

Education for Sustainable Development in Japan under GAP



March 2017

Major platforms and support schemes for ESD under GAP in Japan

In Japan, a number of platforms and support schemes have been formulated in order to systematically integrate ESD activities implemented by various stakeholders. Cases introduced below showcase the major activities implemented by the public sector.

Related Priority Action Area: ★ Policy support ★ Whole-institution approaches ★ Educators ★ Youth ★ Local communities

I. Intersectoral coordination

ESD Roundtable Meeting



- Comprise 23 ESD experts/stakeholders around Japan including teachers, NPOs, and academics from the fields of both education and sustainable development.
- **Meet annually to review the implementation of GAP and discuss the way forward.**
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and Ministry of Environment (MoE) jointly serve as the secretariat.

ESD Consortium Project



- **MEXT subsidizes the “ESD consortiums”** which are composed of the boards of education, universities, ASPnet schools, the private sector and so on.
- **Each consortium is requested to have an ESD coordinator.**
- 14 consortiums exist now, and MEXT will subsidize these consortiums up to 3 years.

ESD Promotion Network



- Platform set up with the support of MEXT and MoE in order to **enhance collaboration between the school education system and environmental education programs.**
- While the national centre is located in Tokyo, there is a plan to establish 8 regional centres, based on the locations of the MoE branches.
- Each regional centre has a steering committee

II. Capacity building schemes

Capacity Building for schools and educators



- In FY2016, MEXT designated 24 schools for support. MEXT supports schools that are willing to implement ESD practices by **conducting training, sending experts** etc.
- MEXT **developed “A Guideline on Promoting ESD”** in 2016 for supervisors in boards of education and school administrators. MEXT also conducted teacher training specifically aiming at how to make use of this guideline.

Capacity Building for Environmental Education Practitioners



- MoE conducts **capacity building program (training and award)** targeting staff in charge of environmental issue and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) **in the private sector from ESD perspective.**
- MoE conducts teacher training for environmental education practitioners who are elementary and secondary school teachers.

III. Interministerial coordination

Interministerial meetings on ESD



- **Comprise 11 ministries**, chaired by the administrative vice ministers of MEXT and MoE.
- Formulated **“Implementation Plan of GAP in Japan”**, which stipulates the action needed to be taken by the public sector in March 2016.

IV. Activities on youth

Youth Conference/ Networks



- Starting from 2014, **MEXT has organized annual ESD Japan Youth Conferences**, which around 50 youths selected from among a number of applicants attend.
- MoE, together with environmental agencies and UNU, conducts a project promoting the **formation of ESD networks among high school students.**

V. Developing databases

Developing ESD Database



- Based on the Act on the Promotion of Environmental Conservation Activities through Environmental Education, the **Government identifies and registers personnel and private-sector** entities that are capable of teaching environmental education.
- MoE launched **“+ESD Project”**, which aims at visualizing and connecting ESD activities through the building of an ESD project database.

UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet Schools) in Japan



- MEXT and the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO designated **ASPnet Schools as hubs to promote ESD**.
- The number of member schools increased during UNDESD from 19 in 2005 to 1,044 in 2016. This is the largest number in the world.
- **Guidelines for the ASPnet Schools** have been prepared in order to ensure their quality.

The guidelines for the UNESCO Associated Schools (Summary)

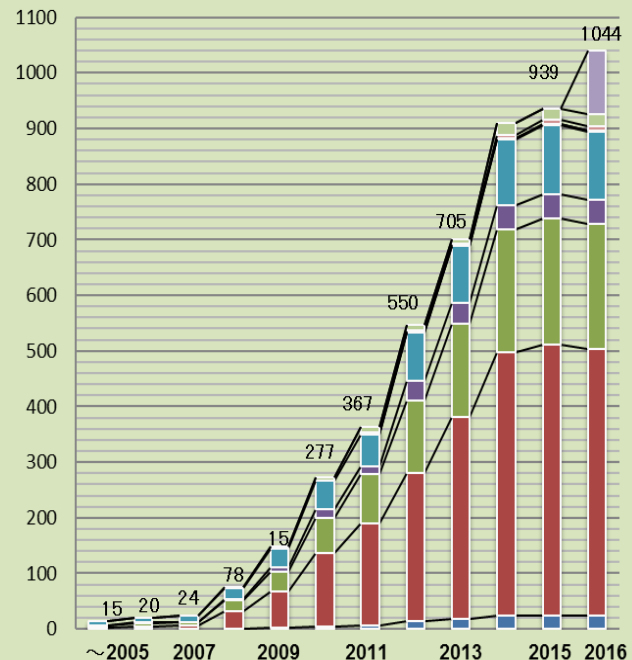
i) What is expected of ASPnet Schools

- Mutually learn from one another through the network.
- Build an open network through collaboration with multi-stakeholders.
- Widely promote ESD outside of school.
- Indicate in the school management policies the efforts to implement the activities of ASPnet Schools.

ii) What is expected of hubs to promote ESD

- Clarify the qualities and abilities that the schools wish to foster through ESD, and make efforts to formulate curricula that put emphasis on the process of learning that aims at problem solving.
- Make efforts to improve teaching methods.
- Engage in research and practice and endeavor to spread the ESD concepts.

Changes in the No. of ASPnet Schools in Japan



Support schemes for ASPnet Schools

● **Secretariat of ASPnet Schools**

A secretariat to manage the ASPnet Schools has been established. The secretariat also operates the official website, which functions as the clearing house for accessing good practices, useful materials, information on events etc. For FY2016, MEXT commissioned its operation to ACCU.

● **“Inter-University Network to Support the ASPnet Schools (ASPUnivNet)”**

A network comprising 20 universities was created to advise and support activities and the application process for becoming an ASPnet Schools.

● **Japan National UNESCO ASPnet Conference**

Since 2009, MEXT has been organizing an annual national conference to provide opportunities for ESD practitioners to discuss and share good practices on ESD conducted in ASPnet Schools. It attracts hundreds of participants each year.

Voices from **GAP** Key Partners in **Japan**

MEXT, Japan/ Japanese National Commission

As Japan is the Member State that proposed UNDESD, MEXT/Japanese National Commission play a central role in promoting and scaling-up ESD both domestically and internationally. **Scaling-up ESD is only possible when stakeholders themselves play their best roles.** Thus, we recognize that our task is to motivate and support ESD stakeholders by providing various platforms.

Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)

ACCU has been dedicating to human resource development and mutual understanding in the fields of culture and education in line with UNESCO's philosophy within Japan and overseas. Commissioned by MEXT, **ACCU is a secretariat for UNESCO ASPnet in Japan.** We are also a key partner of Priority Action area 2 on GAP, **focusing on whole-institution approach.**

The Goi Peace Foundation

Since 2014, **the annual ESD Japan Youth Conference has been instrumental in promoting youth involvement in ESD.** A national ESD youth network has emerged out of the conference and the circle is growing every year. We are excited to be collaborating with MEXT in advancing this youth-led platform to catalyze more collaborations and innovations in ESD.

Okayama City

Okayama City has been promoting the 'Okayama ESD Project' with various stakeholders since 2005. **The locally-rooted 'whole-city approach' to ESD,** which facilitate learning and actions of citizens, from children to the elderly, **is appreciated as a model for other communities.** The project won the UNESCO-Japan Prize on ESD in 2016.

RCE Chubu

As a regional network located in the host city of the UNESCO World Conference on ESD held in 2014, RCE Chubu is conducting ESD activities which contribute to achieve the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on ESD. With **promoting the Bioregional/Watershed ESD Model,** we are developing ESD activities in both formal and non/in-formal education, locally and globally.

ESD in Japan: Characteristics and the way forward

1. ESD has been developed in School Education [★Policy support + ★Educators]

In Japan, **schools are playing a key role as a platform to promote ESD**. ESD is included in the government's 5-year basic plan on promoting education, and the perspective of building sustainable development is included in the National Curriculum Standard.

Next step To enhance understanding of ESD through teacher training, encourage local boards of education to use the **“Guideline on Promoting ESD”** developed by MEXT.

2. ESD has been integrated with environmental education

[★Policy support + ★Whole-institution approach + ★Local community]

Japan has a long history of promoting environmental education. It is important to make use of this foundation with the added perspective of ESD.

Next step Publicize and encourage utilization of the **“ESD promoting network”**, a platform established with the support of MEXT and MoE in order to enhance further collaboration between the education sector and the environmental sector .

3. ESD and SDGs – activities embedded in daily activities

[★Policy support + ★Local Community]

The perspectives of ESD have been embedded in various areas not necessarily labelled “ESD”. These include activities on SDGs, in which many more private sector-stakeholders are becoming active.

Next step Strengthen the role of **ESD as an enabler for achieving SDGs** and continue discussion on how ESD can contribute to SDGs.

4. ESD is implemented with various stakeholders in local communities

[★Policy Support + ★Whole-institution approach + ★Educators + ★Youth + ★Local community]

ESD contributes to the involvement of various stakeholders in order to ensure the **sustainability of local communities** .

Next step Share the good practices resulting from the **ESD Consortium Project**, and make use of its achievements for the future.