

Comments and Suggestions

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Feedback from program participants

The program was evaluated using the data sheet of the ACCU Evaluation Form, by four of the invited foreign participants.

Overall impression of the program

All four participants evaluated the program as "excellent." All commented that the conference was well organized and well prepared. Some additional comments were: 1) program was productive and professional, 2) stimulating with engaging discussion, 3) dynamically structured with various perspectives, 4) addressing many important issues in EE and ESD, 5) good participants, and 6) the staff were very friendly and helpful.

The most useful/valuable activities of the program

All participants mentioned that the "Group Discussion" was most valuable, because of the exchange of various experiences, including dialogues on important themes. Two of them answered that the "Panel Discussion of Plenary Session I" was valuable, because of the stimulating discussion on several issues and the country reports, where participants could share their experiences. One participant wrote down that the "Field Trip" was useful, as she was able to see firsthand a successful example of theory transformed into action.

Your objective in participating in this program and whether or not your expectations were met.

All mentioned that their objective was to 1) learn about other countries' practice and research related to EE and ESD, especially in Japan, 2) share experiences with other participants, 3) engage with colleagues from Japan and other countries in the Asia-Pacific.

Three evaluated that their expectations were fully met and one evaluated that most were met.

Your plan for applying the ideas and skills you acquired through your participation in the program upon your return.

All participants answered that they would share ideas with members of the Society of EE in their own country, and share ideas with colleagues at their universities. Two stated that they would write a report on the conference for publication in the newsletter of the Society of EE in their own country.

Suggestions on how to improve the Program in the future

All mentioned "more time," especially for discussion, dialogue, and panel discussions, to delve deeper into the topics. Two mentioned that they would like to see more participation from the floor and local participants.

Program evaluation from the organizer

We received many comments and feedback from conference participants and members of the Japanese Society of Environmental Education. Most of them evaluated that the conference was "excellent." Most of them mentioned that "Country Reports" on EE and ESD from other countries'

participants were informative, and "Group Discussion" was very helpful to connect experiences with theory, and to deepen understanding regarding the important issues within EE and ESD.

As an organizer of this conference, I evaluated that the conference was "very successful," as the conference was implemented as we had planned, except that two of the foreign guests could not join the conference due to illness and a visa problem.

At its onset, this conference had the following three aims:

- 1) Analyze the history and trends of EE research in the Asia-Pacific.
- 2) Reorient EE towards ESD.
 - a) To review and reassess conventional EE practices from the viewpoint of 'ESD,' or education that contributes to the realisation of a sustainable society.
 - b) To identify EE research priorities for the next ten years.
- 3) Consider measures to connect EE research and practice.
 - a) To share and learn from examples of current EE practice in the areas of:
 - "Higher Education/Educator Training" (Group Discussion 1),
 - "Primary & Secondary Education" (G.D. 2).
 - b) To consider and propose measures to integrate EE research and practice, also incorporating the concept of ESD, under the themes:
 - "Pedagogy/Teaching Methods & Program Development" (G.D. 3),
 - "Monitoring & Evaluation" (G.D. 4),
 - "System Thinking and Holistic Approach, and Future Direction" (Plenary Session II).

These are some of the areas for which intensive future research and theory development are necessary.

In the end, the aforementioned three aims were fulfilled and participants were actively involved in the "Group Discussion" and "Panel Discussion."

However, the following three improvements are necessary:

More time is needed to delve deeper into the topics.

More time is needed to build a network between participants from countries of the Asian Pacific.

We should spend more time listening to the participants from the floor, allowing them to express their ideas and join the discussion.

Proposal for ACCU

I would like to express our sincere gratitude for providing a grant for our International Conference, and giving us many useful suggestions to implement the conference. It was especially helpful for us that ACCU decided to give us the grant only a short period after we submitted our proposal. As a result, we could start preparation for our conference earlier than we had expected, and break down our budget easily. I do not have any special suggestions for the ACCU.