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United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
(2005-2014)

UNESCO Strategy for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development



*Supporting Member States and other stakeholders in
addressing global sustainable development
challenges through ESD*

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I - Introduction

The UNESCO Strategy for the 2nd half of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) draws on the findings and lessons learnt from the first phase of the DESD monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process (as reflected in the 2009 DESD M&E report *“Learning for a Sustainable World: Review of Contexts and Structures for Education for Sustainable Development”*¹, see also document 35C/54). It also builds on the UNESCO World Conference on ESD and the Bonn Declaration (see document 181 EX/INF.15) as well as on the outcomes of other key international ESD meetings (see documents 179 EX/INF.4 Rev., 180 EX/5 (Part IX) and 181 EX/5 Add.1). The Bonn Declaration gives particular emphasis to the importance of education for the global development agenda and underlines the essential contribution of ESD to shaping the purpose, content and quality of all education. The UNESCO strategy will be implemented in line with the International Implementation Scheme (IIS) which, along with the Bonn Declaration, will provide the global strategic framework for UNESCO and its DESD partners during the second half of the Decade.

The strategy is also shaped by the shared vision of education emerging from the four 2008-2009 UNESCO international education conferences (see documents 35 C/INF.16 and 35 C/INF.28 Rev.²): one of education systems that encourage equity and inclusion, quality learning, flexibility and innovation. While UNESCO puts highest emphasis on achieving Education for All (EFA), the Organization’s actions in education extend beyond this, to pay explicit attention to inclusion, social cohesion and social justice, to lifelong learning and to the crucial role of higher education and research.

The overall goal of the UNESCO Strategy for the Second Half of the DESD is to **support Member States and other stakeholders in addressing global sustainable development challenges through ESD**, thus addressing the challenges of learning for bringing about a more sustainable world.

II – The global context

The global financial and economic crisis³ has thrown into contrast the weaknesses of prevailing economic paradigms and, in the process, stimulated a questioning of widely-held assumptions about desirable lifestyles, development models and personal values. The very suddenness with which the crisis occurred was a shock to those who took stability and continuity for granted. Hopes for speedy recovery have therefore been joined by a desire for viable, long-term solutions and greater sustainability, especially in the perspective of other crises concerning climate change, food and energy.

Education in general has been affected by the multiple crisis – not only in terms of threats to budgets, aid flows and learning opportunities, but also in terms of the very purposes of education: what kind of society and economy, indeed what kind of future should education prepare learners for? And how should it respond to the changing realities around us as well as prepare for – and contribute to – a different future? These types of questions have long been important components of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), but have now, in 2010, acquired new urgency and relevance. This was well captured by the Bonn Declaration: *“Investment in Education for Sustainable Development is an investment in the future”*.

The United Nations system sees an alternative future out of the crisis in terms of a **“Green Economy.”** The Interagency Statement of 25 June 2009 on *“Green Economy: a Transformation to Address Multiple Crises”*⁴ clearly states that *“the shift towards a green economy requires education for sustainable development”*. Indeed, building green

¹ see <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001849/184944e.pdf>

² see also <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001841/184163e.pdf>

³ see also documents 35 C/INF.11, 35 C/INF.27 and 35 C/INF.33

⁴ see <http://content.unep.org/go/newsroom/2009/june/green-economy-a-transformation-to-address-multiple-crises.en>

economies and sustainable societies requires more than clean technologies. Humankind will not solve the problems it faces today with the same values and approaches that created them. Hence, the international community needs to understand green economies as sustainable societies, creating a balance between environmental, societal, cultural and economic considerations in the pursuit of an enhanced quality of life⁵. A key advantage of the concept of sustainable development is that, through its social, economic and environmental pillars as well as its cultural and ethical dimensions, global challenges are understood in all their complexity.

A case in point is climate change, the debate over which in recent years has drawn on scientific evidence regarding the impact of human activities on global warming and has mobilized the international community to address **climate change**⁶. From Kyoto to Copenhagen, this problem is perceived by a great majority as a mere ecological issue. However, its complexity, its multiple implications, its global scale and its need for local action call for considering it through a dynamic interface between environmental, economic, social and cultural factors. Indeed, climate change is not solely environmental in terms of its root causes (economic development models, industrialisation, urbanisation, consumption and lifestyle patterns, etc), nor in terms of its actual and anticipated effects (increased scarcity of resources, flows of refugees, etc.), nor in terms of the means through which it may be mitigated and adapted to (international conventions on carbon emissions, national green taxes, awareness raising programmes, etc.). This is why UNESCO promotes **ESD as the best framework for addressing climate change issues through education**.

The DESD must be seen in the framework of the wider development agenda. Indeed, ESD is a long-term endeavour going far beyond the end of the Decade. While the DESD will come to an end in 2014, the year 2015 will be crucial as it is the reporting year for the UN **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**⁷. ESD is closely linked to MDG 2 (focused on primary education), MDG 7 (concerning environmental sustainability) and MDG 8 (for a global development partnership), but relates and clearly contributes to the achievement of each of the other MDGs. ESD is relevant to all environmental, cultural, economic and socio-political contexts and provides a concrete tool for addressing global sustainable challenges through education, taking into account regional specificities, challenges and priorities.

ESD influences education towards effectively addressing current global challenges. ESD promotes, for instance, a sense of both local and global responsibility, encourages future-oriented and critical thinking, integrates traditional knowledge, builds recognition of global interdependence and promotes reflection on new lifestyles which combine well-being, quality of life and respect for nature and other people. ESD is transformative education at heart. The current context therefore gives us a chance to improve educational systems with a view to increasing both the **quality and the relevance of education** in this fast-changing world.

III – Key regional challenges⁸ and opportunities for the 2nd half of the DESD

Africa

The DESD strategy in Africa⁹ particularly stresses the importance to understand its contribution to the achievement of the MDGs and to poverty alleviation. Key challenges that

⁵ see UNESCO Future Forum on "Moving Towards a Green Economy and Green Jobs" (http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=46207&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) and on "Mitigating Climate change - Building a Global Green Society" (http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=46713&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

⁶ see also UNESCO's Strategy for Action on Climate Change (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001627/162715e.pdf>); http://www.unesco.org/en/education/dynamic-content-single-view/news/education_for_sustainable_development_crucial_to_tackle_climate_change/back/9195/cHash/633f273139/, and ESD Day at 35th General Conference (http://www.unesco.org/en/education/dynamic-content-single-view/news/esd_day_at_unescos_general_conference/browse/1/back/9195/cHash/c8b38482f6/)

⁷ see <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

⁸ see Chapter 2 of the 2009 DESD M&E report, http://www.unesco.org/education/justpublished_desd2009.pdf

need to be considered include the need to recognize that human development is closely linked to longevity (health and well-being), capacity-building (training), knowledge (education) and living standards (income); that the majority of Africans live in rural areas; and that the negative impact of the HIV & AIDS pandemic remains severe.

In Africa, the re-orientation of education towards sustainable development requires the strengthening and boosting of the quality and efficiency of capacity development initiatives (education, training, community development and public awareness programmes) to address the relevance of education to development and poverty alleviation objectives.

The potential contributions to enhancing the quality of education and, ultimately the quality of life in Africa are enormous as ESD can help address a number of key needs in the region, especially by developing greater synergies between school and community; re-aligning education in Africa with African culture, knowledge and contexts; stimulating creative thinking in society that can produce new economic models to benefit more people as well as new social responses to changes in culture, social structures and lifestyles; building on other ongoing UN initiatives (EFA, UNLD, EDUCAIDS and the MDGs), and using EFA processes to bring out the ESD focus, values and practices.

Arab States

The ESD Regional Framework for the Arab States¹⁰ identifies a number of specific challenges for the implementation of ESD in the region:

- understanding the broad and inclusive concept of ESD and its inter-linkages with a number of other cross-cutting themes and initiatives in order to integrate it into school curricula, educational materials and activities;
- integrating the values and traditions of the Arab States in the planning and implementation of ESD, in particular using them to inform the development of ESD curricula and teaching materials;
- providing the necessary funding and training and promoting the principle of equal partnership;
- enhancing cooperation through the participation of international organizations and bodies in ESD development and implementation.

In the Arab States region, ESD is primarily focused on environmental issues and has a stronger presence in formal education than in non-formal and informal education. Policy-makers, administrators, and teachers need to be given more space to make changes, to experiment, and to take risks to accomplish new educational and sustainability goals.

Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific strategy¹¹ points to formidable challenges faced by the region: political and economic crises, as well as natural disasters. Emerging issues and new policy considerations that are of importance in the Asia-Pacific region, such as the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (DRR) and addressing the impact of food insecurity, will have to find their way into existing and newly designed development strategies. There is an opportunity for UNESCO to design its programmes to address these closely-linked complex issues by adopting a proactive and holistic approach to resolve them. Climate change provides education a rare entry-point with truly cross-sectoral political engagement and willing partners. Gender equality, as one of the two UNESCO global priorities, provides an invaluable perspective upon the systemic changes needed to address unsustainable approaches. Similarly, providing technical assistance to Member States to integrate disaster prevention and preparedness in national policies to sustain and augment

⁹ see http://www.dakar.unesco.org/news/pdf07/observatory_strat.pdf

¹⁰ see <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001619/161944m.pdf>

¹¹ see http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/esd/documents/esd_publications/working-paper.pdf

development gains provides entry-points into reforming the education system where it is most vulnerable.

ESD in the Asia-Pacific region is now at a point where countries are beginning to engage in clear strategies for ESD – moving ESD from theory to practice – by identifying clear thematic national SD priorities, linking priorities to existing aims and objectives for education and learning in current policies, building inter-ministerial support, discussing financing and engaging with the right people at the national level. Nevertheless, many issues remain, including ethnic, religious and linguistic barriers; loss of indigenous and traditional knowledge; low adult literacy rates and unachieved universal primary education; need for increased financial support in education; and marginalization. All of these issues need to be considered when interpreting ESD progress and planning activities in the region.¹²

Latin America & the Caribbean

At the strategy-building conference “Building an Education for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean,” held in San José, Costa Rica in 2006, UNESCO and the Earth Charter together stressed the need for the development of a regional strategy for the DESD for the Latin America¹³ and the Caribbean (LAC) region. The strategy is based on a shared vision that by the end of the Decade, through public educational policies and active participation of educators and communicators, the LAC region would be in a position to contribute towards counteracting acute processes of environmental damage and destruction and would have made substantial progress in the construction of just and sustainable societies.

In the LAC region, UNESCO is called upon to forge synergies with other multilateral agencies, such as UNEP, WHO, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, and UNFPA as well as with bilateral agencies. The strategy also acknowledges the need to coordinate DESD activities with on-going regional programmes such as the Regional Project of Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC) and the Latin American and Caribbean Program for Environmental Education (PLACEA). Also, the agenda of the EFA Dakar Framework for Action and the Millennium Development Goals were considered as fundamental referents that need to be articulated through this strategy.

Europe and North America

The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Strategy for ESD¹⁴ not only places ESD high on the political agenda but is also the driving force for creating structures and provisions for ESD in the region. The Strategy outlines a range of objectives underlying the regional implementation of ESD and identifies the following needed key actions: strengthening existing regional and sub-regional alliances and networks working on ESD and encouraging twinning programmes, bilateral cooperation and partnerships, as well as using existing international legally binding instruments such as the Aarhus Convention¹⁵ and other relevant agreements.

A key challenge identified in the region is a lack of competences in ESD, in particular in the education sector, to address the interdisciplinary and holistic nature of ESD, which was recognized as a persistent bottleneck in advancing ESD by Ministers of Education and of the

¹² Data from global DESD questionnaire responses was supplemented with information from Asia-Pacific sub-regional EFA Mid-Decade Assessment reports, Asia-Pacific ESD Monitoring Country Updates and *2008 Asia-Pacific Sub-regional ESD Consultations*.

¹³ see <http://www.oei.es/decada/portadas/estrategiaregional.htm>

¹⁴ see <http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2005/cep/ac.13/cep.ac.13.2005.3.rev.1.e.pdf>

¹⁵ The Aarhus Convention is a new kind of environmental agreement which links environmental rights and human rights and acknowledges that we owe an obligation to future generations. The convention can be found via: www.unece.org/env/pp/.

Environment in Belgrade in 2007.¹⁶ Other challenges include the absence of a consensus on a common understanding of ESD, confusion about understanding the difference between environmental education and ESD, institutional, legislative and policy frameworks requiring adaptation to the needs of ESD, the lack of appropriate ESD teaching tools and research, as well as the need to strengthen the involvement of civil society in governance at multiple levels (e.g., school, community, region, country).

IV – Key areas of strategy action for the second half of the DESD (2010-2015)¹⁷

The DESD concerns everyone. It is up to everyone to contribute, in ways large and small, to changes in thinking, values, attitudes and behaviours conducive to achieving sustainable development. To this end, UNESCO is committed to serving as a change agent through education to mobilize Member States, UN agencies, partners, communities and individuals to promote ESD and implement the Decade.

Based on the recommendations from the resolution of the 35th session of the General Conference and the decision of the 182nd session of the Executive Board, extensive consultations have been conducted internally and externally, including with DESD technical and advisory expert groups and committees, such as the respective member agencies of the UN Inter-Agency Committee for the DESD.

Developed through a multi-stakeholder consultative process, this global strategy aims to ensure ownership and commitment on the part of UNESCO programme sectors, institutes and field offices for an accelerated and focused implementation of the DESD, and support to the regional and national ESD strategies and frameworks currently in place. It is designed to be implemented in collaboration with UNESCO's DESD partners.

The Strategy provides a set of focused priorities through which UNESCO will put knowledge into action and promote the further integration of ESD into all types and settings of education at all levels. UNESCO seeks to create an enabling environment for promoting ESD and developing the capacity of Member States and other stakeholders and partners to promote the goals of the DESD, thereby also contributing to the fulfilment of the Education for All (EFA) goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

During the 2010-2015 period, UNESCO will focus its efforts on four key areas of strategic action:

- 1) enhancing synergies with different education and development initiatives and strengthening ESD partnerships;
- 2) developing and strengthening capacities for ESD;
- 3) building, sharing and applying ESD-related knowledge;
- 4) advocating for ESD, and increasing awareness and understanding of sustainability.

In each area of strategic action, UNESCO will strive to stimulate fresh initiatives, promote new forms of cooperation, boost the spread of good practices in ESD and place strong emphasis on enhancing partnerships in ESD to better mobilize and engage with key stakeholder groups. The Strategy will be implemented in collaboration with UNESCO's DESD partners in line with the International Implementation Scheme (IIS) for the DESD and the Bonn Declaration. It will entail enhanced engagement with key stakeholders, including but not limited to National Commissions, youth, civil society including women's and faith-based organizations, the private sector and the media.

Evidence from good practices in ESD indicates that success factors include strong and effective partnerships that can contribute to promoting ESD. There is, however, a need to strategically and carefully plan to ensure the benefits of partnerships. In particular, establishing and managing a wide range of stakeholders with different objectives, interests

¹⁶ A high-level segment on ESD was organized during the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe", Belgrade, October 2007 (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/belgrade.htm>).

¹⁷ see also document 35 C/54

and approaches can be very time-consuming and lack of clarity about the respective roles and responsibilities of partners can create difficulties. An essential element for ensuring an efficient implementation of the DESD is thus better engaging with key stakeholders, such as:

- National Commissions to support them in addressing ESD issues, in encouraging the development of coordinating mechanisms and in playing an important role in the DESD monitoring and evaluation process;
- youth through fostering initiatives and partnerships that open up spaces for identifying, testing and implementing youth-led ideas and innovative approaches, in collaboration with a variety of international, regional and national youth and student organizations;
- civil society, including women’s organizations and faith-based organizations, through support for ESD communities of practice and exchanges of good ESD experiences;
- the private sector, through assistance with staff awareness-raising and outreach programmes, within the framework of professional development and corporate social responsibility activities;
- the media, through providing good ESD examples, stories and contacts to stimulate debate and disseminate information among the wider public.

A. Enhancing synergies with different education and development initiatives (EFA, MDGs, UNLD, EDUCAIDS) and strengthening partnerships among ESD stakeholders

Achieving sustainable development requires a global change of mindsets, beliefs and behaviours, and education is vital to this task. Furthermore, sustainable development requires the building of partnerships at all levels – local, national, regional and global – and this certainly applies to education where creating synergies between different education initiatives and harnessing the expertise existing within UN agencies, funds and programmes are essential. Moreover, ESD has a demonstrable relevance to the wider development agenda, particularly the MDGs. The integrated and systemic ESD approach is especially well suited to creating and enhancing such synergies.

As a promoter of international cooperation, UNESCO, through the following priority actions, will:

<p><i>(a) strengthen its leadership and coordination role for the DESD</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - incorporate ESD into “delivering as one” UN strategies at country level, particularly through UNDAF processes, as well as strengthening MDG-related efforts in partnership with other agencies and organizations - further enhance the UN’s engagement with the DESD, especially through cooperation with other UN entities such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UN-Habitat, United Nations University (UNU) and the Education for All convening agencies - strengthen inter-agency cooperation, particularly through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o enhanced coordination between UN agencies, international and regional organizations on DESD strategies and actions, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in Africa, strengthen partnerships with UNEP/GEF (Global Environment Facility) at regional level • in the Arab States region, expand the DESD Regional Task Force to include new members from UN agencies, international and regional organizations • in Asia-Pacific, strengthen the UN DESD Interagency Steering Committee’s consultative role • in Latin America & the Caribbean, strengthen partnership with the UNEP Regional Office and the Earth Charter Secretariat
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the Inter-Agency Committee for the DESD to enhance the visibility of UN involvement in the DESD, to organize joint events at key UN meetings including CSD sessions, to develop joint publications related to ESD ○ follow-up on agreements signed between UNESCO and various organizations that concern ESD, such as those with UNEP, UN-Habitat, OECD, the Commonwealth Secretariat ○ support the implementation of the different regional ESD strategies and frameworks, in coordination with relevant partners in the regions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - foster closer linkages between Human Rights Education and ESD in the development and implementation of a plan of action for the 2nd phase (2010-2014) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) - enhance possible synergies and linkages with other Decades and global initiatives: UN Literacy Decade, UN Water Decade, UN Decade of the World's Indigenous People, Alliance of Civilizations, EDUCAIDS (the Global Initiative on Education and HIV & AIDS), and with MDG-related processes, as well as UN commitments to cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, - co-organize the end-of-Decade Conference with Japan
<p><i>(b) continue and further extend dialogue with governments and other key stakeholders in order to facilitate global and regional partnerships</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - facilitate South-South and North-South-South cooperation and partnerships within the Decade - enhance the linkages between ESD and EFA through initiating ESD/EFA dialogues with key stakeholders as well as looking at enhancing linkages between ESD and gender, climate change and disaster risk reduction - initiate the development of stronger liaison with the media for regular and high-quality reporting on SD issues - organize meetings with, promote exchanges with, and enhance the role of civil society, including youth organizations and faith-based organisations, NGOs, and the private sector in arranging new partnerships and the implementation of ESD activities - advocate the incorporation of ESD into school curricula and national educational plans as well as in informal and non-formal educational methods - engage closer with National Commissions, responsible Ministries, Permanent Delegations and other state actors in order to promote national coordination of ESD efforts, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ in Africa, advocate for the establishment of national ESD multisectoral committees in ECOWAS and CEMAC; as well as support the work of ESD National Committees in SADC & EAC ○ in the Arab States region, provide technical support to Member States in expanding the role of ASPnet, UNEVOC, and UNESCO Chairs in achieving the EFA goals and the MDGs through ESD actions ○ in Asia-Pacific, provide technical assistance to Member States on the integration of ESD into education policy and planning while taking existing EFA efforts into account ○ in Latin America & the Caribbean, include and maintain ESD in the PRELAC (Regional Project on Education for LAC, 2002 - 2017) agenda

<p><i>(c) further integrate ESD into UNESCO programming processes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - further develop ESD intersectoral approaches, in particular through the ESD Intersectoral Platform, and the development of a joint intersectoral material to promote multiperspective approaches to SD challenges - enhance linkages between ESD and human rights education, inclusive education, cultural diversity and gender equality in order to move the ESD and EFA agendas closer together - further explore and promote linkages between the DESD agenda and key international conventions, such as those focusing on biodiversity (contributing to the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity), climate change, desertification and cultural diversity (notably World Heritage, Intangible Heritage and Diversity of Cultural Expressions) - promote ESD as the best framework for addressing climate change issues through education in the follow-up actions to the Bonn Declaration and the UNESCO International Seminar on Climate Change Education (July 2009) and to the Copenhagen COP15 results - further develop cooperation with media in ESD, as well as working with community multimedia centres - create spaces and opportunities for Education and other sectors' to influence and advance the ESD agenda, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o in Africa, support the inclusion of an ESD perspective in UNESCO programmes (BEAP, TVET, LIFE/NFE, TTISSA, etc.) o in the Arab States region, provide technical support to Member States in the implementation of national ESD/DESD strategies and workplans o in Asia-Pacific, develop and adopt an intersectoral approach to ESD and disaster risk reduction, culture and indigenous knowledge
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B. Developing and strengthening capacities for ESD

Reorienting education to integrate sustainable development principles, values and practices must take place not only in formal education institutions but also in many other learning processes and social settings. Moreover, although creating an education that empowers people to address important sustainable development challenges is a multi-stakeholder endeavour – a task for the whole society – the primary responsibility rests with government. To support this task, UNESCO recognizes that suitable policies and well-designed programmes must be put in place. Reinforcing the abilities, competencies and professional knowledge of teachers and educators as well as promoting a culture of monitoring and evaluation are critical elements in this regard.

As a capacity-builder, UNESCO, through the following priority actions, will:

<p><i>(a) support Member States and other partners in implementing the DESD</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhance upstream capacity development and policy advice, as well as develop new sets of policy tools/briefs to provide recommendations and guidance to decision-makers in terms of appropriate ESD policy formulation - provide support to ESD national implementation, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o providing capacity-building on integrating ESD strategies into CCA/UNDAF programmes at country level o developing rosters of ESD experts to provide timely technical support on request from the Member States and UNESCO's programme sectors o in Africa, support the integration of ESD in education, poverty reduction/development policies and programmes o in the Arab States region, provide policy advice to Member
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	<p>States in the implementation of Phase two of the Regional Guiding Framework on ESD (2008-2011)-Commitment and Construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ in Asia-Pacific, ensure education sector-wide ESD delivery from planning (through curriculum and teacher training) to the local community level by focusing on the issues and needs of the local context (through such projects as Myanmar Education Recovery Programme (MERP) and Climate Change in Cambodia). ○ In Latin America & the Caribbean, stocktaking of actual implementation of policies on ESD developed by Member States, and providing technical assistance to other Member States in the process of developing policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support regional reviews of ESD integration into sector-wide policies, as well as inter-regional cooperation on the development of educational policies and quality programmes through tools such as the ESD Lens - conduct ESD training workshops for journalists using the UNESCO “Media as partners” kit - strengthen capabilities of decision-makers and staff of the private sector for ESD implementation - support capacity-building on ESD in relation to literacy and NFE for policy-makers and planners - promote ESD as a way to address climate change, disaster risk reduction and freshwater sustainability as parts of the curriculum and educational planning in countries most at risk, especially in SIDS
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<p><i>(b) support Member States to reorient teacher education and training programmes towards sustainability</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide support to teacher education (TE), in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ assist Ministries of Education and higher education institutions in analysis and revision of TE programmes and curricula ○ organize regional consultation meetings and capacity-building activities in TVET teacher education ○ in Africa, develop guidelines and tools for incorporating ESD principles into TTISSA programmes ○ in the Arab States region, support capacity development for policy-makers and institutions in reorienting teacher education using ESD Teaching and Learning Modules (TLSF-Arabic version) ○ in Latin America & the Caribbean, develop and implement pre-service teacher training modules on ESD - strengthen ESD teacher education, by supporting the International Network of Teacher Education Institutions associated with the UNESCO Chair at York University, in particular through the organization of network consultations (i.e. May 2010 meeting), creation of sub-regional networks, development of exchange platforms, etc. - support educators’ communities of practice for adapting tools to their contexts, for enhanced exchange on ESD approaches, on innovative experiences in ESD teaching and learning, including through electronic networking
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<p><i>(c) assist Member States in the further development of monitoring</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conduct M&E capacity development activities in Member States in collaboration with UNESCO Regional Bureaux and Cluster offices - enhance inter-regional cooperation on DESD-M&E and sharing of experiences to promote monitoring and evaluation culture and practices - support regional efforts to develop tools and indicators for ESD, to support the collection of data, the integration of ESD indicators in ED
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<i>and evaluation frameworks, tools and indicators to assess ESD progress</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policies and poverty reduction strategies - continue the implementation of the global DESD Monitoring & Evaluation project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Phase II on processes and learning related to ESD (2010-2011) o Phase III on impacts and outcomes of the DESD (2012-2015) - ensure that the principles of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are taken into account in the monitoring and evaluation process - ensure coherence in terms of monitoring and evaluation with the regional ESD strategies and frameworks currently in place
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C. Building, sharing and applying ESD-related knowledge

Knowledge is an essential component of education for sustainable development. Promoting research, supporting the development of scientific understanding, and sharing and disseminating the vast amount of available knowledge, including traditional and indigenous knowledge, are central activities within the DESD. UNESCO will support the development of national research agendas and assist in building the capacity of higher education institutions to engage in ESD-related research and innovation.

As a laboratory of ideas, UNESCO, through the following priority actions, will:

<i>(a) promote ESD-related research through UNESCO's programmes, institutes and networks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - generate knowledge, share new approaches and enhance evidence-based policy dialogue, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o pursue exchange on the DESD research agenda and follow up on its implementation o promoting research programmes, initiatives, good practices and findings, including those in the private sector o enhancing and better capitalize on the UNESCO Chairs' contribution to the Decade o cooperating with UNU in the framework of RCEs o exploring the creation of an online platform for research in ESD - support the development of national research agendas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o in the Arab States region, developing policy research on ESD in selected universities and centres on curriculum innovations and teacher training o in Asia-Pacific, establishing a working relationship and exchanges with the Category 1 institute and Category 2 centres in the region o in Latin America & the Caribbean, mobilizing the UNESCO Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) to addressing ESD as one priority in its programmes and activities - expand networking with communities of research and practice to explore the linkages between culture and ESD at the policy and practice levels, including through the establishment of a UNESCO Chair in 'culture' and ESD - organize regional consultation meetings to promote ESD-related research in TVET in the areas of youth, HIV & AIDS, water education, and public/private partnership among the UNEVOC Network members
<i>(b) strengthen UNESCO's performance as a clearing house</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - collect and disseminate information on ESD programmes, innovations, good practices, guidelines and materials, and share them with policy-makers and professionals using ICT tools, websites and other means - pursue the DESD publication series through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o further identification and dissemination of good practices

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ publication of ESD technical papers, policy briefs, guidelines and tools ○ commissioning case studies and collection of best practices on ESD-related issues in TVET - promote and disseminate research and innovations, good practices and learning materials on ESD through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the use of UNESCO's ESD Lens, tool kits and teacher education resource materials ○ the use of UNESCO's Cultural Diversity Programming Lens and Intercultural Dialogue Tools from an ESD perspective ○ UNEVOC Online Services and UNEVOC Publication Programmes ○ development and launching of an Electronic resource platform for the Asia-Pacific region ○ further development of the ESD circuit on UNESCO Santiago's online platform on educational innovations RED INNOVEMOS ○ enhancement of existing ESD websites in UNESCO HQ and field Offices in terms of the clarity and structure of DESD messages ○ UNESCO Water Portal and newsletter
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<p><i>(c) mobilize and make full use of the expertise that exists within UNESCO's programme sectors and its networks</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implement a joint intersectoral activity on developing a tool to facilitate multiperspective thinking in ESD through interdisciplinary and intercultural learning, to be used in different educational settings, including the media - articulate ESD principles with those of gender equity, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, notably in the context of using and adapting policy and programming tools and promote their use in the context of DESD - continue inter-sectoral activities with the Science Sector on education and natural disaster risk reduction, as well as enhance cooperation between Intersectoral Platforms (Climate Change, PCPD, SIDS, Foresight & Anticipation, science education) - reinforce cooperation with UNESCO networks to promote, build and share ESD learning, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNESCO Chairs, through setting up the <i>Working Group of UNESCO Chairs for ESD</i> and enhancing UNESCO ESD Chairs networks and their cooperation with other Chairs (in particular UNESCO Chairs in Sustainable Urban Development), the IAU and other higher education institutions and the MEEG ○ UNESCO ASPnet, by enhancing public outreach to schools through ASP network, developing joint materials on ESD issues, in particular on climate change issues (such as a Teachers' Climate Change Sourcebook); cooperation in pilot testing the use of learning materials to supplement audiovisual documents related to ESD; ESD capacity development workshops for ASPnet coordinators and teachers ○ Man and the Biosphere programme and the network of Biosphere reserves, in particular on follow-up actions on the implementation of the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves (2008-2013), and using UNESCO biosphere reserves as hands-on spaces for teaching and learning in ESD ○ World Heritage Centre, in particular on cooperation on the World Heritage educational programmes (such as with the World Heritage Cultural Specialist Guides in Asia-Pacific)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNEVOC, in particular ESD knowledge sharing and best practices arranged in the Arab States region utilizing selected UNEVOC Centre (ESD-TVET) and ASPnet Secondary Schools ○ the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, the network of water-related centres under the auspices of UNESCO and the World Water Assessment Programme, together with intersectoral partners (such as UNITWIN, ASPNet and UNESCO-UNEVOC) and external partners (such as UNW-DPC, InWent, CPSC) promoting water education
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D. Advocating for ESD, and increasing awareness and understanding of sustainability

The success of the Decade rests on formulating and sharing a common vision of ESD and on mobilizing support for the DESD in both general and targeted ways. Civil society, the media and the private sector are vital partners for achieving large-scale mobilization. Increasing the visibility and improving the profile of ESD, especially aiming at educators, policy-makers and young people, are needed to ensure that the sustainable development agenda becomes better known and more widely accepted.

As task manager for Chapter 36 (Promoting Education, Public Awareness & Training) of Agenda 21, UNESCO, through the following priority actions, will:

<p><i>(a) strengthen its lobbying/advocacy role to increase the visibility of the Decade</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhance public outreach, awareness and mobilization in support of ESD and the DESD, by implementing a multifaceted communication approach, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ organize various events, especially in connection with international days celebrated by the UN ○ develop educational materials to accompany audiovisual materials (Architects of Change international documentary series) ○ communicate about ESD and DESD at conferences, seminars, international and regional workshops, and through advocacy campaigns ○ encourage the establishment of DESD/ESD focal points at national level ○ highlight DESD achievements at the end of the Decade - increase work with the media on ESD topics to maximize audience and outreach, including capacity development activities for media professionals/journalism students on selected issues. - strengthen lobbying/mobilizing around the DESD, through regional meetings of ministers from various departments to establish consensus around ESD and its intersectoral implementation - support to NGOs, civil society and other groups in lobbying for proper implementation measures for ESD - support ESD initiatives in Member States with objectives to link education to socio-economic development - encourage the development of schools-community partnership on ESD - popularize ESD through information technologies and in particular through the use of web 2.0 tools
<p><i>(b) develop advocacy resource tools</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - highlight ESD's relevance and importance to global sustainability challenges in mobilizing around key themes and events like climate change and COP 15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cooperate with UN agencies, international and regional organizations in the implementation of ESD programmes, involving key policy-makers and celebrities - develop and disseminate information briefs as well as learning, training and advocacy tools on various themes related to ESD, and in various formats (including e-learning resources) for different stakeholders, i.e. governments, private sector, etc. - advocate for the mobilization of adequate resources and funding in favour of ESD, including exchange of information and practices between Field Offices and National Commissions on innovative tools for ESD mobilization of resources, as well as development of fundraising strategies - conduct a series of media training workshops in different regions to enhance coverage of ESD and DESD - document, through various mediums, the Decade's implementation from both local, national, regional and global viewpoints
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<p><i>(c) intensify UNESCO's efforts and initiatives to put ESD higher on the international agenda</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promote the DESD, by organizing debates/round tables on challenging issues for ESD, and by encouraging the exchange of experiences between Field Offices on ESD and sharing these with Member States and the general public - highlight the relevance and importance of education and training for sustainable development in major education and development forums such as international conferences and processes, including the G8, the G20, the CSD, the EFA High-Level Group, the E-9 initiative, the United Nations Chief Executives Board, the Davos Forum and United Nations world conferences (notably the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Brazil). - ensure proper awareness and implementation of the regional ESD strategies and frameworks, as well as that DESD work is tied closely to MDG efforts and CCA/UNDAF, UNCPD, UNESS, etc. processes at country level and by positioning ESD around relevant issues being debated at international level - advocate the role of the IAC/DESD and other interagency mechanisms or intergovernmental initiatives at regional levels (such as PRELAC, the Regional Project on Education for Latin America and the Caribbean) in promoting integration and follow-up of ESD projects and initiatives between UN agencies, international and regional organizations - participate in key events on education and bring ESD on the agenda of these meetings
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Information on progress made in the implementation of the Strategy will be provided regularly through the Director-General's reports on the execution of the programme adopted by the General Conference (EX/4), as well as through specific progress reports to the 2011 and 2013 Executive Board sessions prior to the 36th and 37th sessions of the General Conference.

Annex – The Bonn Declaration

We, the participants gathered at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development held in Bonn, Germany on 31 March to 2 April 2009, issue the following statement and call for action:

1. Despite unprecedented economic growth in the 20th century, persistent poverty and inequality still affect too many people, especially those who are most vulnerable. Conflicts continue to draw attention to the need for building a culture of peace. The global financial and economic crises highlight the risks of unsustainable economic development models and practices based on short-term gains. The food crisis and world hunger are an increasingly serious issue. Unsustainable production and consumption patterns are creating ecological impacts that compromise the options of current and future generations and the sustainability of life on Earth, as climate change is showing.
2. A decade into the 21st century, the world faces substantial, complex and interlinked development and lifestyle challenges and problems. The challenges arise from values that have created unsustainable societies. The challenges are interlinked, and their resolution requires stronger political commitment and decisive action. We have the knowledge, technology and skills available to turn the situation around. We now need to mobilise our potential to make use of all opportunities for improving action and change.
3. The impacts of unsustainable development, priorities, responsibilities and capacity differ between regions and between developing and developed countries. All countries will need to work collaboratively to ensure sustainable development now and in the future. Investment in education for sustainable development (ESD) is an investment in the future, and can be a life-saving measure, especially in post-conflict and least developed countries.
4. Building on the Jomtien, Dakar and Johannesburg promises, we need a shared commitment to education that empowers people for change. Such education should be of a quality that provides the values, knowledge, skills and competencies for sustainable living and participation in society and decent work. The Education for All agenda underlines that the availability of basic education is critical for sustainable development. It similarly emphasises pre-school learning, education for rural people and adult literacy. Achievements in literacy and numeracy contribute to educational quality, and will also be critical to the success of ESD.
5. Through education and lifelong learning, we can achieve lifestyles based on economic and social justice, food security, ecological integrity, sustainable livelihoods, respect for all life forms and strong values that foster social cohesion, democracy and collective action. Gender equality, with special reference to the participation of women and girl children in education, is critical for enabling development and sustainability. Education for sustainable development is immediately necessary for securing sustainable life chances, aspirations and futures for young people.

Education for sustainable development in the 21st century

6. Education for sustainable development is setting a new direction for education and learning for all. It promotes quality education, and is inclusive of all people. It is based on values, principles and practices necessary to respond effectively to current and future challenges.

7. ESD helps societies to address different priorities and issues: inter alia, water, energy, climate change, disaster and risk reduction, loss of biodiversity, food crises, health risks, social vulnerability and insecurity. It is critical for the development of new economic thinking. ESD contributes to creating resilient, healthy and sustainable societies through a systemic and integrated approach. It brings new relevance, quality, meaning and purpose to education and training systems. It involves formal, non-formal and informal education contexts, and all sectors of society in a lifelong learning process.
8. ESD is based on values of justice, equity, tolerance, sufficiency and responsibility. It promotes gender equality, social cohesion and poverty reduction and emphasises care, integrity and honesty, as articulated in the Earth Charter. ESD is underpinned by principles that support sustainable living, democracy and human well-being. Environmental protection and restoration, natural resource conservation and sustainable use, addressing unsustainable production and consumption patterns, and the creation of just and peaceful societies are also important principles underpinning ESD.
9. ESD emphasises creative and critical approaches, long-term thinking, innovation and empowerment for dealing with uncertainty, and for solving complex problems. ESD highlights the interdependence of environment, economy, society, and cultural diversity from local to global levels, and takes account of past, present and future.
10. Linked to different needs and the concrete living conditions of people, ESD provides the skills to find solutions and draws on practices and knowledge embedded in local cultures as well as in new ideas and technologies.

Progress in the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

11. During the first five years of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), led and co-ordinated by UNESCO, many countries have made progress in implementing ESD and have designed innovative policy frameworks. A number of UN agencies, NGOs, regional bodies, and partner networks are engaged in concrete activities that support specific areas of ESD. Many people and organisations are committed and engaged in action. Efforts towards better understanding, promotion, implementation and assessment of the quality of ESD are underway. A global monitoring and evaluation framework has been designed. Efforts at the global level have been complemented by regional strategies and initiatives.
12. We recognise that education is a significant factor in improving human well-being. We now have the knowledge and experience available to significantly improve the contents, methods and purposes of education. We know how to begin reorienting education systems to emphasise lifelong learning. Through ESD, we are learning how to improve links between formal, non-formal and informal education. We know the importance of strengthening and sharing knowledge of educational change processes.
13. Science has provided us with a better knowledge of climate change and of the Earth's life-support systems; it has gathered significant knowledge about HIV and AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, heart diseases, and other serious health challenges. We know more about natural systems, and human impacts on them, and the ways that biodiversity supports our well-being. We know that current economic thinking has to change, and that there is a need to avoid unsustainable production and consumption and promote and support the emergence of 'sustainably developed' countries. Social science has provided insight into ethical, cultural, cognitive and affective aspects of human development, as well as sociologies of change.

14. We now need to put this knowledge into action. This is especially important to strengthen and extend the outcomes of the DESD in the next five years, but also to ensure longer term implementation of ESD.

A call for action

15. The progress of ESD remains unevenly distributed and requires different approaches in different contexts. In the coming years, there is a clear need for both developed and developing countries, civil society and international organisations to make significant efforts to:

At policy level in member states

- (a) **Promote ESD's contribution to all of education and to achieving quality education**, with particular regard to fostering the linkages between ESD and EFA within a coherent and systemic approach. Foster the goals of the ESD agenda in international fora and at the national level.
- (b) **Increase public awareness and understanding about sustainable development and ESD**, by mainstreaming and expanding the learning and insights gained in the first five years of the DESD into public awareness policies and programmes and various forms of informal learning. This should include promoting the role and contribution of **the media** for fostering public awareness and understanding of sustainability issues. It should also include capacity-building of media professionals.
- (c) **Mobilize adequate resources and funding in favour of ESD**, in particular through integrating ESD into national development policy and budgetary frameworks, into UN common country programming processes and other country-level policy frameworks (such as sector-wide approaches), as well as into EFA and MDG initiatives. Promote and include ESD in the priorities of foundations and donors.
- (d) **Re-orient education and training systems to address sustainability concerns through coherent policies at national and local levels**. Develop and implement ESD policies through co-ordinated inter-sectoral/inter-ministerial approaches that also involve business and the corporate sector, civil society, local communities and the scientific community.
- (e) **Develop and strengthen existing international, regional and national enabling mechanisms and cooperation for ESD that respect cultural diversity**. Establish regional and country-level committees, networks and communities of practice for ESD that strengthen local-national, and national-global links, and that enhance **North-South-South** and **South-South co-operation**.

At practice level

- (f) **Support the incorporation of sustainable development issues using an integrated and systemic approach in formal education as well as in non-formal and informal education at all levels**, in particular through the development of effective pedagogical approaches, teacher education, teaching practice, curricula, learning materials, and education leadership development, and also by recognizing the significant contribution of non-formal education and informal learning as well as vocational and work-place learning. Sustainable

development is a cross-cutting theme with relevance to all disciplines and sectors.

- (g) **Reorient curriculum and teacher education programmes to integrate ESD into both pre-service and in-service programmes.** Support teacher education institutions, **teachers** and **professors** to network, develop, and research sound **pedagogical practice**. Specifically support teachers to develop ESD strategies that can work with large class sizes, and to evaluate ESD learning processes.
- (h) Promote evidence-informed policy dialogue on ESD, drawing upon relevant **research, monitoring and evaluation strategies**, and the **sharing and recognition of good practices**. Develop national ESD indicators that inform the effective implementation and review of ESD outcomes and processes.
- (i) **Develop and extend ESD partnerships to integrate ESD into training, vocational education and workplace learning** by involving civil society, public and private sectors, NGOs, and development partners. ESD should become an integral part of the training of leaders in business, industry, trade union, non-profit and voluntary organizations, and the public services. Re-orient TVET programmes to include ESD.
- (j) **Involve youth in the design and implementation of ESD.** Engage the commitment, solidarity and potential of youth and their organisations and networks in enhancing ESD. Foster young people's ownership of ESD questions and issues.
- (k) **Enhance the major contribution and key role of civil society** in stimulating debate and public participation, and initiating ESD actions. Explore ways to further this involvement and commitment.
- (l) **Value and give due recognition to the important contribution of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge systems for ESD** and value different cultural contributions in promoting ESD.
- (m) ESD should actively promote **gender equality**, as well as create conditions and strategies that enable women to share knowledge and experience of bringing about social change and human well-being.
- (n) **Develop knowledge through ESD networking.** Identify and support schools, universities and other higher education and research institutions, education centres and education networks that could serve as centres of expertise and innovation that develop and share knowledge, and create resources for ESD. Explore the potential of specific geographical and bioregional sites which can serve as spatially defined 'laboratories' for ESD.
- (o) Encourage and enhance **scientific excellence, research and new knowledge development** for ESD through the **involvement of higher education institutions and research networks** in ESD. Mobilise the core functions of universities: teaching, research and community engagement to strengthen global and local knowledge of ESD, and utilise the UNESCO ESD Chairs and UNESCO programme networks in this process. Establish institutional and organisational structures that facilitate flexibility, student participation, and multi-disciplinary programmes and develop model projects that can respond to the complexity and urgency of ESD. Reward structures should be developed and implemented to support ESD initiatives and research in higher education.

- (p) **Develop institutional mechanisms** during the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and other ongoing Decades, such as the UN Decade for Action 'Water for Life', that will ensure that ESD continues to be implemented beyond those Decades.
 - (q) **Engage the expertise available within the UN system** to strengthen ESD in key sustainable development conventions; for example, those focusing on biodiversity, climate change, desertification and intangible cultural heritage.
 - (r) **Intensify efforts in education and training systems to address critical and urgent sustainability challenges** such as climate change, water and food security by developing specific action plans and/or programmes within the DESD umbrella and partnership framework.
16. The participants in the 2009 World ESD Conference request UNESCO, as lead agency responsible for the DESD, to:
- (a) Enhance its leadership and co-ordination role for the DESD based on the International Implementation Scheme in co-operation with other UN agencies and programmes such as UNEP, UNU, the EFA convening agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and the World Bank) - amongst others, and incorporate ESD into 'one UN' strategies at country level, particularly through UNDAF processes.
 - (b) Support member states and other partners in the implementation of the DESD, particularly through upstream capacity-building and policy advice on the development of coherent national strategies, monitoring and evaluation, recognising and sharing good practices on ESD, advocacy and global partnership development, with due consideration to post-conflict and least developed countries.
 - (c) Represent and/or promote the ESD agenda in other major education and development forums such as international conferences and negotiations such as the G8, G20, Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, EFA High-Level Group, UN Chief Executives Board, and UNESCO world conferences (amongst other ongoing events and activities).
 - (d) Utilize the expertise that exists within UNESCO biosphere reserves, world heritage sites and other science, culture and education programmes, such as TTISSA (Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa), ASPnet schools and LIFE (Literacy Initiative for Empowerment) to further ESD objectives and ensure that key priorities for ESD are integrated into longer term programmes and strategies within UNESCO.
 - (e) Promote ESD-related research through UNESCO's programmes in order to enhance the quality and evidence-base of ESD. Further develop the global monitoring and evaluation system to evaluate ESD and take initiatives to develop international strategies and practices that can lead to a successful conclusion of the DESD with visible and concrete outcomes.
 - (f) Highlight the relevance and importance of education and training in the UN Summit on Climate Change (COP 15) in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009 in consultation and co-operation with other partners.

- (g) Intensify efforts and initiatives to put climate change education higher on the international agenda, in the framework of the DESD, in the context of UNESCO's strategy for action on climate change, and as a component of UN-wide action.
- 17. Furthermore, the participants in this conference undertake to work towards implementation of this Declaration.
- 18. The participants encourage the mobilization of adequate funding in support of the recommendations contained in this Declaration.
- 19. The participants in the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development express their gratitude to the German government for hosting this conference, and welcome the intention announced by the Government of Japan to host jointly with UNESCO the end-of-decade world conference on ESD.
