Training the next generation of decision makers
Why focus on programs for young professionals?

- Climate change is an intergenerational challenge
- Young people will ultimately bear the responsibility for implementing the policies and programs necessary to address climate change.
- We must begin to incorporate their skills, knowledge and ideas into current strategies, and develop their capacity to become leaders.
Lessons learned from the youth outreach strategy on climate change

- Provide young people with access to in depth information on climate change and what they can do about it
- Provide young people with opportunities to make a difference
- Recognize and reward their work
Lessons learned from Canada25:
How to foster young professional talent in Canada

• Provide learning placements with top organizations and experts
• Open up opportunities to exercise real influence over strategies or projects
• Provide access to a global network of peers
• Provide opportunities for specialized training early in their careers
• Recognition programs
Core elements of IISD’s Internship Program

• Recruitment of top graduates for 6-month international placements
• IISD partnership with host organizations
• Joint terms of reference
• Pre placement training at IISD:
  • Includes both research and communications
• Provision of information and access to knowledge
• Monitoring throughout the placement
• Debriefing
• Ongoing contact with alumni
Sample climate change placements

TERI: analyzing the economic impacts of climate change on the agricultural sector in India

UNCTAD: recommendations for a training program in emissions trading

Arctic Centre, Finland: collection of indigenous observations on climate change

IVM: research on energy trade and carbon flows between Eastern Europe and the European Union

ENDA: information collection and synthesis on southern perspectives on climate change
Benefits

Interns

develop their research, communications, problem solving skills; build networks of peers and experts; provided with opportunities to have real influence; recognized for their contribution

Host organizations and IISD

value the exchange of knowledge and expertise, as well as the strengthening of partnerships; progress more quickly on important projects
Challenges to this approach

• A highly targeted, intensive approach to building capacity and bringing new ideas forward

• A shared investment by all parties

• Ongoing barriers to international mobility: visas, cost of living

• Currently restricted to those graduates who are not yet working

• Replicability
Considerations for an Article 6 work plan

• Consider young professionals as a key target audience

• Consider pilot projects to develop similar experiential programs for the young talent in developing/transitional country organizations

• Foster climate change partnerships across organizations through the exchange of young professionals

• Consider recognition and reward programs for young professionals