# Application Summary – Saskatchewan

Geographical scope and major characteristics of the Region

The province of Saskatchewan, Canada, with population of 995,000 encompasses a variety of rural areas, smaller and medium sized towns and cities. The two biggest cities are Saskatoon (pop. 205,000) and Regina (pop. 190,000). Both cities have strong connections with the aboriginal community.

The two largest universities in Saskatchewan are the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon (19 000 students; 7350 faculty and staff) and the University of Regina (12 500 students; 1200 faculty and staff). The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology has 13 300 students and over 1400 employees.

Between Regina and Saskatoon there are a number of smaller communities in which farming is an important industry. Among those communities is Craik, which has become an important sustainability hub due to its newly built Eco-Centre, which provides opportunities for formal, informal, and non-formal education, and is a natural meeting place.
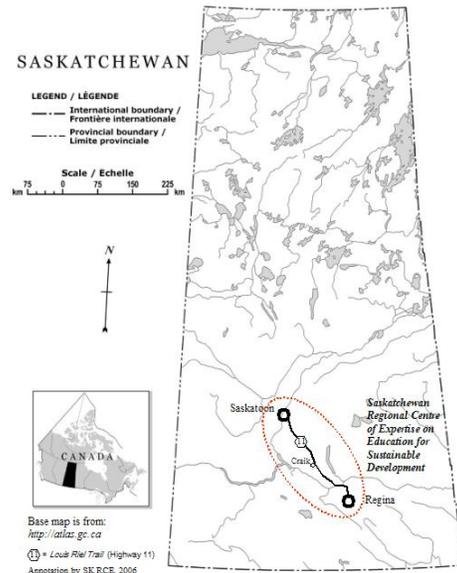
Major sustainable development challenges of the Region

Environmental:
- Climate change, primary resource extraction and production, watershed issues
Social:
- Poverty, vulnerability among First Nations peoples
- Migration of population from rural to urban areas and outside the region
- Declining infrastructure in inner city and rural communities
Economic:
- Long-standing depressed rural economy with recent localized development
- Historic lack of industrial development
- Exposure to fluctuations in global prices for exports

Initial Focus: (chap.4 page 8-13)
- *Cross-cutting themes*: Sustaining rural communities, Educational approaches for Regional ESD
- *6 Main Issues*:
1) Climate change
2) Health
3) Farming and local food production, consumption, and waste minimization
4) Reconnecting to natural prairies ecosystems
5) Supporting and bridging cultures for sustainable living and community building
6) Sustainable infrastructure including water and energy

Process of RCE development and key institutions involved

Process of RCE development

Stage 1   Drafting of RCE Concept among Core Actors

- RCE concept was first introduced at the University of Regina in February, 2005 by Prof. Charles Hopkins.

Stage 2   Local Stakeholder Consultations

- On August 25, 2005, individuals and organizations interested in ESD from the prairie region of Saskatchewan were brought together at the University of Regina. The meeting sought grassroots, regional direction concerning how an RCE could be structured that best facilitated desired educational activities and collaboration among participants. The interests and capacities of individuals and organizations in ESD were identified as well as the kinds of resources that could potentially be offered in creating an RCE.

Stage 3   Development of Application (further conceptualization of RCE)

- A draft RCE proposal was developed in time for a second visit by Charles Hopkins to the University of Regina on November 2 and 3, 2005, and the University of Saskatchewan on November 4, 2005.
- The proposal was reviewed by workshop participants. From analysis of participant contributions, 6 ESD issues were identified as a regional focus for the SK RCE in December, 2005, along with 2 overarching themes.
- A subcommittee was tasked with developing a potential governance model based on comments from RCE workshop participants (completed May, 2006).
- The revised draft proposal was subsequently sent out for further comment and review by SK RCE participants with the process to develop the proposal completed in July, 2006.
- Faculty and administrative staff at the University of Regina in Regina, Saskatchewan, the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) have facilitated the development of the RCE proposal in conjunction with the active participation of regional leaders in formal, informal, and non-formal education.

RCE vision, short-term and long-term objectives

RCE Vision
Education for sustainable development aims at promoting reflection and discernment in the region to help identify and pursue paths to sustainability. Such paths lead to ongoing improvements in quality of life while sustaining healthy ecosystems. They promote active environmental stewardship, social justice, and intergenerational equity.

Objectives

- Literacy and access to quality basic education for all within the region
- Identification of key issues of sustainability and sustainability projects in the region
- Open networks for knowledge sharing
- Public awareness about sustainability in the region
- Ongoing opportunities for collaborative work on ESD projects

- Integration of sustainability into formal education curricula
- Formal linkages (agreements) promoting ESD between organizations
- Identification of current research in ESD and coordination of new ESD research projects
- Development and incorporation of science and technology for ESD
- Acknowledgment and celebration of success
- Ongoing advocacy for ESD outcomes
- Ongoing documentation of RCE activities
- Ongoing measurement and evaluation of RCE initiatives

Strategies/scenarios to achieve vision and objectives
Three approaches the SK RCE will take to advance ESD are:
1. Regional Approach – fosters relationships between human communities and between human and non-human communities and ecosystems.
2. Strengths-based Approach – builds on regional strengths (e.g. local knowledge and experience, regionally identified opportunities) by adding value to ESD activities through service, facilitation, and networking.
3. Institutional Approach – intentionally engages actors in formal, non-formal, and informal education in a diversity of organizational forms each having significant resources and distinct contributions for advancing ESD and sustainable livelihoods in the region.

Criteria for monitoring and evaluation
The SK RCE will make use of the existing available outcome measures (e.g. modeled on those used by the Canadian voluntary sector including those used for evaluating governance of non-profit organizations) where possible and develop new ones only where needed and existing measures are inadequate.

The regional governance structures (the RCE Facilitation Group, the RCE Technology Group, and the RCE Theme Area Working Groups) will also need to periodically evaluate themselves against the outcomes set for SK RCE.

Governance/management structure of the RCE

Commitment of Key Institutions
Organizations in the town of Craik, the cities of Regina and Saskatoon expressed support for ESD and the establishment of the SK RCE. They included:
- Craik Sustainable Living Project (CSLP)
- City of Regina
- Regina EcoLiving Inc.
- Royal Saskatchewan Museum
- Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technologies
- University of Regina and its federated colleges (Campion College, Luther College, and First Nations University of Canada)
- University of Saskatchewan

Short-term, long-term resource arrangements
The two sources of funding have been received for establishing an RCE.
1. *Technology Innovation Fund* by University of Regina—awarded $1600 for developing computer hardware to help establish the Web-based regional networking structure.
2. Luther College—committed $4666 to hire a doctoral student in computer science to help design a regional Web-based structure. (chap.6 page 25)

For the medium- and long-terms, it is expected that future in-kind contributions of organizations/individuals (staff time, meeting spaces, computer equipment, etc) will continue to help minimize the financial costs of maintaining SK RCE. A formal acknowledgment of the SK RCE will open up many funding opportunities from the region's universities and federal granting councils. (p.72-73, Appendix H)

Organizational diagram is available on page 24.

Regional Structures:
1) *RCE Facilitation Group* - a coordinating board which serves to facilitate ESD activities. A representative of each of the 6 Theme Area Working Groups would be included. Its responsibilities include: determining terms for membership in the RCE; identifying and approaching potential RCE partners; facilitating periodic gathering of members; acting as a formal liaison with UNU.
2) *Theme Area Working Groups* – there are 6, each working on one of the 6 focused areas of actions. They are responsible for identifying existing ESD initiatives and local centres of expertise and facilitating their creation and advancement.
3) *RCE Technology Group* – helps develop and maintain the RCE Virtual Networking Structure including the RCE Website at the regional level.

The diagram on page 24 is used to express the supportive, facilitative, and coordinating role of the regional structures (as an alternative to a vertical, hierarchical relationship between local ESD initiatives in the region and the regional RCE structures).

Above regional groups are linked horizontally as well through cooperation, such as that the RCE Facilitation Group and the RCE Technology Group work to support the efforts of the 6 Theme Area Working Groups by devising effective administrative tools, policies, and access to resources.

Decision-making will be done within each of the regional structures based on their respective specializations and purposes. No additional decision-making structures are envisioned at this time.

Local Structures
A) *Local Centres of Expertise* – will offer hands-on, person-to-person, services including: sharing information within local communities; coordination of individuals and organizations with expertise in sustainability at the local level.
B) *ESD Initiatives within RCE Theme Areas* – RCE will help facilitate the formation of local, sub-regional, and regional initiatives in ESD within the ESD Theme Areas identified. These initiatives are to be led and maintained by communities of individuals to ensure local autonomy.
C) *RCE Virtual Networking Structure* – is a web-based network which will enable knowledge sharing, networking, data collection, and research.

"Local" initiatives imply those occurring within a geographical jurisdiction smaller than the "region" within the SK RCE. (This "region" constitutes a portion of the province of Saskatchewan.)

Collaboration among stakeholders
A listing of the "Letters of Support for the SK RCE on ESD Proposal" is attached as Appendix F with a separate attachment provided of the complete letters.

The development of the application has brought together the three main institutions of higher education, namely the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, the

University of Regina, and the University of Saskatchewan. It also brings together academic organizations, governments, NGOs, and businesses.

The proposed governance structures provide several avenues for collaboration among organizations, such as formal strategic collaboration among formal(including primary and secondary schools), informal, and non-formal educational organizations in the region with respective representation on the SK RCE Facilitation Group.

On-going and planned activities

Transformative education
- School programs to improve nutrition, exercise, and awareness of the effect pollutants can have on health.
- Using the environment /nature as a classroom for hands-on activities and wilderness experiences.
- Further bridging of First Nation and non First Nation communities in formal education settings on topics of sustainability.
- Campus Sustainability Initiatives at the University of Saskatchewan, University of Regina, and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST).
- Study and training related to sustainable livelihoods will be provided. ESD will be incorporated in curricula for those training in education and education-related professions.

Research and development
- Creation of a Web-based networking structure for the SK RCE – Some of its features include calendar of ESD events, posting of documents, mass emailers for each ESD issue area, voting function, member registration, and archiving of documents.
- Research, documentation, and analysis of the SK RCE's development, such as developmental methodology and successes/challenges experienced along the way.
- Conducting specific research into exploring how the 6 SK RCE ESD issues and its overarching theme areas relate to Sustainable Livelihoods (SL), set as a mandate for SK RCE.
- Development of an *ESD Initiative Planning and Evaluation Toolkit* – E.g. Scorecard with questions related to the ESD goals to facilitate design of local ESD initiatives; Specific qualitative and quantitative measures or indicators could be developed to facilitate the measurement of success of these ESD initiatives.
- Research on the roles of formal, informal, and non-formal education in historic transitions in production (transition from production systems based on kinship and tributary systems to those based on market-based systems).

Other activities
- Chapter 7 on "Existing and Potential ESD Initiatives in the ESD Theme Areas" highlights many ongoing and possible new initiatives in the 6 theme areas as well as the cross-cutting theme areas.
- The Saskatchewan Education for Sustainable Development Working Group (SESDWG) is a broad based initiative with leadership from the Department of Learning of the Government of Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan Learning). It has received $65,000 this year of funding towards specific ESD projects in Saskatchewan. SESDWG has made a number of formal ESD commitments including
  o mapping ESD activities in Saskatchewan
  o providing seed money for youth sustainability forums in Saskatchewan
  o holding an ESD symposium tentatively set for March 22-23, 2007.

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