



Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Executive Board

Hundred and ninety-second session

192 EX/6.INF
PARIS, 4 September 2013
English & French only

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

BIENNIAL REPORT (2012-2013) BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON UNESCO'S EFFORTS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (DESD)

Summary

Pursuant to 184 EX/Decision 11, the Director-General reports on progress made in the implementation of the UNESCO strategy for the second half of the DESD at the global, regional and national levels, during the 2012-2013 period.

INTRODUCTION

1. This document gives an overview of UNESCO's activities in 2012-2013 to implement the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). The Decade aims at integrating the knowledge, skills and values necessary for sustainable development into all areas of education and learning. The work undertaken under the four priority areas of the UNESCO strategy for the second half of the DESD (185 EX/9 Add.) are outlined. It is complemented by the report on ESD in six-monthly EX/4 documents and the online reporting in SISTER throughout the biennium.

PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2012-2013

A. ENHANCING SYNERGIES WITH DIFFERENT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AND STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AMONG ESD STAKEHOLDERS

2. UNESCO has undertaken significant efforts in 2012-2013 to enhance the synergies between ESD and the wider sustainable development agenda. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development ([Rio+20], 20-22 June 2012, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), UNESCO strongly made the case that education is crucial for sustainable development. UNESCO's efforts at global and regional level, which included a major side event at Rio+20, organized together with the Governments of Sweden and of Japan, contributed to the significant passages on education in the conference's outcome document, *The Future We Want*.¹

3. UNESCO has furthermore made the case for ESD in a number of processes dedicated to specific sustainable development challenges. The Organization is a founding member of the United Nations Alliance on Education, Training and Public Awareness on Climate Change, which was launched at the 18th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 18) in 2012 in Doha, Qatar, and a coordinator of the Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction Knowledge and Education. As a contribution to the 11th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 11) in Hyderabad, India, in 2012, UNESCO co-organized an international conference on biodiversity and ESD. The results were presented by the Indian Minister of Environment and Forests and the French Minister of Environment to the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity at a COP 11 side event.

4. UNESCO highlighted the importance of ESD in the United Nations-coordinated thematic consultations on the post-2015 agenda, which took place throughout late 2012 and early 2013. ESD is referenced in the outcomes of the thematic consultation on education, organized by UNESCO and UNICEF. UNESCO was a member of the steering group of the thematic consultation on environmental sustainability and co-moderated a separate strand dedicated to ESD. Throughout the reporting period, UNESCO has also strengthened its partnership with other United Nations agencies, through the United Nations Inter-Agency Committee for the DESD, which is convened by UNESCO.

B. DEVELOPING AND STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES FOR ESD

5. UNESCO significantly enhanced its support on climate change education for sustainable development (CCESD), including disaster risk reduction (DRR), with a focus on Africa and small island developing States. Pilot country programmes undertaken with support from Japanese funds-in-trust are almost completed in Guyana, Mauritius, South Africa and Tuvalu. A joint programme with United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is under way in the Dominican Republic.

¹ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=E

6. Technical support is provided at regional and country levels. Examples include: an initiative through which over 100,000 students in Guatemala developed graduation projects on ESD; 2,000 teachers and 500 literacy trainers in Latin America trained in ESD; policy-makers from 14 Western African countries trained in ESD; ESD national strategies developed in three southern African countries; teacher training institutions in seven countries in the Arab region supported; growing numbers of sustainable school activities in China and Indonesia.

7. In Viet Nam, a major project to integrate ESD into education has been launched during the reporting period. It is funded by Samsung, a private partner, and implemented in close collaboration with the Government of Viet Nam. The project aims at developing, piloting and disseminating open-licensed teacher training materials on ESD, focusing on climate change, DRR and biodiversity.

8. Targeted materials support UNESCO's capacity-building efforts. On the basis of an analysis of curricula in 30 countries, UNESCO produced a technical guidance on the curriculum integration of DRR, jointly with UNICEF. Hundreds of materials are available on an online CCESD clearing-house and a web-based teacher education course on CCESD was developed.² Additional CCESD material was developed as part of the Sandwatch project and disseminated to countries of the Caribbean Cluster. Institutions in seven Member States of the Arab region (Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates) collaborated to develop ESD teacher education and training modules.

C. BUILDING, SHARING AND APPLYING ESD-RELATED KNOWLEDGE

9. The second of three UNESCO reports on the DESD, *Shaping the Education of Tomorrow*,³ developed with support of Japanese funds-in-trust, was launched at the Rio+20 conference. It shows how ESD is increasingly regarded as an important component of quality education. The report has been downloaded 8,000 times, an accompanying literature review was accessed 13,000 times (as of 13 June), demonstrating its high relevance and pertinence. The report was also distributed by the secretariat of the Rio+20 conference via Twitter to 23,000 followers. Data is now being collected for the final report on the DESD, which will be launched at the World Conference on ESD in 2014.

10. Examples of national approaches to ESD are provided by the publication *National Journeys towards ESD 2013 (Costa Rica, Viet Nam, South Africa, Morocco and Sweden)*.⁴ As part of its development of guidelines for CCESD, UNESCO reviewed the integration of climate change into education policies in 18 countries. The results will be made available at the end of 2013.

D. ADVOCATING FOR ESD, AND INCREASING AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABILITY

11. UNESCO's advocacy for ESD focuses on the relevance of ESD to quality education and overall progress towards sustainable development. A new introductory leaflet, three animation video clips, and journalistic articles which present concrete projects provide easy access to ESD concerns for the wider expert public.⁵ More technical advocacy material is targeted to specific audiences. For example, a brief arguing for the synergies between TVET and ESD was produced for the Third International TVET Congress (Shanghai, 2012). UNESCO field offices have used international days such as the International Teachers Day, World Environment Day, and World Water Day to promote ESD with the local audience. A number of National Commissions have translated key ESD publications.

² <http://www.unesco.org/new/ccesd>.

³ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002164/216472e.pdf>.

⁴ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002210/221008e.pdf>.

⁵ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-sustainable-development/>.

12. The UNESCO ESD website is among the five most visited sites of the Education Sector. It has been revised to provide quicker access to resources such as concrete examples of ESD in practice as well as to key publications.⁶ A website for the World Conference on ESD in 2014 has been developed.

13. In order to enhance the awareness of ESD of media professionals, UNESCO conducted trainings and supported the establishment of ESD-related media networks. Examples include the Media for Environment, Agriculture and Development network in Namibia; the media group of the Environment and Sustainability network in Lesotho; and the Green Pen Forum in Swaziland.

THE WAY FORWARD

14. At the Rio+20 conference, Member States resolved to “promote education for sustainable development and to integrate sustainable development more actively into education beyond the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development”. In response to this request and pursuant to 190 EX/Decision 9, the Director-General is submitting a proposal for a Global Action Programme on ESD (see 192 EX/6) for the consideration of the Executive Board. The proposed Global Action Programme aims to generate and scale-up action in all levels and areas of education and learning in order to accelerate progress towards sustainable development.

15. Preparations are under way for the UNESCO World Conference on ESD (10-12 November 2014, Aichi-Nagoya, Japan), which will be co-organized by UNESCO and the Government of Japan. The conference is expected to be a major event that will mark the end of the DESD and lay the ground for future ESD work.

⁶ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-sustainable-development/publications/>.