

My Community, Our Earth

Success in Partnerships



towards Geographic Learning
for Sustainable Development

Dr. Patricia Solis
Association of American Geographers
United Nations CSD 16 Partnership Fair
New York, May 2008



Purpose

- Engage students in using the tools and concepts of geography to see how their communities can be made more sustainable
- Raise awareness of the importance of geography and geographic technologies to issues of sustainable development
- Foster critical thinking and stewardship by youth around the world



Partnership

- Association of American Geographers, Secretariat
- ESRI, Inc.
- National Geographic Society
- United Nations Environment Programme
- US Department of Agriculture
- Inter-American Development Bank
- US Department of State
- US Agency for International Development
- NOAA, USGS, GLOBE, GeoEye, ATG, and others...

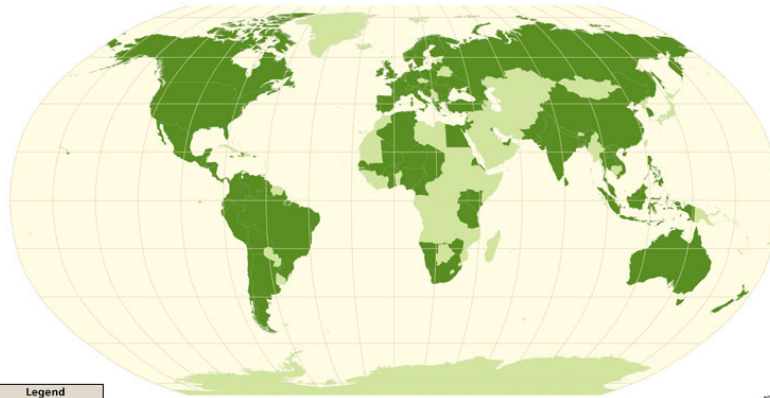


Outcomes of First Phase

- 2091 Resource Kits sent out to 103 countries
- 218 Student Projects submitted from 27 countries
- 514 Mentors registered from 63 countries
- Showcased at many international events
 - WSSD in Johannesburg, UNCSD series of meetings
 - IDB Annual Meeting in Milan
 - ESRI International User Conferences
 - AAG Annual Meetings, etc.



MyCOE Student Participation



Legend
MyCOE
■ Participant
■ Non-Participant

Student Participation by Country

Robinson Projection
Central Meridian 0.00
Source: ESRI Data & Maps CD



Project Gallery and Library

- MyCOE Projects are posted on the website in a searchable gallery
- All resources, data, software, materials, lesson plans are free
- Multi-lingual

www.geography.org/sustainable

The screenshot shows the 'mycommunity, our earth' website. The page title is '2002 Project Gallery'. Below the title, there is a navigation menu with options: 'home', 'site map', and 'contact us'. The main content area lists several projects with their descriptions and thumbnails. The projects listed are:

- Project 18: [Description \[PDF\]](#)
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA, United States
- Project 70: [Description \[PDF\]](#)
The University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN, United States
- Project 1070: [Description \[PDF\]](#)
University of Alexandria
Alexandria, Egypt
- Project 1197: [Description \[PDF\]](#)
M. E. Resulzade Anadolu Lisesi
Ankara, Turkey
- Project 1288: [Description \[PDF\]](#)
Ozel Kalamys Fen Lisesi
Ystanbul, Turkey
- Project 1404: [Description \[PDF\]](#)
University of Szczecin
Szczecin, West Pomeranian, Poland

Ongoing Programs

- Maintain Flexible Partnerships
- Develop Two-Tier Participation
 - E-communities and Web Library
 - Specific Funded Activities
- Address Partner Missions and Constituencies
- Link to Global Objectives
 - Millennium Development Goals
 - United Nations CSD
 - UN Decade of Education for SD
- Regional Focal and Thematic Initiatives



My Community, Our Earth: Geographic Learning for Sustainable Development 2007-2008 Biodiversity Initiative in Central America



The teams received a warm welcome at the Panamanian Ministry of Foreign Relations.



Testing out their GIS skills in the workshop, the group toured the Metropolitan Park, a national protected area inside of Panama City and gathered atop Cerro Anil.

Instructor Dr. Sierra (center, at computer) demonstrates geographic analytical techniques for conservation applications to workshop participants in the lab at the Technological University of Panama.



Project Coordination: Dr. Patricia Sells, AAG, psells@aag.org
 Instructor: Dr. Rodrigo Sierra, University of Texas at Austin
 Support: Dr. Matt Koopke, AAG
 Carrie Stokes, USAID, Gene Feainight, USGS
 G. Terborgh and Merrill Lyne, ESRI
 Thanks to The Geo Eye Foundation

Photos courtesy of Patricia Sells.

MyCOE partners are supporting interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral teams of university students and their mentors to learn geographic techniques for research applications around protected areas, threatened species, and related topics. A week-long hands-on workshop in Panama in January 2008 trained 25 participants on 12 Biodiversity Teams from Colombia, Panama, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Guatemala.

Through this two-year program, MyCOE is building the geographic technology capacity in Central America to protect biodiversity using GIS, remote sensing, and geospatial analytical techniques designed for such applications. The program is also strengthening collaboration among the region's universities, government environmental authorities, and NGOs to encourage multi-institutional approaches that address biodiversity and conservation with geography.

Students and their mentors were competitively selected for their long-term potential to contribute to the region's biodiversity issues. In addition to the workshop, they receive resources such as free GIS software from ESRI, tutorials, and mentoring from the AAG and the MyCOE partnership. Both students and their mentors receive modest stipends to conduct projects of 3 to 6 months and travel support, thanks to funding from USAID and logistical support from USGS and imagery donations from the Geo Eye Foundation.

Team projects use geographic information and technologies as a powerful component that facilitates new kinds of research, provide high level educational experience, and optimize complex studies toward biological conservation: from identifying coffee landscapes as biological corridors to serving as a framework for participative ecological restoration; from analyzing the danger of extinction of marine turtles due to illegal extraction to studying public arboreal spaces and urban biodiversity; our exceptional group of MyCOE participants are well on their way to making a difference, using tools and concepts of geography to protect our planet and our human habitat.

Support in Panama: Merly Asuarra Alvarez, Geoinfo ESRI National Distributor; Norma Martinez, University of Panama; Delva de Chambers, Technological University of Panama; Rita Ispolano, USAID Panama; Maria Sotillos, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute



For more information:
www.aag.org/our/sustainable

My Community, Our Earth: Geographic Learning for Sustainable Development
Building Capacity for Environmental Education in South Asia



Teachers in the Muslim Region of Mindanao, Philippines learn hands-on ways to integrate math and science curriculum with environmental subject matter, using geography and GIS.



The Philippine Science High School's Southern Mindanao Campus in the Tagbò District of Marikina, Davao City serves as the venue for the MyCOE Teacher Workshop, May 19-23, 2008.



Photos courtesy of Rochelle Pajaron and The World Land Trust.

MyCOE is promoting the use of Geography, GIS and GPS to improve environmental education in South Asia, developing tailored new materials and ready-to-use lesson plans for teachers at high school levels to incorporate field experiences in their classrooms. Materials and tutorials are based upon freely available data, lessons, and software, including ESRI's AEJEE, so teachers everywhere in the region can access the technologies at no cost.

The program will also provide travel support to attend a workshop in Davao, May 2008, and GPS equipment to 35 secondary school teachers competitively selected from more than 200 applicants in the Muslim Region of Mindanao, Philippines. The workshop will welcome the participants with a greeting from US Ambassador to the Philippines, Kristie Kenney, an avid supporter of environmental research and education in the country.

Capacity building and materials broach topics that include natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and flooding; ecoregions; environmental pollution; collection of local field data; watershed management; climate change; health and others.

MyCOE is creating new online support mechanisms, including a digital library, a e-community, and a collaborative space using wiki technologies for teacher-led follow-on activities to apply new techniques in their schools and share skills with other teachers.



Project Coordination: Dr. Patricia Solis, AAG, psolis@aag.org
Instructors: Dr. Susan Gallagher, AAG; Barbara Aih-Duke, Curriculum Integration and GIS in Education; and Dr. Lisa Krys-Matthews, University of North Alabama
Educational Team: Dr. Matt Koeppe, AAG, Dr. Joseph Kerski, ESRI
Support: Dr. Frances Colon, US Department of State
 In the Philippines: Caron De Mars, Environment Science and Technology Office of the US Embassy in Manila; Julia Barron, US Embassy; Corazon Monica Sebilo, The GLOBE Program, Philippines; and Rochelle Pajaron, Philippine Science High School.



For more information:
www.esri.com/sustainable

My Community, Our Earth: Geographic Learning for Sustainable Development
Supporting Basic Math and Science Education in the Muslim World



MyCOE participants gather in Tunis, Tunisia for networking and training, August 12-15, 2008, coinciding with the International Geographical Union Conference.



The group-based project approach used in MyCOE geographic learning activities encourages girls and young women to actively engage in the classroom.



Photos courtesy of the Association of Tunisian Geographers.

MyCOE is promoting the use of geography and GIS to support basic math and science education in the Muslim World. Working with collaborators in the Middle East, North Africa, and in the US, MyCOE is improving the availability of innovative educational resources and GIS software in Arabic for K-12 teachers in the region.

MyCOE is providing capacity training in the use of geographic technologies and hands-on active pedagogy that engages youth in math and science for 25 educators from Tunisia, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Yemen, selected competitively from across the region. Teachers will receive travel support as well as newly translated materials, including adapted award-winning geography learning resources and technology tools such as the freely available ESRI AEJEE software for educators in Arabic.

An important element of the program focuses on improvements in primary and secondary math and science education to a more interactive, hands-on approach that promotes the development of opinion formulation, fact-based decision-making, critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. This is accomplished using geography and GIS as an interdisciplinary pedagogical framework. These skills enable citizens to make informed decisions for their communities that advance democracy and help them to increase their employment options.

Participants will also become master trainers themselves and serve as resources for their colleagues back in their local communities.



Project Coordination: Dr. Patricia Solis, AAG, psolis@aag.org
Instructor: Dr. Yasser Ayed, Cluj University
Evaluator: Dr. Alha Benimmas, Université de Moncton
Support: Dr. Frances Colon, US Department of State
 Dr. Matt Koeppe, AAG
 Dr. Joseph Kerski, ESRI
 In Tunisia:
 Dr. Adnane Hayder, Association of Tunisian Geographers and the National Organizing Committee of the 31st International Geographical Union Congress



For more information:
www.esri.com/sustainable

Top Ten Lessons Learned

- Stay on Message: “Geography Matters”
- Create multiple pathways for participation
teachers - mentors - students - experts
- Recognize participants, partners, & champions
- Design responsive & flexible opportunities for partners to engage and contribute
- Strategic planning & steering committee
- Adopt continual improvement strategies
feedback - assessment - evaluation



Top Ten Lessons Learned

- Pursue funding & resources as continuous cycle
- Increase partnership’s human resource capacity
staffing abilities - ICT - matrix management
capturing talents of volunteers - turnover
- Forge linkages among sectors
academic institutions - government agencies -
private business - nonprofit - civil society
- Ensure long-term stable Secretariat (AAG 100y+)
- Produce and communicate results





Thank you!

Dr. Patricia Solís

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