

Survey report on CEC members' needs and communication circumstances

Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA)

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QUICK READ SUMMARY

Main findings

- CEC has currently members in 14 Eastern and Southern African (ESA) countries. Representatives of seven countries took place in the survey. Just over 22% of members participated in the survey. Survey results are considered indicative and must be interpreted with some caution.
- *Profiles of CEC members:* CEC members represent a wide range of institutions and technical backgrounds. A reasonable gender balance is observed, although youth representatives (under the age of 35) are underrepresented. Certain countries have no CEC members or only a very limited number.
- *Target and interaction groups:* The CEC ESA membership engages with a wide diversity of target/interaction groups. Whereas in the past a strong focus was on "traditional" Environmental Education, membership and expertise have broadened to address broader learning and communication needs, in line with trends observed in other CEC regions.
- *Communication interaction:* Access to online information seems to be an important need for CEC members in ESA. However, limitations in accessibility of internet are highlighted as key weaknesses. Limited resources to actually download, print and distribute materials seem to be a key barrier to effective use of internet based resources.
- Very few respondents seem to be familiar with more modern applications of social media and communication. Partially this seems to be due to a lack of exposure, however, another key issue remains the limited accessibility to the hardware. Although all respondents have access to internet and cell phones, the quality of connectivity, frequency of access and costs vary greatly between CEC members and countries.
- *Members' expectations of CEC:* Numerous ideas of what and how CEC can add value to the ongoing work of the experts and function as a network were proposed, especially serving as a provider of technical information.

Key recommendations

1. CEC regional

- *Membership:* Need to actively solicit members with CEC relevant expertise, in line with revolving CEC profile. Specifically identify CEC members in countries with no/little membership and target youth.
- *Network:* Review and improve network delivery to better meet CEC member key expectations; use survey results as planning foundation (see detailed proposals on page 9).

2. CEC global

- *Network:* Consider survey results in the further development and projects of the CEC Global, especially new networking approach. Design relevant and more specific follow-up surveys/ needs assessments..
- *Communication means:* Keep technical and technological barriers in mind, especially when CEC Global is devising strategies for improving its outreach and communication i.e. through a web-based communication platform. Needs of other target groups to be considered (constituency with whom the CEC members interface).

Background

In December 2009 the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) conducted a quick web survey among CEC worldwide, seeking input into planning and designing a new CEC website or web portal (see www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/cec?4483/CEC-website-survey-results for the result summary).

In the African regions it was found that some of the proposed website tools and technologies may be hard to navigate for our membership. We often are challenged by realities that prohibit long-time internet connectivity and downloading of larger files. It is often difficult to become a member of an online discussion group and overall connection to the global world of experts and practitioners may be harder to administer than generally believed. Further limited information was available from CEC members in Africa with regards to their own work constituency and needs and expectations with regard to their CEC membership.

A follow-up survey that had the following three main objectives was design and conducted in the Eastern and Southern African (ESA) and Western and Central African (WCA) regions in late March to early April.

The main objectives included:

1. To gain in-depth understanding about the suitability of the planned webportal for communication and use by our CEC membership in these regions – and on possible alternatives.
2. To assess with which key stakeholder groups our CEC members primarily work in their countries and what type of support from CEC they would require to facilitate their work.
3. To understand what the memberships' expectations are on the CEC as a network organization – and how such expectations can be met.

This report is divided into four key sections:

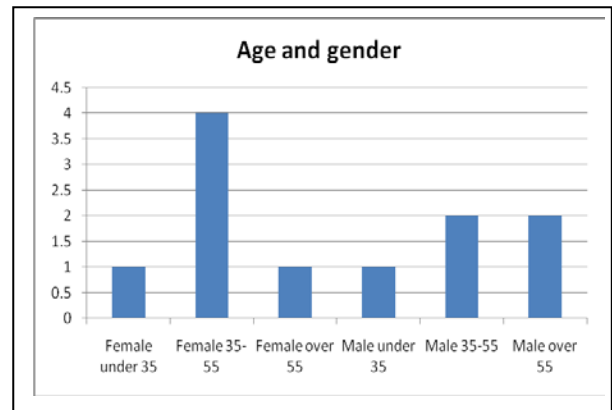
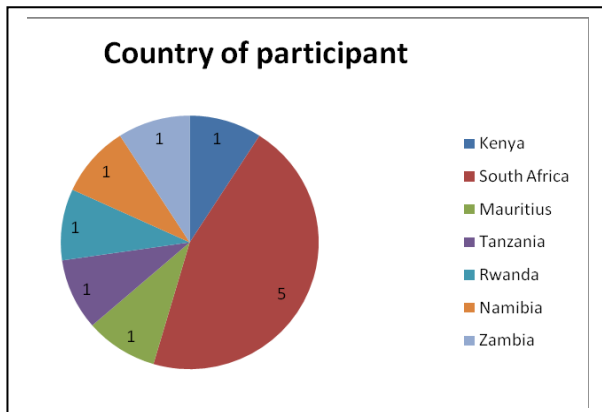
- Profile of respondents
- Learning and communication community interactions: key target group and operation profiles of CEC members in ESA
- Communication media used by CEC members in ESA region: key constraints and opportunities
- Members' expectations of CEC – globally and regionally and suggestions for operationalisation of network

It is noted that a relative low number of CEC members in the ESA region responded to the survey only (just over 20%). Consequently the results may not be fully representative and must be interpreted with some caution.

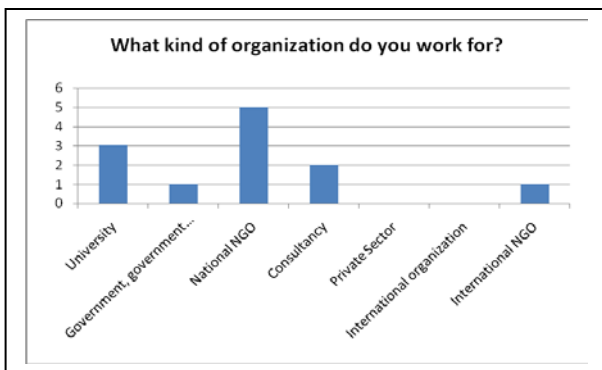
Profile of respondents

In ESA region a total of eleven (11) responses were received out of a membership of 49 CEC members, adding to a participation of 22.4 % of the membership. Not all questions were responded to by all survey participants.

Out of overall 14 countries that have CEC membership currently¹, members in seven (7) countries in the region, namely Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia (see Figure 1) submitted the online version of the questionnaire, with a majority of submissions made by South African CEC members. No responses on the to the survey request attached word file were received by mail or fax.



More female CEC members responded to the survey (6) compared to male members (5), and the highest contribution came from females in the age group between 35-55 years of age (Figure 2).



Many of the survey respondents worked with National Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (5), followed by Universities (3) and Consultancies (2), some having multiple functions in one or more organizations (Figure 3). Only one (1) respondent respectively worked for Government or an international NGO.

Discussion and thinking points

- Respondents from a good cross-section of CEC membership countries responded. There are clear gaps in country representatives in membership, which should be actively filled.
- A reasonable gender balance was observed in respondents, as well as age distribution, although experts under the age of 35 were underrepresented. The IUCN Youth group may be able to contribute to overcoming this weakness.
- CEC members represent a wide range of institutions – more so than in CEC Global membership, where most experts are associated with higher learning institutions. Does this represent a trend in newly emerging and regionally differing CEC needs?

¹ See CEC membership list, http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/cec_members_directory_east_southernafrica_march2010.pdf

Learning and communication community interactions: key target group and operation profiles of CEC members in ESA

Table 1 depicts with what type of target and interaction groups the CEC members from the ESA region mainly interact in their environmental education, communication and learning work. It is interesting that most respondents (multiple answers were possible in terms of Options 1 to 6) are working with Technical Professionals (21), whilst University (17), Schools (17) and Policy Makers (11) followed closely. According to the sub-groupings the single most interacted with stakeholder group are students at University level. Amongst the Technical Professionals it is interesting that a majority of interactions are with Government personnel in this category.

Selections under the Options (1 to 6, "first option", "second option" etc.) provided some more detailed ranking results. A relevant summary table is included in Annex 1.

Broad target group	Detailed sub-grouping	Score
Schools	School learners (Grade 1-7; primary level)	4
	School learners (Grade 8-12; secondary level)	4
	Teachers	3
	Teacher trainers	6
	TOTAL	17
Teacher Training Institutions	Teacher trainers	5
	Teaching students	6
	TOTAL	11
Universities	Lecturers	4
	Researchers	3
	Students	10
	TOTAL	17
Technical Professions	In government (head quarters/capital)	4
	In government (regional office/outstations)	6
	In NGOs (head quarters/capital)	2
	In NGOs (regional offices/outstations)	1
	In Community-based Organizations (CBOs) (head quarters/capital)	4
	In CBOs (regional offices/outstations)	4
	TOTAL	21
Policy Makers	In national government	5
	In national parliament	1
	In local authorities	7
	In local councils	2
	TOTAL	15
Donors	Donors	4
	TOTAL	4

Discussion and thinking points

- A majority of members work for national NGOs; overall the spread of institutional affiliation looks quite well spread especially when compared to overall CEC membership which mostly has academics from higher learning institutions on board.
- In the future soliciting of membership we should focus to cover all the main fields of expertise and institutional affiliations relevant to the expert support expected from the Commission.
- Although a quite good representation of different member countries was achieved through the survey, it would be pertinent to identify why other countries were not represented. Is it a matter of connectivity? Engagement? Other?
- Should membership soliciting, including appointments of National Activators, be pro-active and lead to a tighter network in all ESA countries? If so – how can this best be achieved?
- CEC members under the age of 35 are underrepresented.

Overall it seems rigorous to say that there is a trend that previously dominating interactions with traditional Environmental Education sectors do not necessarily prevail any longer in the ESA region. Although the specific content of the interactions with the target groups were not identified through the survey, the breadth of the target and interaction groups seems to indicate this trend.

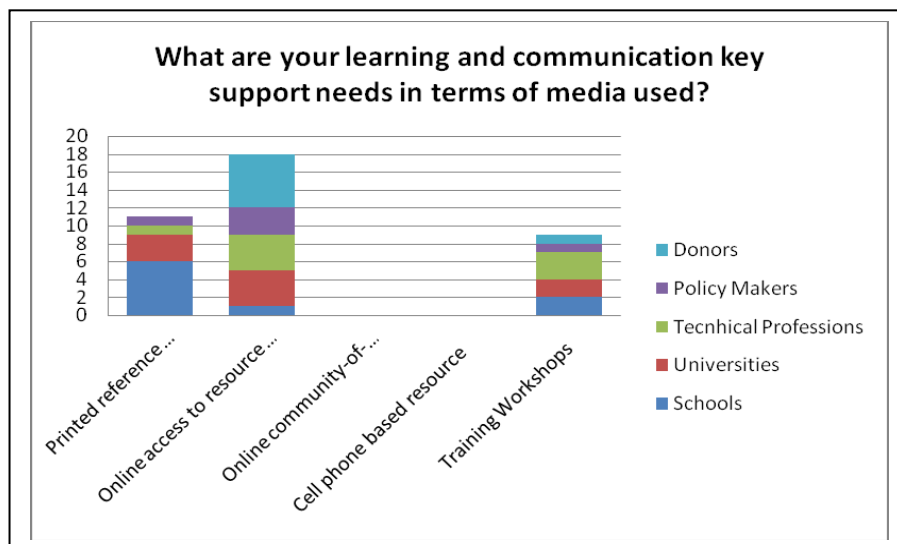
Assessing how our CEC members communicate/interact mostly with their respective key target groups, clearly the majority of interactions are via e-mail (21), followed by face-to-face meetings (12), used frequently with all target groups (Table 2). Fax and modern communication and social media platforms such as twitter are not used at all, whilst phone calls both through land lines and cell/mobile phones are limited. The most diversified means of communications are used for interactions with schools and donors, whilst those with policy makers are limited to e-mails and meetings.

	Schools	Universities	Technical professionals	Policy makers	Donors	TOTAL
Phone	2	1	0	0	1	4
Cell/mobile phone	1	0	1	0	1	3
Fax	0	0	0	0	0	0
Email	3	4	5	6	3	21
Internet communication platforms e.g. Twitter	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meetings	2	4	2	2	2	12

Enquiring about key learning and communication support needs in terms of media used with their various target and interaction groups (Figure 4), it is clear that CEC members in the ESA region mainly would envisage resource materials that are accessible online (19 votes). One respondent provided the following qualifying comment in this category:

“Often need reference material which can be used to be applied in the country context; meaningful outreach mostly through training workshops, meetings as well as targeted hand-outs; limited use of internet platforms usually due to technical problems especially, but not only, in Government”.

Additionally printed reference materials and training workshops per se were rated to be needed with 10 and 9 votes respectively, spread over the various key target and interaction groups. No single votes were pledged for social media and internet- or cell-phones based communication platforms.



Notable are the responses that have been provided to further explain and corroborate the choices, listed in the following table (Table 3), especially major constraints encountered with using or applying the respective tools and resources. Bottlenecks such as poor accessibility especially of internet infrastructure, prohibitively high costs for internet and printing infrastructure and consumables, but also cell phone use will be difficult to address, whilst capacity constraints in terms of lack of understanding and knowledge about certain tools could potentially be easier to overcome.

Support needs/tools	Constraints/opportunities (please elaborate)
Printed reference materials, e.g. books, publications, journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost of distribution (postage) high - Not currently accessible; too expensive - No access to printed CEC publications at the moment - Books and publications needed - (For?) Training workshops
Online access to resource materials (internet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broadband costs and availability limit e-learning options - Capacity of network often poor; poor internet server - No access to online materials - Limited funds for printing and disseminating materials
Online community-of-practitioners interactions e.g. Twitter/ Facebook, mailing lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time constraints - Lack of expertise; not used to these communication tools - Not widely used for work purposes
Cell phone based resource access and communication e.g. Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Costly - Time constraints - Lack of expertise; not used to these communication tools - Not widely used for work purposes
Training workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty of accessing/ supporting trainees in rural areas - Costly – reaches limited numbers of participants - Limited by time and appropriate equipment - Considered very effective method to reach target groups, but limited especially by costs
Technical seminars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost of venue/ catering and transport are high - Time constraints and appropriate equipment/ expertise are prohibitive - Considered very effective method to reach target groups, but limited especially by costs
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On the job training and mentorship; very effective, requires huge inputs from training provider; often not formally recognized – should develop relevant in-country policies

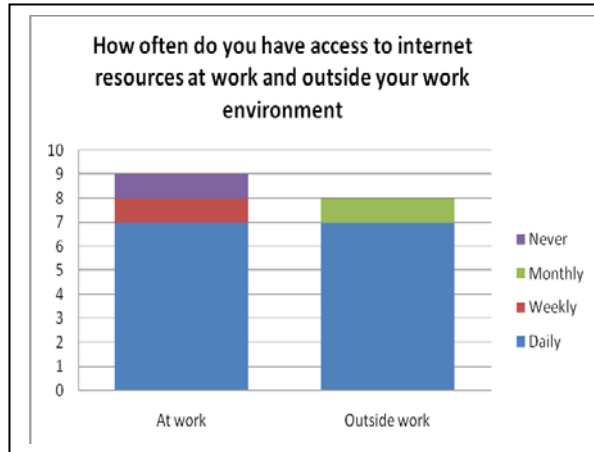
Discussion and thinking points

- *The CEC ESA membership engages with a wide diversity of target/interaction groups. Whereas in the past a strong focus on “tradition” Environmental Education was found, it seems that membership and expertise have broadened to address a broader learning and communication need. This seems to be well in line with trends observed in other CEC regions.*
- *Technical experts are amongst the largest target/interaction group.*
- *Access to online information seems to be an important need to CEC members in ESA. However, already here but also later in the survey limitations in accessibility of internet is highlighted as a key weakness. Limited resources to actually download, print and distribute materials seem to be a key barrier to effective use of internet based resources.*
- *Very few respondents seem to be familiar with more modern applications of social media and communication. Partially this is due to a lack of exposure, which could be overcome through specific CEC Global through interactions with their regional constituency, training event etc. However, another key issue remains the limited accessibility to the hardware – which is much harder to address by a network such as CEC.*
- *This survey made a first attempt at specifying members’ needs, which should be reflected in the further developments and projects of the CEC Global. However, it is also clear that more detailed follow-up investigations need to take place to more specifically identify e.g. the topical content of support information required, etc.*

Communication media used by CEC members in ESA region: key constraints and opportunities

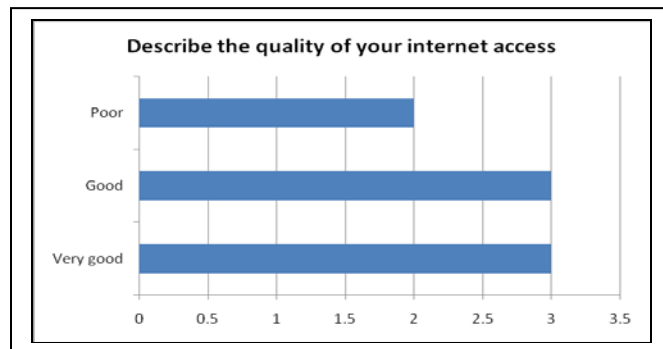
According to the survey, a majority of respondents do have daily internet access, both at work and at home (Figure 5), with most people connecting via Broadband, and several members in South Africa by Mobile Phone (Table 4). Accessibility and quality of access seem to vary greatly amongst members and especially countries, with South Africa offering by far the most advanced connection possibilities.

One question, which has not been addressed, is if those CEC members who did not respond to the survey did not do so due to accessibility limitations – which should possibly be further explored.

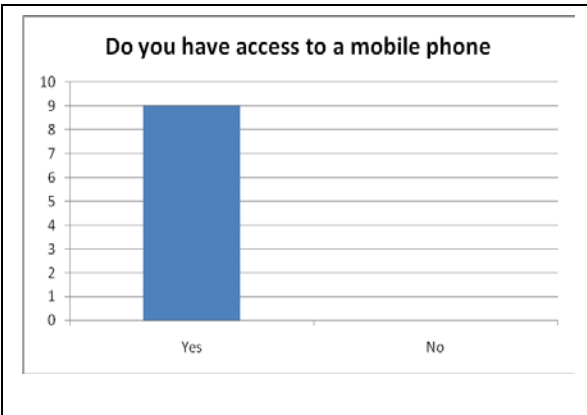


Way of connectivity	
Mobile Phone	3
Regular telephone line	0
Broadband (ISDN, ADSL, etc)	6
Home	4
Office	5
Internet café	2

The quality of internet access was rated quite positively with excellent to good quality reported by most respondents, whilst two respondents complained about poor access, one specifying that bandwidth limits were making the internet access slow (Figure 6). It should be noted that the majority of positive respondents are based in South Africa, and accessibility there may not be a good measure of accessibility elsewhere in the region. Only eight (8) out of 11 respondents answered this question.



All members taking part in the survey indicated that they have access to a mobile phone, both receiving and making phone calls (Figure 7). Only three (3) respondents have internet access via their phones and none of the respondents use their phone for social communication tools other than standard sms (Table 5).



Calls (Incoming)	0
Calls (Incoming and Outgoing)	9
SMS	7
Internet Access	3
Twitter and other group association	0

The cost of internet and cell phone subscription varies greatly within the ESA region. For internet the costs are ranging from US\$0.05 per MB traffic to US\$ 200.00 monthly subscription fee for a standing broadband line with predetermined maximum traffic. The average monthly subscription fee in South Africa averaged around 50 US\$, compared to the US\$ 200.00 in neighboring Namibia. It seems that most survey members are using work access, for which they are unable to determine the full cost. For cell phone subscriptions costs are generally lower ranging around 50 US\$ for low usage, and with a greatly varying bouquet of user and subscription options in most countries. “Pay-as-you-go” is a common option for more limited use and for people on a tighter budget to manage (although not necessarily the cheaper option).

Discussion and thinking points

- *Although all respondents have access to internet and cell phones, the quality of connectivity, frequency of access and costs vary greatly between CEC members and countries.*
- *This technical and technological barrier must be considered when CEC Global is devising strategies for improving its outreach and communication i.e. through a web-based communication platform.*
- *Considering that the CEC members in the region are probably amongst the better connected and set-up stakeholders in the region, strategies for reaching out to the overall IUCN constituency and the overall intended target groups of IUCN must be considered.*

Members' expectations of CEC – globally and regionally and suggestions for operationalisation of network

In a nutshell the expectations for the global and regional CEC are that the Commission serve as a network and facilitate network activities. Creating access to information especially for use and application in a local context in lectures, workshops, training materials etc. was cited frequently. Fellow CEC members were seen to avail their expertise e.g. as trainers or mentors on specific issues. A specific role in providing cutting edge information on e-learning, finding appropriate model(s) for promoting it is envisaged. The full list of contributions is included in [Box 1](#).

As a member of IUCN in the ESA region- what are your expectations from the global IUCN- CEC network?

- *To establish contact with other IUCN members involved in similar activities*
- *To provide the network and links*
- *Appreciate current information on global conservation issues*
- *Provide technical information on environmental issues for lecturers, workshop, and seminars with students, teachers, etc.*
- *Training and exchange of information and experience from fellow CEC members*
- *Active interaction amongst regional members of CEC interactions with other IUCN institutions (Secretariat, members)*
- *Specialist views and inputs into IUCN work especially from country level.*
- *Training workshops and materials, provide internet connectivity*
- *To help find the appropriate model(s) to promote e-learning in the southern African prohibit*

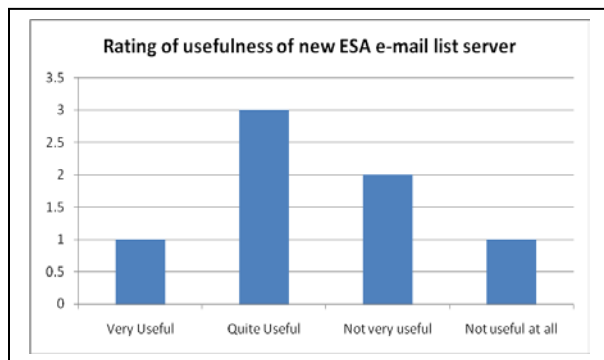
Ideas for how the specific regional interactions of the CEC could be improved to serve the various countries' needs mostly indicate that it would be extremely useful to have at least some face-to-face interaction for network members to get to know one another. It is recognized that the costs may be prohibitively high, but it is clear that workshops, meetings and personal interactions are rated to be of high value. Internet based communication and networking is identified as an option, however several remarks still draw to the fact that accessibility to adequate technology is a prohibiting factor. See [Box 2](#) for the full list of contributions.

How can CEC-ESA interactions be improved for your country/work?

- *More personal interaction, which are prohibited by costs*
- *Interaction where all members are called to share their experiences, members meet once per year*
- *Better role clarification*
- *Need to find practical work/interactions for all members to facilitate engagement*
- *Resource accessibility e.g. via enhanced internet communication platform (for those who have good access); specially facilitated interactions for those who do not have good internet access*
- *More meetings and workshops and networking*
- *Printed publications should be made available to members*
- *Regular access to reports, publications, discussion forums, workshops, seminars, etc*
- *Regular reminders with reference to latest news*
- *Need coordination*
- *Members can be alerted or supported to networking opportunities -similar members on separate database*
- *Support with additional bandwidth*

During the first quarter of 2010, a dedicated list server for ESA CEC membership was established by the global CEC. A suite of correspondences such as bi-monthly updates from the Regional Vice Chair and

specific requests for inputs e.g. into the agenda for the CEC Steering Committee Meeting and the to be tabled ESA report were posted.



Only seven (7) respondents answered this question, and four (4) found it quite useful, whilst three (3) did not find it very useful or not useful at all.

Six respondents provided more detailed comments, from which it emerged that mostly CEC members did not quite understand yet how it would function or had not even seen it. The most substantiated contribution was:

“ Good for sending out communications; not yet fully interactive; interface not user friendly and modern/professional enough”.

Other general comments on how CEC ESA could be strengthened mostly echoed the previous responses concerning the improvement of commissions operations, calling for more communication between Commission members, the revival of the regional network especially through establishing face-to-face meeting opportunities. One contribution explicitly highlighted again that is very difficult for smaller NGO's to keep up to date with new and fast IT trends and equipment – which makes effective interaction via internet-based communication platforms difficult.

Discussion and thinking points

- *Ideas discussed about strengthening and furthering the CEC Global and Regional networks by establishing a new structure that more specifically addresses the networking needs and transforming the Commission into a Networking Organisation seem to apply well to the needs of members in ESA.*
- *Draft ideas and tools presented as part of a global CEC communication and knowledge management platform during CEC's global Steering Committee (SC) meeting in April 2010 seem to address many ideas, needs and concerns of ESA CEC members.*
- *It seems pertinent that regional CEC members be more fully informed about the CEC Global plans and be further engaged in providing inputs into future working groups and projects. A first step would be detailed feedback from the SC meeting. Specifically regionalized communications may be required.*

**ANNEX 1: Your environmental learning and communication community interactions -
Who are your main interactions with (provide applicable options)**

Schools						Response Count
School learners (Grade 1-7; primary level)	School learners (Grade 8- 12; secondary level)	Teachers	Teacher trainers			
Option 1	57.1% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	42.9% (3)	7	
Option 2	0.0% (0)	100.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4	
Option 3	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	75.0% (3)	25.0% (1)	4	
Option 4	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (2)	2	
Option 5	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0	
Option 6	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0	

Teacher training institutions				Response Count
Teacher trainers		Teaching students		
Option 1	42.9% (3)	57.1% (4)		7
Option 2	0.0% (0)	100.0% (2)		2
Option 3	100.0% (1)	0.0% (0)		1
Option 4	100.0% (1)	0.0% (0)		1
Option 5	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)		0
Option 6	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)		0

University				Response Count
Lecturers	Researchers	Students		
Option 1	22.2% (2)	11.1% (1)	66.7% (6)	9
Option 2	25.0% (1)	25.0% (1)	50.0% (2)	4
Option 3	0.0% (0)	33.3% (1)	66.7% (2)	3
Option 4	100.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1
Option 5	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0
Option 6	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0

Technical professionals							Respos e Count
In government (HQ/capital)	In government (reg. office)	In NGOs (HQ /capital)	In NGOs (reg. offices)	In CBOs (HQ /capital)	In CBOs (reg. offices)		
Option 1	33.3% (3)	22.2% (2)	11.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (3)	0.0% (0)	9
Option 2	0.0% (0)	100.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	4
Option 3	25.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	25.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (2)	4
Option 4	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (1)	2
Option 5	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	1
Option 6	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (1)	1

Policy makers					Response Count
In national government	In national parliament	In local authorities	In local councils		
Option 1	57.1% (4)	0.0% (0)	42.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	7
Option 2	33.3% (1)	33.3% (1)	33.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	3
Option 3	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	66.7% (2)	33.3% (1)	3
Option 4	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	2
Option 5	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0

			0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0
			Donors		
			Donor		Response Count
Option 6	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0
Option 1	100.0% (4)				4
Option 2	0.0% (0)				0
Option 3	0.0% (0)				0
Option 4	0.0% (0)				0
Option 5	0.0% (0)				0
Option 6	0.0% (0)				0