

Jamaica

(719)

UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme

Progress report

Period of activity: 2006-2007

The Small Island States Universities Consortium on Capacity-Building to implement the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA)(UCSIS)

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I Activities

1. Education/research/ Training

Education :

A Master of sciences degree in sustainable development of small islands and small states will be created according the following chart :

Overview modules : 12 credits

Culture for sustainable Island development

Lead University: USP in collaboration with UWI

Economics for sustainable Island development

Lead University UMT in collaboration with UMU

Environmental issues for sustainable island development:

Lead universities : UWI in collaboration with UMU, UVI

Social issues in sustainable island development

Lead universities : UMT in collaboration with UWI

Specialisations in the core area : 9 credits

Electives : 3 credits

Research/dissertation/project : 12 credits

Total: 36 CREDITS (72 ECTS)

It was agreed that the UCSIS will work towards the development of a program of study that will exist at each university, have a common name and share the same core courses. There will be flexibility with the electives. The degree granted will be awarded from the UCSIS University at which students enrol for at least 50% of their coursework in collaboration with the other UCSIS universities

Training :

The UCSIS intends to deliver the MSc as a modular programme. This will permit the UCSIS to use the modules to train Parliamentarians across SIDS as well as other Government Officials who represent these countries at international meetings on diverse matters.

Another focal area is Teacher Education for Sustainable Development

Research :

The research agenda of the UCSIS is derived directly from the BPoA and is as follows:

Climate Change and Sea Level Rise

Natural and Environmental Disasters

Management of Wastes

Coastal and Marine Resources

Freshwater Resources

Land Resources

Energy Resources

Tourism Resources

Biodiversity Resources

Transport and Communication

Science and Technology

Sustainable Capacity Development and Education for Sustainable Development

National and Regional Enabling Environments

Health

Knowledge Management & Information for Decision Making

Culture

2. Meetings/ Conferences :

The UCSIS « attended the Global Challenge, Global Climate Solidarity, Climate Change and Vulnerability Conference »

Date and Place : 13-14 of February, 2007, at The Hague, Netherlands.

The UCSIS attended the « Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting »

Place : Malta

The UCSIS attended the UNESCO Colloquium: Universities as Centres of Research and Knowledge Creation

II. Impact

The principal outcome of this strategic intent is that the UCSIS is indeed the first ever Cross Border, Trans-disciplinary Higher Education Initiative which focuses specifically on the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action (BPoA). It is this focus that separates it from all virtual Higher Education networks as well as all other attempts at Quality Provision of Cross Border Higher Education at this time.

III. Forthcoming activities

Meeting with the VUSSC
Collaboration with the Avicenna Project (UNESCO)
Student Exchanges across all Five Institutions
Curriculum Articulation of the MSc across all Five Institutions
Training of members of Parliament and Government Agencies
Applied Research Activities

IV. Development prospects

The UCSIS needs the support of UNESCO to mobilise and attract donor agencies to support its initiation activities.

The Higher Education Institutions of the Canary Islands have petitioned the UCSIS for membership

The UCSIS is the beginning of an Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students across Islands and Small States that parallels the ERASMUS. It is also the first steps towards a Bologna Framework for Higher Education across Islands and Small States. To function like the Bologna Project a meeting among the AOSIS, UCSIS, UNESCO, UNDP and the VUSSC is critical.