



# ProSPER.Net E-Bulletin

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## Message from the [ProSPER.Net](#) Secretariat:

Dear colleagues and friends,

In Tokyo we are all waiting impatiently for the first cherry blossom sakura which will finally announce the beginning of spring and the change of season.

As with many things in Japan, sakura carries a certain weight for its symbolism and tradition. Salary men gather under cherry and plum trees laden with short-lived white and pink flowers picnicking and drinking sake for the so called hanami (literally translated as flower viewing). It is hugely popular and difficult to get a spot in one of the many parks or cemeteries in Tokyo. People are merry and cheerful that the long winter is over, finally getting a break from the cold, with the excruciating hot and humid summer still far away.

Spring is probably the most beautiful season in Japan. The Japanese Meteorological Agency and the public track the sakura zensen or cherry blossom front, as it moves northward up the archipelago with the approach of warmer weather via nightly forecasts following the weather segment of the news programmes.

The official change of season in 2015, the vernal equinox or spring equinox, as it is called in the Northern Hemisphere, comes March 20th, so we take this opportunity to wish you all already a wonderful beginning of spring.

Sincerely,

[ProSPER.Net](#) Secretariat

## Latest News

### Health Food Traditions of Asia – Research Project Meeting, Penang, Malaysia

A two day meeting of Health Food Traditions of Asia (HFTA) project under the [ProSPER.Net](#) research programme was hosted by the Centre for Global Sustainability Studies (CGSS), Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang 10-11 February. The eight month project was coordinated by the University of Gadjah Madah (UGM), Yogyakarta, Indonesia with three partners Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and the Prince Songkla University (PSU). Experts from UNU-IAS and the Oxford University also participated in the event.

The event highlighted the vast geographic, socioeconomic and cultural diversity in Asia (with special reference to ASEAN) and the relevance of rich food traditions in the region, as well as the increasing disparity in health status within and between countries. [Read more.](#)

[ProSPER.Net](#) Leadership Programme: Communities struggle for sustainable rural development in the Cameron Highlands

The Leadership Programme (LP) provides opportunities for participants to develop inter-disciplinary skills to lead sustainable development initiatives appropriate to local, regional or global contexts. The second [ProSPER.Net](#) Leadership Programme was hosted by the Higher Education Leadership Academy in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 16 to 24 August 2014.

The programme included lectures on leadership, biodiversity, conservation and ecosystem services, as well as urban issues and industrial development from the perspective of multi-stakeholder partnerships to support local development, and field visits which provided different examples of community engagement and insights on the types of required leadership that enable sustainable actions to thrive. Below you will find an extract of the article produced as one of the outcomes of last year's LP Programme.

*"An exotic hill station in Malaysia, Cameron Highlands is located in the northwestern part of the state of Pahang (about 290 kilometres from Kuala Lumpur or 90 kilometers from Ipoh, the capital of Perak), with its boundaries stretching from Kelantan in the North to Perak in the West... Development in rural Cameron is a challenge for local and national governments. This is due to the lack of an effective linkage between various stakeholders, that in a rural scenario would include the local and national governments, community leaders, villagers, the private sector as well as industrial partners, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). All these stakeholders play an important role in local development, but often act in isolation and pursue conflicting goals. In this scenario, effective and coherent decision making is usually a challenge."* [Read more.](#)

## ISSC calls for proposal for Transformative Knowledge Networks worth €900,000

The International Social Science Council (ISSC) and its partners are inviting applications for proposals for Transformative Knowledge Networks for the recently launched [Transformations to Sustainability Programme](#). Three Transformative Knowledge Networks will be supported each with up to €900,000 over three years.

The Transformations to Sustainability Programme seeks to address global sustainability challenges by supporting research on the complex processes of social transformation needed to secure effective, equitable and durable solutions. It will enable social scientists to develop knowledge networks that will both strengthen social science leadership in global change and sustainability research and to foster on-the-ground progress towards greater sustainability.

The knowledge networks will be led or co-led by social scientists in low- and middle-income countries, and will involve the relevant academic disciplines, as well as societal stakeholders, in truly co-designed and co-implemented solutions-oriented research.

## Presentations from 2nd World Symposium on Sustainable Development at Universities (WSSD-U-2014)

Over 100 power point presentations from sustainability experts from across the world, presented at [WSSD-U-2014](#) are now online [here](#). RCE Hamburg would like to encourage you to make use of these presentations as a basis for lectures, to be held as part of the Teach-In Day on 26th March.

## Upcoming Events

Joint Meeting [ProSPER.Net](#) General Assembly and Board Meeting

3 June 2015

Tongji University, Shanghai

The Joint Meeting of the [ProSPER.Net](#) 9th General Assembly and 15th Board Meeting will be hosted by Tongji University in Shanghai, China on 3 June 2015 in conjunction with the [International Student Conference on](#)

[Environment and Sustainability \(ISCES\)](#). [ProSPER.Net](#) members will gather to discuss the network's strategy and roadmap as well as ways to enhance research and linkages with other networks.

The third [ProSPER.Net](#) Forum on Sustainability in Higher Education will take place on the following day (4 June 2015). Details of the meeting and forum will be shared in due course. For more information please visit the [ProSPER.Net](#) website.

### 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

14-18 March 2015  
Sendai, Miyagi, Japan

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan. Several thousand participants are expected, including at related events linked to the World Conference under the umbrella of building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and its preparatory process welcome the participation and contributions of all relevant stakeholders, including parliaments, civil society, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, non-governmental organizations, national platforms for disaster risk reduction, focal points for the Hyogo Framework for Action, local government representatives, scientific institutions and the private sector, as well as organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations.

For more information on the UN conference click [here](#).

### BLISS 2015 : Towards Cleaner and Greener Societies

16-20 March, 2015  
New Delhi, India

TERI University's BLISS 2015, with a contemporary theme - 'Towards Cleaner and Greener Societies', aims to address the sustainability concerns regarding a safe and clean environment and equitable social development. The programme will provide a platform to address and debate diverse problems associated with the creation of a 'clean and green' society at large and also ponder upon how youth can contribute to solving these problems. To ensure that sustainability-driven business models to combat climate change can be maintained, the five-day programme will play a pivotal role in providing insights into the problems and solutions related to sustainability science, using an interdisciplinary approach.

Application deadline is the 6 March. For more information on the event visit the [BLISS](#) website.

### Online Course: The Age of Sustainable Development

[SDSN.edu](#) provides a course as an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of sustainable development, drawing on the most recent developments in the social, policy, and physical sciences. The course describes the complex interactions between the world economy and the Earth's physical environment. The course offers a broad overview of the key challenges and potential solutions to achieve sustainable development in the 21st century. For more information please visit the course's [website](#).

## Publications

### UN SDSN Report: Indicators and a Monitoring Framework for SDGs

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network, a Global Initiative by the UN has been working to develop a set of indicators for the SDGs for over a year. They now launched a new global consultation on their draft report, 'Indicators and a Monitoring Framework for the SDGs.' This draft report presents a comprehensive indicator framework for the OWG goals and outlines major indicator gaps that must be filled over the next twelve months.

The report can be found [here](#).

## UE4SD State of the ART Report

The report from University Educators for Sustainable Development (UE4SD), which is a three-year European Commission project funded through the Lifelong Learning Programme, analyses the findings of four regional reports, which summarized the national mapping exercises conducted by 53 UE4SD partner institutions in 33 countries across Europe. This process identified existing policy developments and strategic commitments for ESD in higher education across the different countries, and collected the examples of best practice in supporting professional development in this area. Please find the report [here](#).

## UNICEF Report: The Investment Case for Education and Equity

Education is in crisis worldwide. Millions of children, especially the most marginalized, are excluded from school. Many millions more attend school, but they do not learn basic reading and math skills. In addition, international funding for education is on the decline. [The Investment Case for Education and Equity UNICEF Report](#) explains the global education crisis and outlines solutions. It calls for an increase in funding for education and investments that are more equitable and efficient.

## The Lima Ministerial Declaration on Education and Awareness Rising

One of the major outcomes of the COP20/CMP10 Alliance meeting is the [Lima Ministerial Declaration on Education and Awareness Rising](#). After the adoption, Minister Korolec, COP 19/CMP 9 President, said that "this declaration is an important step towards bringing education back into the spotlight where it belongs". The minutes of the COP20/CMP10 meeting can be downloaded [here](#).

## IUCN: Protected Planet Report 2014

[The Protected Planet Report 2014](#) follows the recommendation of the Protected Planet Report 2012 to provide a more complete overview of each of these elements of the Aichi Biodiversity Target, 11 Chapters summarise current knowledge and progress towards achieving each element of the target, and provide further guidance for implementation, based on data from the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), a review of published literature, and expert review.

*If you wish to contribute to the monthly bulletin or have news, upcoming events, or publications, you would like to share, please let us know. You can e-mail it to [ProSPERNET@unu.edu](mailto:ProSPERNET@unu.edu). In addition, we encourage you to visit the [ProSPER.NET](http://prospernet.ias.unu.edu/) portal at <http://prospernet.ias.unu.edu/>.*

This is a publication of UNU-IAS [ProSPER.Net](#) Secretariat.

Please send your comments, suggestions and materials to [prospernet@ias.unu.edu](mailto:prospernet@ias.unu.edu).

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