

Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development

We, the participants of the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, from 10 to 12 November 2014, adopt this Declaration and call for urgent action to further strengthen and scale up Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), in order to enable current generations to meet their needs while allowing future generations to meet their own, with a balanced and integrated approach regarding the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. This Declaration recognises that people are at the centre of sustainable development and builds on the achievements of the United Nations (UN) Decade of ESD (2005-2014); the deliberations of the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Aichi-Nagoya; and the Stakeholder Meetings held in Okayama, Japan, from 4 to 8 November 2014, namely, UNESCO ASPnet International ESD events, the UNESCO ESD Youth Conference, the Global Regional Centres of Expertise Conference, and other relevant events and consultation processes, including regional ministerial meetings. We express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Japan for hosting the UNESCO World Conference on ESD.

1. **CELEBRATING** the significant achievements made by the UN Decade of ESD (2005-2014), in particular, in putting ESD higher on national and international agendas, advancing policy, improving the conceptual understanding of ESD, and generating substantive good practice amongst a wide range of stakeholders,
2. **EXPRESSING** our appreciation to many governments, UN entities, non-governmental organizations, all types of educational institutions and setups, educators and learners in schools, communities and workplaces, youth, the scientific community, academia and other stakeholders who have actively committed to and participated in the implementation of the UN Decade of ESD, and to UNESCO for the leadership role it has played as lead agency of the Decade,
3. **RECALLING** the international commitment to further promoting ESD that was included in the outcome document of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), *The Future We Want*,
4. **NOTING** that the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, endorsed by the 37th session of the General Conference of UNESCO as a follow up to the Decade of ESD and a concrete contribution to the post-2015 agenda, aims at generating and scaling up ESD actions in all levels and areas of education, training and learning,
5. **REAFFIRMING** ESD as a vital means of implementation for sustainable development, as recognised in intergovernmental agreements on climate change (Article 6 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Doha work programme), biodiversity (Article 13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its work programmes and related decisions), disaster risk reduction (Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015), sustainable consumption and production (Sustainable Lifestyles and Education Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production 2012-2021), and children's rights (Articles 24[2], 28 and 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child), among many others,
6. **WELCOMING** the growing international recognition of ESD as an integral and transformative element of inclusive quality education and lifelong learning and an enabler for sustainable development, as demonstrated by the inclusion of ESD as a target in the Muscat Agreement adopted at the 2014 Global Education For All Meeting and in the proposal for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the Open Working Group of the UN General Assembly on SDGs,
7. **RECOGNISING** the establishment of the UNESCO-Japan Prize on ESD approved by the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 195th session,

We, the participants,

8. **EMPHASISE** the potential of ESD to empower learners to transform themselves and the society they live in by developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, competences and values required for addressing global citizenship and local contextual challenges of the present and the future, such as critical and systemic thinking, analytical problem-solving, creativity, working collaboratively and making decisions in the face of uncertainty, and understanding of the interconnectedness of global challenges and responsibilities emanating from such awareness,

9. **STRESS** that ESD is an opportunity and a responsibility that should engage both developed and developing countries in intensifying efforts for poverty eradication, reduction of inequalities, environmental protection and economic growth, with a view to promoting equitable, more sustainable economies and societies benefiting all countries, especially those most vulnerable such as Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries,
10. **UNDERScore** that the implementation of ESD should fully take into consideration local, national, regional and global contexts, as well as the contribution of culture to sustainable development and the need for respecting peace, non-violence, cultural diversity, local and traditional knowledge and indigenous wisdom and practices, and universal principles such as human rights, gender equality, democracy, and social justice,
11. **APPRECIATE** the commitments to ESD expressed by all concerned stakeholders through their specific contributions to the GAP Launch Commitments,
12. **COMMIT** ourselves to building and maintaining the momentum of the launching of the GAP, in its five Priority Action Areas for ESD, namely policy support, whole-institution approaches, educators, youth, and local communities, through inclusive quality education and lifelong learning via formal, non-formal and informal settings,
13. **CALL UPON** all concerned stakeholders, including governments and their affiliated institutions and networks, civil society organisations and groups, the private sector, media, the academic and research community, and education and training institutions and centres as well as UN entities, bilateral and multilateral development agencies and other types of intergovernmental organisations at all levels, to: a) set specific goals, b) develop, support and implement activities, c) create platforms for sharing experiences (including ICT-based platforms), and d) strengthen monitoring and evaluation approaches in the five Priority Action Areas of the GAP in a synergistic manner,
14. **URGE** all concerned stakeholders, in particular Ministries of Education and all ministries involved with ESD, higher education institutions and the scientific and other knowledge communities to engage in collaborative and transformative knowledge production, dissemination and utilization, and promotion of innovation across sectoral and disciplinary boundaries at the science-policy-ESD practice interface to enrich decision-making and capacity building for sustainable development with emphasis on involving and respecting youth as key stakeholders,
15. **INVITE** governments of UNESCO Member States to make further efforts to:
 - a) Review the purposes and values that underpin education, assess the extent to which education policy and curricula are achieving the goals of ESD; reinforce the integration of ESD into education, training, and sustainable development policies, with a special attention paid to system-wide and holistic approaches and multi-stakeholder cooperation and partnerships between actors of the education sector, private sector, civil society and those working in the various areas of sustainable development; and ensure the education, training and professional development of teachers and other educators to successfully integrate ESD into teaching and learning;
 - b) Allocate and mobilise substantial resources to translate policies into actions, especially building necessary institutional capacities for both formal and non-formal education and learning at national and sub-national levels along the five Priority Actions Areas of the GAP; and
 - c) Reflect and strengthen ESD in the post-2015 agenda and its follow-up processes, ensuring, first, that ESD is maintained as a target in the education goal and also integrated in SDGs as a cross-cutting theme; and, second, that the outcomes of the 2014 World Conference on ESD are taken into consideration at the World Education Forum 2015 to be held in Incheon, Republic of Korea from 19 to 22 May 2015,
16. **REQUEST** UNESCO's Director-General to continue to:
 - a) Provide global leadership, support policy synergy, and facilitate communication for ESD, in cooperation with governments, other UN entities, development partners, private sector and civil society, within the framework of the UNESCO Roadmap to Implement the GAP;
 - b) Harness partnerships and mobilise networks including the UNESCO ASPnet, UNESCO Chairs, Centres under the auspices of UNESCO, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites, as well as UNESCO Clubs and Associations; and
 - c) Advocate the importance of ensuring adequate resources including funding for ESD.

The Joint Declaration of
UNESCO ASPnet International ESD Events for Students and Teachers
Platform for Students

Adopted on November 7, 2014

People around world have been making huge efforts to solve both global and regional issues. It is true that societies have made good progress when it comes to wars, conflicts, the environment, culture, energy and food. However, today we still face many problems. For these reasons, we, as ASPnet high school students, are committed to learning from one another, taking into account our diverse regional backgrounds, with the aim of learning more about the world's important issues.

We are now at the end of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, which began in 2005. Throughout the past 10 years, we have learned the importance of mutual learning and of developing a shared attitude towards global issues. This has been achieved in the clear belief that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is essential to the success of sustainable development around the world. As a result, it seems that the world is looking to us, the younger generation, to commit ourselves to solving these problems – now more than ever.

Today, in November 2014, we have come together here in Okayama City, Japan, as high school students from thirty-two nations, representing a new generation of ESD. Our discussions began with familiar issues under the themes of 'What factors do we believe block sustainability in everyday life and society?' and 'What is important when it comes to promoting sustainability?'

Subsequently, we discussed what we mean by 'development', and here we agreed on the diversity of its applications. We shared the opinion that, as high school students, we need to take the lead in respecting the environment, our culture, our traditions, and other human beings – regardless of their age or where they live. We need to spread our ideas as widely as we can through a range of demonstrable activities and do this in a responsible way. To achieve our aims, we believe that it is important for us to start with small actions in our immediate vicinities. For example we can cooperate with our friends, promote recycling and participate in volunteer activities, all the while demonstrating to an increasing number of people the range of enjoyable opportunities that ESD provides. This will interest other people in ESD and in the younger generation as a result of our unique, creative projects. In short, we agreed there are many things

we can do together.

Based on these discussions, we then exchanged opinions and ideas to explore what we, as high school students, can and should do now and in the future. Finally, we arrived at the following five conclusions:

1. We are not helpless but our abilities may be limited. However, we are keen to cooperate with each other, to make full use of the opportunities that exist for learning about sustainability, and to disseminate information on ESD.

2. We are conscious that every single one of us, as high school students, are human beings living on Earth. As such, we need to be conscious of the environment and the natural world around us. In the longer term, we need to take responsible actions in specific ways to encourage ESD where it is not yet taught in schools.

3. Each of us has a responsibility to share and respect a variety of lifestyles, cultures and opinions by fostering connections with each other so that we can promote mutual understanding and inspiration.

4. People need to learn how to connect or communicate with each other more, to know what peace and human rights are, and what the individual can achieve through education. This should consist of topics such as gender equality, human rights, peace, and awareness raising. In all of this, we need to be conscious of the important role that education plays.

5. Every one of us needs to be conscious of all the above-mentioned and make every effort to develop clear personal objectives.

**Okayama Declaration of
the UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan
Promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
beyond
the United Nations Decade of ESD**

What ESD means to us

I am connected to you, to everyone at school, to everyone in the community, an inclusive community, and to everyone in the world.

Therefore, even though you may be hidden from my view, recognizing the value of my role in encouraging each other and supporting each other makes me want to do something.

My world extends from the classroom to the schoolyard, from the schoolyard to the community, from the community to my country, from my country to your country, and then further to the world and to the Planet.

Therefore, recognizing that precious living treasures are present everywhere, makes me want to do something.

Connections with the past, with tomorrow and with the distant future. Now, I am connected with the past and with the future.

Therefore, recognizing that I shoulder an important responsibility amid this long passage of time, makes me want to do something.

Based on a message from teachers describing their perceptions of student transformation at a UNESCO Associated elementary School

Incorporating the ESD vision will lead to the creation of various connections within children's learning - connections between themselves and other people, as well as with the diversity of the world, the living earth, nature, science and technology, culture, the past and the future. Amid such connections, learning will deepen and survive in the hearts of children, and it will support the creation of a sustainable future. This support will be in the form of power to invoke action and collaboration, and the ability to continue inquiring and learning.

Outcomes of the UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan under the UN Decade of ESD

In 1953, UNESCO launched a programme to realize its ideals in schools around the world. Schools in Japan have participated in the programme from the outset. In Japan, the Course of Study (National Curriculum Standard) and the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education incorporate the ideas of constructing a sustainable society and promoting ESD. UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan were positioned as bases for promoting ESD in accordance with the Proposal regarding the effective utilization of UNESCO Associated Schools for the promotion and dissemination of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (February 2008) by the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO. Through the ESD vision, and by virtue of teachers who empathize with the objectives of UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network

(ASPnet), and of people and organizations that support the schools, UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan increased dramatically in number, to reach a current total of 807. Thanks to the UNESCO Associated Schools across Japan, the scope of ESD in school education broadened significantly. The UN Decade of ESD has led to many positive outcomes in ESD in UNESCO Associated Schools.

By implementing ESD in UNESCO Associated Schools, topics such as peace, the environment, biodiversity, energy, human rights, international understanding, multicultural coexistence, disaster risk reduction, cultural heritage and regional studies were considered as entry points to learning. Projects and curricula were developed for identifying and resolving key issues in a hands-on, investigative manner. As well as in individual subject areas, ESD has been implemented by drawing connections between curriculum areas, effectively utilizing the Integrated Study Hours and other school activities.

Through implementing ESD that makes the most of the unique characteristics of a region, the children have gained a deeper understanding of how local communities are formed by people supporting each other. They have learned about the merits of communities and the issues they face. In addition, together with local people, they have considered what to hand down to future generations and what to reform, and they have learned about translating these ideas into action. ESD has also been leading to a shared understanding that the issues faced by local communities are linked to those at national, Asian and global levels and that joint efforts to overcome geographical distances and differences in generation and status enables us to create a sustainable future.

The children now view various local and global issues as their own. They have nurtured a “zest for living” while learning collaboratively, and they have developed an awareness that they are the future leaders of society. It is now realized that experiential learning and scientific investigation, through ESD, foster communication skills and critical thinking. They assist individuals in creating a sustainable future either individually or in collaboration with others.

A transformation occurred in the awareness of teachers guided by the ESD vision. Rather than merely communicating knowledge, teachers adopted an attitude of designing and coordinating child-centered study while learning together with their students. There were instances where this attitude changed the children, and changes in the children brought about changes in their school, which in turn brought about changes in the community. It brought out the inner strength of those children in Japan who were regarded as being indifferent to society and as having low self-esteem. It let them to gain self-confidence. Exchanges between schools led to the realization of an even deeper level of learning.

Moreover, collaboration deepened between schools and boards of education, parents/guardians, local stakeholders, NGOs and NPOs, businesses, universities and specialized institutions, the quality of ESD in practice improved. It also led to confirmation of the joy of trans-generational learning.

The Great East Japan Earthquake of 11 March 2011 wrecked tremendous damage. However, in certain areas, ESD that had been embedded in schools and communities contributed significantly to the disaster recovery, with a great deal of compassionate support being extended to the affected areas through domestic and international networks. Education aimed at creative reconstruction and based on a philosophy of ESD is being conducted for the revitalization and re-creation of local areas.

UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan: Our commitment

We will commit to continuing the promotion of ESD as a driving force for transforming education in Japan.

We will:

- Nurture the next generation who will contribute to their own community and to take actions with global viewpoint for creating a sustainable future.
- Realize education with deeper awareness of interconnectedness in cooperation with members of the community and other stakeholders, no matter what approach to learning or the subject, in order to create a broader commitment to peace and sustainability in local communities, in Japan, in Asia, and in the world. Approaches to learning and subjects include peace, the environment, climate change, biodiversity, international understanding, multicultural coexistence, energy, human rights, gender, disaster risk reduction, cultural heritage, regional studies and sustainable consumption and production.
- Illustrate transformation of students, teachers, schools and communities through ESD to spread the ESD vision, while understanding the essence of ESD.
- Engage in thematic learning and collaborative learning together with UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan and overseas, especially those in neighboring Asian countries. Through such learning we will enhance understanding of, explore solutions and take actions for cross-border global issues such as climate change, biodiversity, disaster risk reduction and sustainable consumption and production.
- Develop a national network, organized voluntarily, with fellow UNESCO Associated Schools in order to learn from each other and to raise the quality of activities. We will promote interaction and collaboration among UNESCO Associated Schools, and then enhance mechanisms for the exchange and use of information.
- Strive to be a practitioner of sustainability in the local community to contribute to the development of sustainable communities together with other schools, non-formal and lifelong learning institutions, NGOs, NPOs, local governments and various other stakeholders, recognizing children and teachers as “agents of change.”
- Continue dialogue and cooperation with various stakeholders to link together the five priority action areas in the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, which is a follow-up to the UN Decade of ESD.
- Encourage UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan and those in all the other countries, as

members of a network spanning 181 countries worldwide, to cooperate in building a sustainable future and, in this context, to learn from each other by creating various opportunities for exchange and collaboration.

Proposal from UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan to further promotion of ESD by schools

Based on the outcomes and challenges of UNESCO Associated Schools in their capacity as bases for promoting ESD under the UN Decade of ESD, in order to fully realize our commitment and to steadily extend ESD to schools outside the network of UNESCO Associated Schools and to the wider community, we make the following proposals to all schools, including UNESCO Associated Schools, and to the supporters of those schools.

- Respect the independent initiatives and ideas of teachers and students, and promote ESD across the whole school by developing creative lessons and by developing investigative and interdisciplinary curricula.
- Consider and share ways for monitoring and evaluating ESD outcomes including methods for voluntarily evaluating children's development and quality of learning through ESD.
- Build policies and systems that provide sustained support for ESD at each school, and arrange the foundation for the school principals to exercise their leadership while respecting the characteristics of ESD.
- Expand the in-service training programmes for teachers and others involved in education to deepen their understanding of sustainability from a local/global perspective while making the best use of their expertise.
- Create mechanisms in the community whereby various stakeholders can participate, cooperate and collaborate in the development of a sustainable society.

All children possess unlimited potential. Around the world teachers share an aspiration to provide quality education so that their potential can be realized. While sharing the same aspiration of parents/guardians and others in the community who nurture these children, we will promote ESD in order to create a peaceful and sustainable future.

8 November 2014

Adopted by participants at the 6th Japan's National UNESCO ASPnet Conference (Okayama, Japan) during the UNESCO ASPnet International ESD Events in conjunction of the UNESCO World Conference on ESD

(Provisional translation: Original Japanese)



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Education for Sustainable Development 2014
World Conference, Aichi-Nagoya, 10-12 November
Stakeholder Meetings, Okayama, 4-8 November



UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development
Stakeholder Meeting

UNESCO ESD **YOUTH** CONFERENCE

7 November 2014 • Okayama, Japan

YOUTH STATEMENT

This Youth Statement was adopted at the UNESCO ESD Youth Conference held in Okayama, Japan, on 7 November 2014, to provide a vision, commitment, and recommendations from youth for advancing ESD beyond 2014 in line with the Global Action Programme on ESD. It represents the voices of 50 ESD youth leaders in the conference, who in turn represent thousands of young people around the globe, and also includes contributions from over a hundred youth who participated in pre-conference online discussions.

Vision for a Sustainable Future

We invite you to take a moment as you read this statement to hold in your heart your loved ones: your children, their children and those that will follow. Imagine – as we have – how the decisions that we make today will impact each and every one of them. Reflect – as we have – on the importance and value of this youth statement to their lives, as well as to ours.

Our statement captures the voices and visions of thousands of youth from around the world who are strongly represented and have widely contributed to this global call – from the experiences of an environmental educator in Madagascar, to the creative approaches of a biomimic in Bahrain; from empowering indigenous youth in Thailand to innovating with gaming platforms in Moldova. Our journeys are different, yet our destination is the same. We come from different backgrounds – a rich diversity of race, colour, religion and belief – yet our vision is one. Our voices are united.

Together, we stand for a sustainable, resilient and equitable society in which every person in every corner of the world has the opportunity to thrive. We strongly believe that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is fundamental to achieving this vision. ESD provides the empowering mechanism through which we can transform the critical sustainability challenges that we face into opportunities. It must be the essence of education. Without ESD we cannot move forward.

Young people play a vital role in advancing the ESD agenda. The implications of our collective decisions and actions will shape our reality and our future. We are committed to lead, yet we cannot do this alone, and neither can you. **Together, we must empower and mobilize youth around the globe!** This document presents our strategic recommendations to achieve this, building on the UNESCO Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development.

We urgently call for a multi-stakeholder commitment to and collaboration on these recommendations. We acknowledge and celebrate the existing efforts of the frontrunners who have led us this far. For many of us, the journey has already begun. For those just starting, we invite you to come with us.

Recommendations

1. POLICY ADVANCEMENT

- a) **Ensure the active involvement of youth in policy planning, implementation and evaluation.** Youth should be recognized as a key stakeholder at all levels, domains and stages of educational governance. Through this, youth will be able to shape policies to strengthen ESD.
- b) **Ensure that policies drive ESD with the urgency it requires and in a holistic, just and gender responsive way.** Policies should address the multiple dimensions of sustainable development and drive immediate action to realize sustainable development in the here and now.
- c) **All relevant stakeholders should allocate resources to empower youth as change agents for ESD.** Governments, civil society organizations, youth councils, communities and businesses should allocate financial, technical and human resources to enable the implementation of ESD policies and the recommendations of this declaration.

2. WHOLE-INSTITUTION APPROACHES

- a) **Educational institutions and governments should provide the institutional support, resources and legitimacy for youth-led change processes towards sustainability.** This requires a combination of bottom-up initiatives and top-down steering. Mechanisms should include dedicated funding, institutional integration, working space, mandates, recognition, and training for youth-led sustainability initiatives.
- b) **Enhance collective action among sustainability initiatives.** Educational institutions should support the joint efforts of pupils, students, staff and the local community. This requires the development of common visions and identities, places of encounter, projects and programmes which are shared among all stakeholders.
- c) **Recognize youth as equal partners to accelerate the operational transformation of educational institutions towards sustainability.** Educational institutions should practice what they teach, by generating positive environmental impacts. In collaboration with staff, youth should become change agents and decision-makers in environmental management, including issues of energy, food, water, waste, buildings and biodiversity on campus.

3. EDUCATORS AND TRAINERS

- a) **Recognize that all citizens have the potential and responsibility to act as facilitators for ESD.** To educate billions of people on sustainability challenges and opportunities, the mobilization of educators and trainers needs to reach beyond those in traditional educational institutions. Youth, professionals, practitioners and citizens across all levels and sectors need to be mobilized as ESD educators and trainers.
- b) **Build capacities of youth as trainers and peer-to-peer educators for ESD.** Youth should be empowered to educate a critical mass of peers, parents, friends and communities on ESD. This requires special support and attention from professional trainers and educational institutions.
- c) **Enhance the capacity of existing educators and trainers to empower youth to engage on ESD issues.** Teachers, educators and trainers need to learn about the new methods, technologies and approaches of ESD-based education. This requires supportive mechanisms such as online trainings and forums, toolkits, funds, peer-to-peer learning and support networks.

4. INNOVATIVE LEARNING FOR YOUTH

- a) **Educational institutions and governments should encourage and support youth and educators to experiment with innovative learning approaches.** ESD is different from traditional education. It thus requires experimentation with alternative technologies as well as creative and experiential methods to break through conventional mindsets and find the best ways to educate youth.
- b) **Monitor and evaluate these learning approaches to determine their effectiveness and efficiency in promoting ESD.** Educational institutions, governments and educators need to develop indicators, frameworks and processes to evaluate the diversity of experiments with ESD in order to identify what works in different institutional and geographic settings.
- c) **Scale the impact of successful learning approaches to different geographic and institutional contexts.** Successful learning approaches need to be de-contextualised and codified, in order to be then replicated across geographic locations, increased in scale and integrated into mainstream

policies. Dedicated funding, recognition, high-level backing and leadership are key to realizing all three of the above recommendations.

5. LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- a) **Respect the voices of youth in community-driven ESD initiatives.** International agencies, governments and civil society organizations should respect the voices of youth when implementing ESD initiatives in communities. This requires that youth are involved in the identification, design and implementation of ESD-related community problems and solutions.
- b) **Support youth-led ESD initiatives in local communities.** ESD forms a strong foundation for the economic growth of local communities and the protection of ecosystems. Realizing this potential requires training, mentoring and sponsorship of youth-led ESD initiatives, supported by educational institutions, companies, civil society organizations and governments.
- c) **Encourage youth to engage with and learn through real-life situations.** Local communities should be positively impacted by ESD and provide a source of learning and inspiration. This requires promoting social service-learning, transdisciplinary education and research, living laboratories, learning centers and online education.

6. SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- a) **Enable all youth to understand and critically appreciate the complexities and uncertainties of sustainability challenges and opportunities.** In order to undertake effective action on ESD, young people need to understand the interconnected socio-cultural, economic and technological systems and trends that create persistent sustainability problems.
- b) **Empower youth to develop visions of more sustainable futures.** Through dialogue and facilitated interactions, young learners need to be supported in developing daring, radical and challenging visions of a more sustainable world. Those visions then provide the inspiration and rationales for youth-led sustainability efforts.
- c) **Equip students with the competencies to transform their personal lives, educational institutions, communities and countries.** To realize their sustainability visions, youth need to be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and values for transforming themselves and the unsustainable systems in their society. Encouragement, feedback and recognition from educators, peers and educational institutions are necessary to strengthen their confidence and motivation along the journey.

7. WOMEN AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS

- a) **Ensure that educational curricula and policies drive ESD in a way that enhances the equality and equity of socially marginalized groups.** Socially marginalized groups are vulnerable and difficult to reach through ESD activities, as they are discriminated against for reasons of gender, age, ability, colour, religion, income, geographic origin and sexual orientation, among others.
- b) **Recognize the values, experiences and perspectives of youth from marginalized social groups for ESD.** Youth from marginalized social groups can provide unique, relevant and interesting values, experiences and perspectives to the education of mainstream and privileged students. Sharing those requires intercultural, interfaith and intergenerational dialogue to create mutual understanding and acceptance.

- c) **Create safe and accessible learning spaces for youth from marginalized social groups.** Specific conditions need to be put in place for empowering youth from marginalized social groups to participate in ESD activities. This requires, among others, deconstructing stereotypes and providing financial support and facilitated encounters.

8. SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- a) **Recognize the importance of social entrepreneurship to contribute to the goals of ESD.** Governments and educational institutions should recognize that social entrepreneurship enables young people to learn about ESD in an informal setting, to create jobs, set up their own ESD activities, and have positive impacts on their local communities.
- b) **Create favourable policy and funding conditions for new social start-ups.** In order to realize the potential of social entrepreneurship to contribute to ESD, governments and financial institutions need to provide subsidies, tax allowances, scholarships, guidance and mentoring schemes to support young entrepreneurs.
- c) **Develop the capacity of youth to set up and manage their social enterprises.** Educational institutions, businesses and civil society organizations should foster the entrepreneurial knowledge, awareness and skills of youth. This requires dedicated courses, peer-to-peer coaching, mentoring, start-up funding and office space, among others.

Youth Empowering and Mobilizing Youth

Across the globe, youth are increasingly mobilizing themselves and taking leadership roles to advance their communities and countries towards sustainability. In this process, young people recognize that creating a sustainable future will require a collective vision, commitment and action from youth around the world. Therefore, youth-to-youth empowerment and mobilization present a unique opportunity for harnessing the knowledge, energy and creativity of young people to advance ESD.

Young leaders on ESD can be inspirational role models for encouraging other youth who share similar concerns in their local contexts. This can be achieved through peer mentoring, sharing of knowledge and skills, and fostering open and safe platforms for expression and action in their communities and beyond.

A critical element of successfully mobilizing youth is building trust and reducing conflict. Stimulating international and intercultural dialogue amongst youth fosters friendship, exchanges, understanding and cooperation among cultures, generations and people with different worldviews. Youth recognition of diversity as an opportunity contributes to advancing ESD at local, national and global levels.

Youth-to-youth empowerment initiatives have the potential to be bold and creative in the way they tell stories and mobilize others. It is here that other stakeholders can harness and partner with the creativity, passion and dedication of young people. In this way, youth-to-youth initiatives can continue growing, spreading the message and creating more impact.

We, the youth of the world, commit to taking responsibility for empowering and mobilizing young people. We are dedicated to using this collective driving force to maximize positive impact on our society and environment. With this role as change makers, we are ready to do our part in transforming today's world for a more sustainable future.

Okayama Declaration on RCEs and ESD Beyond 2014

The global network of Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), having met in Okayama, Japan for the 9th Global RCE Conference, reaffirm the Tongyeong Declaration and hereby declare a renewed commitment to support relevant international ESD frameworks, including the Global Action Programme on ESD, beyond the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

RCEs are designed to achieve systemic transformation by contributing to the realization of socially inclusive and equitable economies within the renewable capacity of earth and planetary systems. Seeking change at the interface of education, research, policy and practice, RCEs commit to the strategies within the priority action areas of the Global Action Programme on ESD, namely actions for advancing policy, transforming learning and training environments, building capacities of educators and trainers, empowering and mobilizing youth, and accelerating sustainable solutions at the local and regional levels, to create sustainable societies.

During the ten years of the global network, RCEs have been navigating a pathway for collective action on ESD. This approach is based on the RCE vision and implementation of contextual programmes for ESD, as well as mutual respect and support within and across continents. RCEs commit to advancing ESD through recognition and respect for indigenous and traditional knowledge. In recognition of global interdependence, RCEs will share responsibility for advancing ESD beyond borders in time and space, mindful of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The global network of RCEs acknowledges the increasing role of formal and non-formal education in ESD and the transformative contributions of RCEs during the UN DESD and beyond, and commits to accelerate, mainstream and scale up actions that empower communities and diverse stakeholders for societal change in multicultural, social, political and economic environments, with compassion and care for individuals as collective members of society. The RCEs will accomplish their mission by building up multi-stakeholder networks with distinctive capacities for research and development, and having innovative and continuously evolving democratic, participatory governance systems.

In adopting this Okayama Declaration, each and every member of the global RCE community aspires to uphold the mission and ambitions of the RCE movement, and commits to contribute through operational and strategic clusters and actions to address sustainability issues at the local and continental levels, which are aimed at achieving the long-term goals of ESD, including environmental stewardship, social justice, and safeguarding the quality of all dimensions of life.

Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development as follow-up to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development after 2014

(Endorsed by UNESCO Member States through the adoption of 37 C/Resolution 12)

Introduction

1. Sustainable development cannot be achieved by political agreements, financial incentives or technological solutions alone. Sustainable development requires changes in the way we think and act. Education plays a crucial role in bringing about this change. Action at all levels is therefore required to fully mobilize the potential of Education for Sustainable Development and enhance learning opportunities for sustainable development for all. The Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) intends to generate this action. The present document provides the framework for the Global Action Programme.
2. The important role of education in sustainable development has long been recognized. Improving and reorienting education is one of the goals of Agenda 21, which was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, and whose Chapter 36 is dedicated to “Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training”. Reorienting education towards sustainable development has been the focus of many initiatives under the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), which was declared following the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002. Education is, furthermore, part of the major three so-called Rio Conventions, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (1994).
3. In *The Future We Want*, the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012, Member States agreed “to promote education for sustainable development and to integrate sustainable development more actively into education beyond the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development”. The Global Action Programme on ESD responds to this agreement and provides the follow-up to the United Nations Decade. It has been developed on the basis of broad consultations and input from a wide range of stakeholders. As a follow-up to the United Nations Decade, it is at the same time intended as a concrete, tangible contribution to the post-2015 agenda.
4. The United Nations Decade has been successful in raising awareness regarding ESD, has mobilized stakeholders across the globe, has created a platform for international collaboration, has influenced policies and contributed to the coordination of stakeholders at the national level, and has generated large amounts of concrete good practice projects in all areas of education and learning. At the same time, considerable challenges remain: successful activities in ESD often merely operate within fixed time-frames and with limited budgets; ESD policies and practices are often not properly linked; ESD has yet to complete its integration into the mainstream of

the education and sustainable development agendas. Furthermore, sustainable development challenges have acquired even more urgency since the beginning of the Decade and new concerns have come to the fore, such as the need to promote global citizenship. Consequently, a scaling-up of ESD actions is required.

Principles

5. The Global Action Programme encompasses policies and practices on ESD. ESD in the context of this Global Action Programme is understood to adhere to the following principles:
 - (a) ESD allows every human being to acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower them to contribute to sustainable development and take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society for present and future generations.
 - (b) ESD entails including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning and requires innovative, participatory teaching and learning methods that empower and motivate learners to take action for sustainable development. ESD promotes skills like critical thinking, understanding complex systems, imagining future scenarios, and making decisions in a participatory and collaborative way.
 - (c) ESD is grounded in a rights-based approach to education. It is concerned with the provision of quality education and learning that is relevant today.
 - (d) ESD is transformative education in that it aims at reorienting societies towards sustainable development. This, ultimately, requires a reorientation of education systems and structures as well as a reframing of teaching and learning. ESD concerns the core of teaching and learning and cannot be considered an add-on to existing educational practices.
 - (e) ESD relates to the environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainable development in an integrated, balanced and holistic manner. It equally relates to a comprehensive sustainable development agenda as contained in the outcome document of Rio+20, which includes, among others, the interrelated issues of poverty reduction, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, and sustainable consumption and production. It responds to local specificities and respects cultural diversity.
 - (f) ESD encompasses formal, non-formal and informal education and lifelong learning from early childhood to old age. It therefore also encompasses training and public awareness activities within wider efforts towards sustainable development.
 - (g) ESD, the term used for this Global Action Programme, is intended to encompass all activities that are in line with the above principles irrespective of whether they themselves use the term ESD or – depending on their history, cultural context or specific priority areas – environmental education, sustainability education, global education, development education, or other.

Goal and objectives

6. The overall goal of the Global Action Programme is to generate and scale up action in all levels and areas of education and learning to accelerate progress towards sustainable development. This goal is further declined into two objectives, the first relating directly to the education sector and the second going beyond this sector:
 - (a) to reorient education and learning so that everyone has the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower them to contribute to sustainable development; and
 - (b) to strengthen education and learning in all agendas, programmes and activities that promote sustainable development.

Priority action areas

7. The Global Action Programme focuses on five priority action areas in order to enable strategic focus and stakeholder commitment. These action areas, which build on successes, challenges and “unfinished business” of the United Nations Decade, are considered as key leverage points to advance the ESD agenda. While ESD action at all levels and in all areas of education and sustainable development is encouraged, action under this Global Action Programme focuses in particular on the following areas and the following strategic objectives:

Policy support

8. Integrate ESD into international and national policies in education and sustainable development. An enabling policy environment is crucial for mobilizing education and learning for sustainable development and the scaling up of ESD action in formal, non-formal and informal education and learning. Relevant and coherent policies should be grounded in participatory processes and designed through interministerial and intersectoral coordination, also involving civil society, the private sector, academia and local communities. Creating an enabling policy environment, which must be properly linked to implementation, requires in particular the following:
 - (a) ESD is systematically integrated into education policies that cover the education sector as a whole or a subset of the sector. This includes the integration of ESD in curricula and in national quality standards and indicator frameworks that establish standards for learning outcomes. It also includes integrating ESD as an important element of international education agendas.
 - (b) ESD is systematically integrated into policies relevant to key sustainable development challenges. This includes reflecting the role of education and learning in national policies related to the three Rio Conventions, in line with the important role the Conventions ascribe to communication, education, training, and public awareness. It includes integrating ESD into relevant international agendas in sustainable development.
 - (c) ESD is a systematic element of bilateral and multilateral development cooperation frameworks.

Whole-institution approaches

9. *Promote whole-institution approaches to ESD at all levels and in all settings.* Whole-institution, or institution-wide, approaches require not only the reorientation of teaching content and methodology, but also campus and facility management that is in line with sustainable development as well as the cooperation of the institution with sustainable development stakeholders in the community. Particular successes in this regard can be found in the areas of higher education and secondary schools. These need to be scaled up and expanded to other levels and types of education, including early childhood care and education, technical and vocational education and training and the non-formal education of youth and adults. The promotion of whole-institution approaches requires in particular the following:
- (a) An institution-wide process is organized in a manner that enables all stakeholders – leadership, teachers, learners, administration – to jointly develop a vision and plan to implement ESD in the whole institution.
 - (b) Technical and, where possible and appropriate, financial support is provided to the institution to support its reorientation. This can include the provision of relevant good practice examples, training for leadership and administration, the development of guidelines, as well as associated research.
 - (c) Existing relevant inter-institutional networks are mobilized and enhanced in order to facilitate mutual support such as peer-to-peer learning on a whole-institution approach, and to increase the visibility of the approach to promote it as a model for adaptation.

Educators

10. Strengthen the capacity of educators, trainers and other change agents to become learning facilitators for ESD. Educators are one of the most important levers to foster educational change and to facilitate learning for sustainable development. There is therefore an urgent need to build the capacity of educators, as well as trainers and other change agents, on relevant issues related to sustainable development and appropriate teaching and learning methodologies. This requires in particular the following:
- (a) ESD is integrated into pre-service and in-service education and training for early childhood, primary and secondary school teachers, as well as teachers and facilitators in non-formal and informal education. This may start with the inclusion of ESD in specific subject areas but will ultimately lead to the integration of ESD as a cross-cutting issue. It includes ESD training for head teachers.
 - (b) ESD is integrated into the pre-service and in-service education and training of teachers and trainers in technical and vocational education and training. This includes building capacities on sustainable consumption and production modalities as well as skills for green jobs.
 - (c) ESD is integrated into faculty training in higher education institutions to enhance capacity in teaching sustainability issues, conducting and supervising solution-oriented interdisciplinary research, and informing policy-making on ESD and sustainable development.
 - (d) Sustainable development perspectives – including, for example, resource efficiency and social and corporate responsibility – are integrated in an enhanced manner in post-graduate education, capacity-building and training of decision-makers, public sector personnel, members of the business sector, media and development professionals, and other sectoral

and thematic specialists relevant to sustainable development. This includes, among others, “train-the-trainers” ESD programmes, the integration of ESD into executive education, as well as aligning in-house training programmes of private company staff with ESD.

Youth

11. Support youth in their role as change agents for sustainable development through ESD. Youth have a high stake in shaping a better future for themselves and generations after. Moreover, youth are today increasingly drivers of the educational process, especially in non-formal and informal learning. Supporting youth in their role as change agents through ESD requires in particular the following:
 - (a) Learner-centred non-formal and informal learning opportunities in ESD for youth are enhanced. This includes developing and enhancing e-learning and mobile learning opportunities for ESD.
 - (b) Participatory skills that empower youth to act as change agents in global, national and local sustainable development processes become a specific focus of formal and non-formal education programmes within and outside of ESD.

Local communities

12. *Accelerate the search for sustainable development solutions at the local level through ESD.* Effective and innovative solutions to sustainable development challenges are frequently developed at the local level. Multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation play a key role in this, for example, between local governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, media, education and research institutions, and individual citizens. ESD supports multi-stakeholder learning and community engagement, and links the local to the global. The full mobilization of education and learning for sustainable development calls for enhanced action at the local level. This requires in particular the following:
 - (a) Local networks that facilitate multi-stakeholder learning for sustainable development are developed, operationalized and enhanced. This includes the diversification and expansion of existing networks, so that new and more stakeholders are integrated, including indigenous communities.
 - (b) Local authorities and governments enhance their role in providing learning opportunities for sustainable development. This includes, as appropriate, supporting, at the local level, the integration of ESD in formal education, as well as the provision of, and support to, non-formal and informal learning opportunities in sustainable development for all members of the community.

Implementation

13. The Global Action Programme is expected to be implemented at international, regional, sub-regional, national, sub-national, and local levels. All relevant stakeholders are encouraged to develop activities under the five priority action areas. Responsibility lies in particular with: Member States’ governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, media, the academic and research community, education and other relevant institutions that facilitate and

support learning, individual teachers and learners, as well as intergovernmental organizations. Contributions are expected both from education and sustainable development stakeholders. Responding to requests for a light organizational structure at the international level and flexibility regarding implementation and target-setting at the national level, the Global Action Programme will mainly be implemented in a decentralized manner.

14. In order to facilitate the implementation, key partners for each of the five priority action areas of the Global Action Programme will be identified and commitments will be solicited regarding specific activities under each priority action area. These activities, which should have concrete timelines and targets, are expected to serve as catalysts for further activities by other actors. A coordination forum for key partners under each priority action area will be established. Research on ESD will be mobilized to support advances under each priority action area. This includes research on innovative approaches to ESD.
15. Building on the experiences of the United Nations Decade of ESD, the establishment of national coordination mechanisms is encouraged, or, as appropriate, the continuation of successful mechanisms that were put in place under the Decade. Each Member State is invited to designate a national focal point. A coordination mechanism among United Nations agencies will be maintained. Through interagency and further relevant mechanisms, full coherence with other relevant international processes and agendas will be sought in implementing the Global Action Programme.
16. A secretariat will be maintained by UNESCO, to be confirmed by the United Nations General Assembly, whose major functions will be: facilitating the implementation of the Global Action Programme through partnerships; monitoring of progress at the global level; providing a clearinghouse of key actors and successful practices.
17. There exists a recognized need to properly resource activities on ESD. At the same time, and given that ESD is not an add-on agenda but cuts across education and sustainable development concerns, there is considerable potential to mobilize funding for ESD from existing funding mechanisms in education and sustainable development. Donors are encouraged to consider the compatibility of ESD with existing funding mechanisms. ESD stakeholders are encouraged to fully and systematically use the existing potential. Furthermore, considerable potential exists in the development of new partnerships, including with the private sector, to support the implementation of the Global Action Programme.
18. The implementation of the Global Action Programme will be regularly monitored. A reporting mechanism will be developed that takes into account the need for evidence-based monitoring, including specific targets and benchmarks, the need for impact-oriented reporting, the different nature of activities that are expected under each action area, as well as the decentralized implementation of this Global Action Programme that concerns a wide range of stakeholders. The development of evaluation mechanisms at the national, sub-national and local level will be encouraged, as appropriate, and the development of indicators will be sought. Reporting on the Global Action Programme may include alternative monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
19. The Global Action Programme is expected to be launched at the World Conference on ESD in 2014 (Aichi-Nagoya, Japan). The Global Action Programme will be established for an initial period phase of five years, after which it will be reviewed for eventual extension. At this time, the priority action areas may be revised, depending on evolving needs.

The Global Action Programme on ESD was endorsed by the following resolution adopted by the 37th session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

37 C/Resolution 12

Follow-up of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development post-2014 – Global Action Programme

The General Conference,

Taking note of 190 EX/Decision 9 and 192 EX/Decision 6,

Also taking note of the strong support expressed by the Executive Board for the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and its five priority action areas,

Having examined the proposal for a Global Action Programme on ESD as follow-up to the United Nations Decade of ESD after 2014 (37 C/57),

1. *Endorses* the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development;
2. *Recognizes* the need for strong political support for the successful implementation of the Global Action Programme on ESD;
3. *Encourages* ministers of Member States and heads of United Nations agencies to participate in the UNESCO World Conference on ESD, which will review the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and discuss further promotion of ESD;
4. *Requests* the Director-General to bring the Global Action Programme on ESD to the attention of the United Nations General Assembly at its 69th session (2014) for consideration and appropriate action;
5. *Also requests* the Director-General to mobilize all UNESCO programme sectors and networks to enhance their contribution to ESD and engage with the preparations for the implementation of the Global Action Programme;
6. *Emphasizes* the need for collaboration and partnership with other relevant United Nations agencies and especially the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production;
7. *Invites* Member States to support the adoption of the Global Action Programme by the United Nations General Assembly as a concrete contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

(Resolution adopted on the report of the ED Commission at the 16th plenary meeting, on 19 November 2013.)