

LEARNINGS FROM THE INTEGRAL ECOLOGY PROJECT – SCAN PHASE (2020)

1. Background and Context

This report presents insights harvested from engagement with focus groups across the EREA community in a range of learning activities from Term 2 2018 to Term 4 2020. (refer to Engagement Map below).

This engagement was part of the Scan Phase of the Integral Ecology Project (IEP). The scan phase is the first of a series of phases that make up the IEP, and will inform the unfolding of the IEP which is set to run from 2020 - 2024¹.

This activity aligns to the aspirations, inspirations and challenges outlined in the EREA Principals' Ecological Sustainability Statement of 2018.

2. Aims of the Scan Phase of the Integral Ecology Project

- i. Throughout 2020, conduct an inquiry that identifies how schools make sense of 'integral ecology' and what's needed to apply it holistically.
- ii. Identify possible ways to build capacity and capability for learning, knowledge creation and practices around integral ecology.

3. IEP Scan 2020 Engagement Map

2018 - 2019	EChO across EREA Community of Practice (Southern Region)	Southern Region Ecological Educators	November 2018 February 2019 April 2019 June 2019	Focus Group
2019	EChO across EREA Community of Practice (Southern Region)	Northern Region Ecological Educators	August 2019 September 2019 November 2019	Focus Group
2020	EREA Regional Identity Teams Gatherings	Identity Leaders and colleagues	Term 1 2020 (three meetings)	Focus Group
2020	EChO across EREA Community of Practice (Eastern Region)	Eastern Region Ecological Educators	Term 1 2020	Focus Group

¹ The goals of the Integral Ecology Project can be found on page 5 & 6.

2020	EChO across EREA Community of Practice (National)	Ecological Educators	Term 2 2020	Focus Group
2020	Climate Change Survey of Young People across EREA	Young People	Term 3 2020	survey
2020	National EREA Community	Educators and Young People	November 2020	Most Significant Change

4. Insights from the Scan Phase of the Integral Ecology Project²³

4.1 Naming what we heard

The following four directions summarise what has been named:

i. *“Caring for Country” and caring for our common home*

- Connecting to the principles and practices associated with the way of life expressed by First Nations Peoples of this continent provides a means to co-create a new way of being and living out an integral ecology.

ii. *Co-Creating Knowledge and new ways of Learning that nurture care for our common home*

- We need to educate our young people in ways of knowing (experiential and place based) that leads to the cultivation of skills, practices and attitudes that embody principles of integral ecology so that they understand the systems that limit and enhance life.
- There is a need to provide education to **everybody** within our school communities about integral ecology in order to understand the associations between our educational mission and the new ways of living that our common home requires of all of us.

iii. *Designing and Implementing a Framework to enable a Whole of School Approach*

- A framework that enables a whole school community to integrate an ecological consciousness and associated practices within all that it does would be valued.
- Organising a framework as a continuum could support schools to begin where they are at while enhancing their practice over time.
- The inclusion of Benchmarks for ecological practices (eg, waste, energy use etc) could help to encourage the implementation of such practices.

iv. *Knowledge Exchange and Knowledge Creation across EREA*

² The COVID 19 pandemic limited the breadth of engagement in the scan, namely Principals, Business Managers and Leaders of Learning. In 2021, the IEP will seek to engage these voices with a focus on obtaining their own perspectives and their responses to the data from this scan.

³ Data from this engagement can be found on page 5.

- As a national community of significant capacity, we need to continue to find ways to learn together and co-create the knowledge that is needed through collaboration.
- Linking integral ecology to current organisational perspectives (eg Liberating Education, Reconciliation, Touchstones, Advocacy etc)

4.2 Responding to what was Named

In response to what was named by school communities across EREA, the following three Projects are being developed:

Project 1: “Caring for Country” EChO across EREA Community of Practice for school communities to participate in. (Design and consultation - Term 2 & 3, 2021)

- Schools will be invited to participate in a Community of Practice focusing on developing knowledge and practices associated with First Nations principles of ‘caring for country’. This will involve coming to understand and ‘Care for Country’ at their local school community level and exchanging this knowledge with other school communities across EREA. In doing so, school communities and EREA collectively will grow their knowledge and practice of caring for country and caring for our common home.
- With a focus on knowledge creation and exchange, this initiative would act as a prototype of Research Centres across EREA.
- The learning associated with this project would serve to support the pathway EREA has set for itself with respect to its Reconciliation Action Plan.
- The voice of young people would credibly inform the intent of this project and in doing so would provide meaningful learning experiences for young people.

Project 2: Design of Caring for Our Common Home: A Pathway for EREA – a framework for school communities across EREA that guides them towards integrating an ecological consciousness and associated practices. (Completed by Term 3 2021)

- This framework will seek to enable a whole school approach to embedding an ‘integral ecology’ response to ecological care.
- This framework will provide practical ways for school communities to enact principles related to integral ecology, including the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA)⁴ and the United Nations Sustainability Goals.
- Case studies and insights from EChO across EREA Communities of Practice hubs will be incorporated within this Framework to establish guidance and benchmarks for ecological practices and community engagement within schools.
- This framework will connect to existing documents such as EREA’s Justice and Peace Framework and the EREA Principals’ Ecological Sustainability Statement.

⁴ System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) has been adopted by the UN as the international standard. It is being applied to measure the UN Sustainability Goals. See <https://seea.un.org/content/seea-and-global-policy>

Project 3: *Developing a Knowledge Exchange & Creation Studio for EREA*

(Feasibility Report by Term 4, 2021)

- Co-Create a knowledge Exchange space as a support to the EREA National Community in its intention to build the capacity and capability for learning, knowledge creation and practices around integral ecology.

5. Next Steps for Integral Ecology Project

2021 Proposed Work Plan

- Develop *Caring for our Common Home: A Pathway for EREA*
- Research into Social Systems Mapping tool
- Engagement and Learning for *Caring for our Common Home: A Pathway for EREA*
- Integral Ecology Scan – Principals; Leaders of Learning
- Research and feasibility study - EREA Knowledge Exchange & Creation Studio
- Pilot/Prototypes
 - Caring for Country – EChO across EREA Community of Practice
 - Laudato si' and Leadership/Decision Making - EChO across EREA Community of Practice