APFED activities such as the Showcase Programme and NetRes.

#### **8d. Regional/international context**

- (i) Collaboration with WRI and TAI is expected to contribute to the improvement in access to information in the region and development of a possible sub-regional/regional policy framework for this purpose
- (ii) Regional synthesis on policies and measures for promoting stakeholder empowerment, partnership building and capacity development will be useful inputs to the relevant policy processes,
- (iii) The Asia and Pacific region is active in carrying out ESD activities that are expected to further expand, as exemplified by Asia now having the greatest number of RCEs. Regional and inter-regional comparative analysis is deemed as useful; a regional strategy on this matter is expected to bear significant results.
- (iv) Trans-national information sharing and partnership building are expected to become more important in addressing trans-boundary environmental issues and the environmental impacts of intensifying economic integration in the region

#### **9. Timeline**

##### ***First year (FY 2007)***

- (i) Literature and case study review
- (ii) Policy, institutional and social capacity assessment
- (iii) Workshops and policy dialogues
- (iv) Questionnaire surveys and interviews
- (v) Development and launching of experimental activities and pilot projects for empirical and case study analysis
- (vi) Preparation of papers on meta-analysis regarding the issues to be addressed in the proposed research

***Second year (FY 2008)***

- (i) Continuation of literature and case study review
- (ii) Continuation of social capacity assessment
- (iii) Preliminary evaluation and analysis of experimental activities and pilot projects while continuing their implementation
- (iv) Undertaking questionnaire surveys and interviews as required,
- (v) Convening workshops
- (vi) Preparation of papers on the findings to be obtained from experimental activities and pilot projects

***Third year (FY 2009)***

- (i) Continuation of literature and case study review
  - (ii) Finalisation of social capacity assessment
  - (iii) Undertaking questionnaire surveys and interviews
  - (iv) Organising workshops
  - (v) Final evaluation of experimental activities and pilot projects
  - (vi) Preparation of final reports on the proposed research
- Preparation of analytical papers on the overall issues to be explored in the proposed research

### Appendix: Details of Research tasks, work force distribution and timelines

**Note: The chart is prepared based on the tentative number of conservatively estimated staff members to be involved in the research activities. Indications in the right three columns show the period when relatively significant inputs of manpower are expected in the three-year period; the routine input of manpower is therefore anticipated for all sub-components throughout the three-year period.**

Research tasks	Person-months	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
<b>Component 1. Research on policies and institutional frameworks for promoting access to environmental information in Asia and the Pacific (Environmental information access component)</b>	<b>42</b>			
(a) Review and assessment of current policy and institutional frameworks and their performance in promoting access to environmental information in Asia and the Pacific.	6			
(b) Thematic analysis of information measures	6			
(c) Empirical analysis of some concrete cases and development of key elements	6			
(d) Pilot projects and activities examining the impacts of information access	6			
(e) Regional policy and programme development for enhancing the policy and institutional performance in the promotion of access to environmental information in Asia and Pacific	9			
<b>Component 2. Research on empowerment, multi-stakeholder partnership building and capacity development for environmental management and sustainable development (capacity development component)</b>	<b>9</b>			
(a) Review of major policies, programmes and initiatives in promoting multi-stakeholder collaboration on environmental management and sustainable development.	<b>39</b>			

(b) Examining the approaches, modalities and impacts of pilot initiatives and social innovation in better promoting environmental management and sustainable development, including those related to the provision of modern scientific information and technology through external mediums.	9			
(c) Analysis of specific cases that aim at promoting the provision of information and knowledge on environment and sustainable development	9			
(d) Pilot projects that intend to promote a multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration in order to achieve higher environmental performance and sustainability	9			
(e) Developing a set of benchmarks and indicators for performance assessment with a view to supporting the stakeholder empowerment and capacity development	6			
(f) Exploration of trans-national or regional platforms in partnership building and partnership activities in Asia and the Pacific	6			
<b>Component 3. Research on education for environment and sustainable development (education for sustainable development component)</b>	<b>54</b>			
(a) Review and assessment of policies and modalities to facilitate education for the environment and sustainable development, and their performance in Asia and the Pacific	6			
(b) Analysing the operation of selected RCEs	9			
(c) Analysing the roles played by major actors in ESD	9			
(d) Examining stakeholder activities	9			
(e) Pilot projects for the promotion of a multi-stakeholder approach in ESD	12			
(e) Assessment of the need for and feasibility of developing an Asia-Pacific regional strategy on the RCE/ESD network	9			