Be a part of our inspirational learning and regional networking efforts!
In today’s fast-moving, globalised world, the human population is rapidly increasing, consumption is rising, growing numbers of people are travelling further and more often, and metropolitan areas are mushrooming. All of this growth is taking its toll on the earth’s natural resources and climate. In as early as 1972, “The Limits to Growth”, a report by the global think tank The Club of Rome, brought attention to the consequences of a growing human population and finite natural resources. The report argued that any attempt to reach a state of equilibrium must be based on a fundamental change in values and goals at individual, national and global level.
Although economic growth and environmental protection have traditionally been regarded as irreconcilable goals, a new paradigm is gradually emerging with the concept of sustainability, in which development is redefined as comprising environmental, economic and socio-political aspects in the interests of the more rational use and management of the world’s natural resources.

In order to achieve sustainability, action is needed, especially at the political level, to promote the necessary technical counter-measures in response to the devastating impact of our lifestyles on the planet. Firm commitments are needed in order to ensure the implementation of policies, development strategies and plans. Lack of leadership, knowledge, skills, determination and courage must also be addressed through education, capacity building and awareness raising.

In response to this challenge, the Italian Trust Fund (ITF) of the Regional Environmental Center (REC), under the auspices of the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, established a targeted programme designed to build the capacities of key leaders in the fields of politics, public service and business and of NGOs, while at the same time forging partnerships between these groups and academia. The programme — which includes comprehensive regional courses, certificate programmes and training for young environmental leaders — moves the focus of the debate from how to remedy the results of poor management to how to put in place preventive measures.

The programme allows representatives from different ministries and organisations to meet and share ideas over one or two weeks. Participants work in a stimulating, neutral setting in teams that transcend national differences. Environmental issues do not stop at national borders but are a common challenge that we must tackle together. The ultimate goal of the programme is therefore to spread the message that sustainable development is not merely a catchphrase, but the only opportunity we have to survive on our planet.
COURSES AND REGIONS

Since the programme was launched in 2004, almost 20 courses, attracting around 500 participants — including senior representatives of cities, local communities, regional and national governments, associations of towns and municipalities, regional development agencies and relevant businesses — have been delivered in several regions.

- Belarus and Ukraine
- Black Sea Countries
- Central and Eastern Europe
- Kazakhstan
- South Eastern Europe and the Visegrad Countries
- St Petersburg and the Leningrad Region
- Turkey
COURSE STRUCTURE, KEY TOPICS, LECTURERS AND VENUES

The curricula and high-quality training materials have been developed by senior experts and professors from leading institutions such as the REC, the Central European University, Bosphorus University and Venice International University, and focus on the practical application of the concepts of sustainable development. Key topics include environmental and resource economics; growth theory and strategy; corporate sustainability; environmental funding; capacity building for stakeholders; institutional and public participation mechanisms; preventive measures and environmental protection; the harmonisation of national environmental policies and law with EU legislation; sustainable green energy technologies and management; waste management; agriculture; and climate change.

Lectures, site visits and simulation games are facilitated by leading professors, practitioners and trainers from Europe and the United States, representing, for example, the European Commission, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, the University of Pennsylvania (USA), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and Bosphorus University (Turkey).

DONORS

The concept of the Sustainable Development Academy was initiated through the Italian Trust Fund by the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, which has been the main donor ever since its launch. Many governmental and private institutions now participate in the initiative, including BG Group, the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEIK), ISTAC Co., Bedol, Reware, ATP and KPMG.
JOIN THE ACADEMY!

If you are interested in participating in one of the forthcoming regional courses, please visit sdacademy.rec.org for more information. If you would like to learn more about the benefits of sponsoring the Sustainable Development Academy, please contact:

Ms. Stefania Romano
Sustainable Development Academy Topic Area Leader and Head of the Italian Trust Fund, The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe
Ady Endre ut 9-11 • 2000 Szentendre • Hungary
Tel: (36-26) 504-013 • Fax: (36-26) 311-294
e-mail: sromano@rec.org
sdacademy.rec.org

The course enables people from various ministries and organisations to form direct contacts free of bureaucratic complications. As a result, problems can be solved in the most efficient way.

Nana Pirtskhelani
Deputy Head, International Relations Department, Ministry of Energy, Georgia