



International Consortium on Landslides

27 April 2008

Members of ICL and UNITWIN Network.

ICL and DPRI-KU are now compiling the UNITWIN Landslide Risk Mitigation for Society and Environment Cooperation Programme. The attached report is draft on 27 April including the input from the President and the Secretariat of ICL and DPRI-KU. I noticed the following new strategy of UNESCO on UNITWIN Networks.

UNESCO Executive Board adopted the strategic orientation for the UNITWIN Programme at 176th Session **in April 2007**.

Emphasis has been laid on:

- the dual function of UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks as “think tanks” and “bridge builders” between the academic world, civil society, local communities, research and policy-making;
- aligning the new UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks with UNESCO’s priorities as defined in its Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013;
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001499/149999e.pdf>
- strengthening North-South, South-South and North-South-South cooperation;
- creating poles of excellence and innovation at the regional or subregional level;
- reinforcing the dynamism of networks and partnerships.

Based on the new strategic orientation for UNITWIN Programme, UNESCO has decided to encourage some UNITWIN Network to become **Poles of Excellence and Innovation in September 2008**. It is defined as follows.

A pole of excellence is “a combination, in a specific geographical location, of universities, higher education institutions, training centres, foundations, and public or private research units working together on joint projects of an innovative nature. Such a partnership is structured around a specific field or theme that is consonant with UNESCO’s priorities, and must reach a critical mass in order to achieve a certain level of quality and international visibility”. A pole of excellence and innovation should:

- (i) conduct research activities fostering partnerships between research and services and industries;
- (ii) master the use of technology, in particular distance learning technology, to provide high-level training in its field;
- (iii) integrate public and private sources to ensure successful applications and developments;
- (iv) offer industry the possibility of using research results to implement profitable activities that have an impact on sustainable development;
- (v) innovate today for building tomorrow;
- (vi) provide leadership in technology innovation in education (by creating for example, ground-breaking software);

- (vii) act as a strategic resource pole offering a forum for sharing of knowledge and experience;
- (viii) contribute actively to developing the respective sector of activities at the national and/or regional level;
- (ix) offer research activities at international level that interfaces with the environment, and attract its own resources by having the capacity and the autonomy to bid for projects, which permit its implementation;
- (x) create institutional space, which can be virtual, for research and training and documentation, and an Internet site.

UNESCO Education Sector revised the Web and uploaded UNITWIN Progress Reports for the past two years in its web.

I will attach the current draft to major members of ICL and request to add possible input suitable for the purpose of UNITWIN and the above new policy of UNESCO on UNITWIN and **Poles of Excellence and Innovation**.

Due to time limitation and not enough explanation, I will send this letter together with the UNITWIN Report 2008 draft to core members of ICL which have already understood UNITWIN Programme with activities suitable for UNITWIN programme.

Please add your input when your organization will have activities appropriate for this programme **by 1 May 2009** to secretariat@iclhq.org.

With best regards,

Kyoji Sassa
Executive Director of ICL

Attached: UNITWIN Report 2008 Draft (27 April 2009)