



**1<sup>ST</sup> PACIFIC YOUTH FESTIVAL  
(17 – 22 July 2006, Tahiti, French Polynesia)**



# **UNESCO'S CONTRIBUTION**

**Report  
prepared by the  
Section for Youth (Bureau of Strategic Planning)**

**September 2006**

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## **Executive Summary**

1. In July 2006, the Ministry of Youth and Culture in French Polynesia, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), and the Tahitian youth organization Union Polynésienne pour la Jeunesse (UPJ) teamed up to organize the 1st Pacific Youth Festival, the first of this kind of regional youth gatherings in the Pacific. The six-day Festival held in Tahiti drew approximately 900 youth leaders (aged 16-30) from 25 countries and territories of the Pacific, who came together to share experiences and promote their concerns and visions of how young Pacific islanders can take the lead in promoting positive change in their communities and make an impact on the agenda for regional development. One concrete aim was to produce a Pacific Youth Charter that sets out young people's visions and recommendations - defining priorities for youth-led action at the local, national, and regional levels.

2. UNESCO - in line with the recommendations of the 4th UNESCO Youth Forum held in Paris on October 2005 – granted its patronage to the event and took the lead in developing the theme of Education for Sustainable Development. An intersectoral team comprising colleagues from UNESCO/Apia, UNESCO/Bangkok and Headquarters was present throughout the event and responsible for the organization of two conference sessions and seven workshops and seminars highlighting priorities and approaches pertaining to Education for Sustainable Development, cultural diversity, national youth policies and communication and networking.

3. Additional workshops and skills-building sessions focused on UNESCO's 'Youth Visioning for Island Living' Initiative and provided an opportunity for young people to learn about the project and the possibility to submit own follow-up projects for start-up support through the 'Youth Visioning' Project Fund. UNESCO also organized a seminar on Multimedia Youth Information Centres which aimed at exploring young people's needs and ideas with a view to developing such a centre in the region. As a follow-up to this session, a network of young people committed to elaborating a project proposal for submission to UNESCO was established.

4. The UNESCO team equally organized an information stand and provided technical assistance to the Drafting Committee responsible for the development of the Pacific Youth Charter. The Charter, adopted at the final day of the event, reflects the wealth of discussions held and highlights a shared vision of young people for the development of the region. All delegations committed to further developing the Declaration in order to meet the specific needs and aspirations of young people at the national level.

5. In the follow-up to the Festival, UNESCO will encourage the further development of communication networks between young people in the Pacific and support concrete youth-led follow-up initiatives pertaining to the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the three different themes of the 'Youth Visioning for Island Living' initiative. UNESCO will also explore opportunities for partnerships with youth organizations and national authorities pertaining to youth participation in the promotion and preservation of natural and cultural heritage and the development of national youth policies and programmes in the region.

# 1. Background

The 1<sup>st</sup> Pacific Youth Festival – the first of this kind of regional youth fora to be held in the Pacific – was organized by the Government of French Polynesia and its youth structure, the Union Polynésienne de la Jeunesse (UPJ) in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). The Festival was structured around nine themes<sup>1</sup> of major relevance for young people and aimed at developing a Pacific Youth Charter which would set out young people's priorities and recommendations for action in the region.

The organizers approached the Section for Youth in April 2006, requesting UNESCO patronage and technical assistance as to the development of specific themes and the elaboration of the Pacific Youth Charter. Given the fact that the themes of the Festival corresponded closely with UNESCO's fields of mandate and main priorities and were in line with the recommendations of the 4<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum pertaining to the organization of Regional Youth Forums in 2006-2007, the Section for Youth saw the event as a unique opportunity to engage young people from the region in UNESCO's strategies and programmes. It thus facilitated consultations with the French National Commission to UNESCO, Programme Sectors, Field Offices and other National Commissions in the region in order to define the nature and scope of UNESCO's cooperation.

## 2. UNESCO's contribution: objectives

Following these consultations, the objectives and content of UNESCO's presence were determined as follows:

- Development of the theme of **Education for Sustainable Development** (through conference sessions, workshops and seminars) and consultation with young people on DESD in order to increase youth participation in strategies and implementation of the International Decade
- Support to youth-led follow-up projects (through information and skills-building related to the Youth Visioning for Island Living Initiative and Project Fund)
- Provision of technical assistance and resource people for the Charter Drafting Committee
- Support to the follow-up process to the Festival, in particular as regards assistance in the development of national youth policies, youth participation in ESD strategies and communication/networking - in cooperation with UNESCO National Commissions, youth networks and other relevant partners
- Identification of contributions and recommendations of young people from the Pacific, to be channeled into the preparations for the 5<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum (2007)

## 3. UNESCO's presence at the Festival

The six-day festival in Tahiti drew approximately 900 young people (aged 16 to 30) from 25 countries and territories of the Pacific, who came together to share experiences and promote

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<sup>1</sup> **Themes of the Pacific Youth Festival:** Education and Training for All / Social and Professional Integration / Sustainable Development / Health / Cultural Diversity / Good Governance / Active Citizenship / Conditions of Peace / Equality for All

their concerns and visions of how young Pacific islanders can take the lead in promoting positive change in their communities and make an impact on the agenda for regional development. Discussions took place in conference sessions, seminars and youth-led workshops. A rich cultural Programme featuring traditional dances and music from all across the Pacific was organized in the evenings by the different national delegations.

UNESCO's presence at the Festival was coordinated by an intersectoral team comprising colleagues from UNESCO's Section for Youth, the Section of Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO/Apia and UNESCO/Bangkok.

UNESCO organized two conference sessions on the themes of 'Education for Sustainable Development' and 'Sustainable Development – an international perspective'. In addition, the team run a total of seven workshops, seminars and skills-building sessions, provided technical assistance to the development of the Pacific Youth Charter and managed the UNESCO information booth.

### **3.1. Conference sessions**

Both conference sessions organized by UNESCO were attended by about 100 to 150 participants and followed by dynamic discussions with the audience.

#### **3.1.1. 'Education for Sustainable Development' (17 July 2006)**

The Conference session on 'Education for Sustainable Development' (ESD) was led by Mr Santosh Khatri (ED/PEQ/ESD) and Ms Susan Vize (UNESCO/Apia) and was attended by over 200 participants comprising youth delegates, ministers and government representatives, academics and representatives from the Pacific regional organizations.

During the sessions, presentations focussed on the international perspectives on DESD, initiatives of UNESCO Apia in developing the Pacific ESD strategy and the TALAVOU programme, a concrete example of UN agencies and programmes working together with the youth in Samoa (invited presentation by Mr Sydney Fa'aso, Samoan Department of Women, Community and Youth). The conference session was immediately followed by a workshop discussing the modalities and elements of youth participation in DESD.

#### **3.1.2. 'Sustainable Development – an international perspective' (18 July 2006)**

The second conference session focused on discussing sustainable development in an international perspective. Ms Maria Helena Henriques Mueller provided an overview on the definitions and concepts of sustainable development and highlighted the milestones of the international agenda in relation to addressing sustainable development. She also outlined a number of UNESCO's activities addressing partnerships for sustainable development in all fields of mandate of the Organization. This intervention was followed by a presentation of specific youth initiatives provided by Ms Lindsey Higgs (UNESCO/Apia) and Ms Seema Deo (UNESCO/Bangkok).

The presentation of Ms Lindsey Higgs provided information on the development of the Youth Visioning for Island Living initiative. This initiative was created as a means of involving young islanders in the sustainable development of their island homes. This inclusion of young people was part of a wider effort to ensure that the 10 year review of the Barbados Programme of Action gathered input from all facets of society. Preparatory activities on the three themes of Youth Visioning were held in islands around the world and in January 2005, in parallel with the

main UN meeting, 94 young people from 37 small island states and territories came together to identify and discuss priority issues related to economy, environment and culture and lifestyle. They then developed action plans that would address the identified issues. With the support of partner organizations, UNESCO created a project fund to help the youth implement their projects and activities are now underway around the world. Through an explanation of this initiative and the reasons behind its creation, it was hoped that this presentation would emphasize the need for young people to participate actively in sustainable development discussions and activities as well as the fact that the international community is listening and welcomes their involvement.



Ms Seema Deo provided an overview on sustainable consumption and argued what young people can do in order to adopt and promote more sustainable lifestyles. This session also included a presentation by Professor Randy Thaman of the University of the South Pacific, focusing in particular on challenges of environmentally sustainable development and community-based biodiversity conservation.

Following the presentations, the speakers responded to questions from the audience. There was a lot of interest and a wide range of questions on sustainable consumption – particularly on recycling and the use of traditional practices; sustainable development in general; biodiversity conservation; and the role of UNESCO in advocacy work.

## 3.2. Workshops and seminars

### 3.2.1. The Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and Youth: From International Commitment to Local Action

(Ms Susan VIZE / Mr Santosh KHATRI)

#### Summary

*The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), which is fundamentally about values, especially respect for others – present and future generations –, for difference and diversity, for the environment, and for the resources of the planet, is a tremendous opportunity! It is a chance to address the complexity and interconnectedness of problems and seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibilities for a sustainable future.*

The conference on 'Education for Sustainable Development' was immediately followed by the workshop, "DESD and Youth: from international commitment to local action", and 39 participants attended the workshop. During the workshop, discussions were held about the concepts and the meaning of ESD, how ESD differs from environmental education, how ESD promotes quality of learning. During the discussions participants emphasized the importance of learning about values, languages and local cultures through ESD workshop. During the workshop, discussions were held about the concepts and the meaning of ESD, how ESD differs from environmental education, how ESD promotes quality of learning. During the discussions participants emphasized the importance of learning about values, languages and local cultures through ESD.



From the group work, participants identified local and regional issues, to be addressed during the Decade. Some of the issues identified were, importance of learning of second language, access to higher education, motivation and training of teachers and availability of learning resources.

Further, the participants recognized the need for national ESD strategy, importance of working with NGOs and with groups outside the formal education system in seeking behavioural changes through ESD.

**Outcomes from working groups:**

**The group acting as 'Youth' identified ESD project priorities:**

- Creation of ESD opportunities in local languages and second language
- Providing higher education opportunities for teachers
- Establishing regional collaboration mechanisms to improve the delivery of higher education

**The group acting as 'Youth Advocates' identified ESD project priorities:**

- Youth's exclusion from policy making as a key barrier to good governance to be addressed through:
  - Formal letter to each government requesting the establishment of a youth parliament, ratification and implementation of all relevant UN conventions, and support for more regional youth events

**The group acting as 'Teachers' identified ESD project priorities:**

- Addressing key problems of truancy, resources, teacher motivation and discipline
- Up skill teachers through an incentives program to increase their education with financial rewards AFTER they have successfully done this
- Improve resources – books, materials, resources and practical teaching aids
- Investigate further funding sources through NGOs and the private sector

**The group acting as "Policy-makers" identified ESD project priorities:**

- Develop national ESD Strategies through consultative processes that will achieve behaviour change
- Further work involving groups outside the formal education sector

**The key outcomes from the workshop were:**

- Nomination of David Ephraim (PNG) as youth representative on UNESCO's ESD Working Group
- Collection of material on pacific youth views of sustainable development
- Identification of the following project ideas:
  - Incentive program to increase teacher skill levels through higher education
  - Youth parliaments to provide policy advice on issues affecting youth to governments
  - Regional collaboration mechanisms for improving delivery of higher education services
  - Further involvement in ESD of groups outside the formal education sector: NGOs, private, churches, etc

An ESD Youth Contact Group was established to be included in opportunities for wider consultation. This material will be provided for inclusion in UNESCO's report on potential regional ESD projects to be completed in September 2006.

**For more information:**

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### **3.2.2. Sustainable Consumption**

(Ms Seema DEO)

**Summary**

*This workshop is about POWER! The power to create change around us through our decisions, choices and actions in every-day life. Through a series of activities, discussions and show cases,*

*you will have an opportunity to explore how you can control the types of goods (and services) that are being sold on the market. You will learn the special focus that advertising and marketing groups place on youth. You will also have the chance to develop simple ways in which you can work with your community to develop effective solutions to environmental and social issues of importance. For those interested, assistance will be provided in developing concrete project proposals for funding purposes.*

The main resource material for development of the workshop was the UNEP/UNESCO 'Youth XChange Sustainable Consumption' Kit (booklet and online materials).



Most participants (around 35) expected to 'learn more about sustainable consumption' and what they could do in their own communities. A large number of the participants had environmental interests, however there were others more interested in human health, poverty and related social issues. This variety made for interesting discussion throughout the session. For example, it was suggested that there is a need to link resource management and consumption issues with health and nutrition issues if people are to be engaged in such discussions. This was discussed in some detail as participants questioned the practicalities of sustainable consumption on small islands.

The activity (carried out in pairs) served to encourage discussion on personal values and practicalities surrounding sustainable consumption lifestyles. This activity aimed to get participants thinking about the realities of putting sustainable consumption ideas into practice.

In an effort to provide concrete examples of what people might do to aid sustainable consumption, two other presenters had been invited to the workshop:

1) A presentation was made by **Mr Jacob Itautoka, Youth Representative from the Laje Rotuma Initiative** (Fiji). Jacob discussed a project initiated by him and a group of like-minded young persons on the island of Rotuma. The environment management project is a recipient of the Commonwealth Youth Programme Silver Award (2005) and the first runner up for the United Nations Programme Volunteer Award. The project started when villagers raised concern about the state of their coral reefs. The project has since grown into a full-fledged environment management programme as villagers' increased their understanding of the links between their land-based activities and the health of their reefs. In an effort to reduce the number of plastic bags ending up around the beach and on the reef, cloth bags have been provided to interested shop owners and to villagers (mainly women, who do the shopping). This provision of an alternative has already seen a marked reduction in use of plastic bags on the island.

2) A second presentation was conducted by **Ms Tamara Logan of the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)**. Ms Logan discussed an initiative in Samoa to reduce the use of plastic bags. The initiative is linked to the protection of the sea turtle and involves encouraging people to use "blue bags" for shopping. A promotional music video has been produced to encourage people to "just say no" to plastic bags.

Overall, given the time factor, the workshop was well received and provided a good starting point for those interested in sustainable consumption. The most important idea that was appreciated by the majority of participants was the need for people to become informed on different issues and to be willing to take initiative on an action. An important issue that was not dealt with in the workshop was the role of media. While this was mentioned briefly in the presentation, it was clear that for most of the participants (who live in rural areas or small urban communities), media influence was largely over-ridden by other pressures and community expectations.

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For more information:



<http://www.unescobkk.org/index.php?id=71> (ESD, UNESCO Bangkok)  
<http://www.youthxchange.net/> (UNESCO-UNEP YouthXChange – Empowering young consumers for a better world)  
<http://www.sprep.org/ws/> (South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme)  
<http://www.rotuma.net/os/lajereports/0204.htm> (Laje Rotuma Initiative)

### 3.2.3. Youth Visioning for Island Living

(Ms. Lindsey HIGGS)

#### Summary

*'Youth Visioning for Island Living' is a process whereby young people living in small islands envision how they would like to see their islands develop and change over the coming decade; and then work to implement their proposals and plans on the ground in their islands. The workshop will provide you with more information on this initiative and the projects currently being carried out by young islanders around the world. Most importantly, it will aim at identifying priority issues and activities where young people can take the lead in making positive changes at the local and national level.*

The Youth Visioning workshop aimed at providing participants with information on the Youth Visioning for Island Living initiative, in particular how the objectives and activities of Youth Visioning (to give young islanders a voice in sustainable island living) can be put into action in their own communities. Its **objectives** were to:

- 1) Make participants aware of the three phases of Youth Visioning for Island Living, most importantly the projects currently being carried out by young islanders around the world
- 2) Identify priority issues within the three main themes of Youth Visioning: Life and love in islands (culture and lifestyle); Money in my pocket (economic and employment opportunities); My island home (environment)
- 3) Identify activities where young people could take the lead in response to one or more of the priority issues and inform of the opportunity to submit a project proposal to the Youth Visioning Fund



The workshop was attended by approximately 40 young people. The session started with a brainstorming exercise on how they feel young people as a group are perceived in their home countries and then discussed the connection or lack thereof between these perceptions and the need for young people to play a key role in sustainable development activities.

Participants were then introduced to the Youth Visioning for Island Living initiatives including the selection of the three themes, the preparatory activities carried out since 2004 and the Mauritius Youth Forum held in early 2005. In the following, all participants broke into smaller groups to identify priority issues (5-10) for each of the three themes and presented their findings to the plenary. In a second step, the small working groups had the task of identifying activities that young people could undertake (5-10) to address the identified priority issues, which were once more presented to the plenary.

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**For more information:**

[www.youthvisioning.org](http://www.youthvisioning.org)

[www.unesco.org/csi](http://www.unesco.org/csi) (UNESCO Small Islands and Coastal Regions Programme)

### 3.2.4. Skills-building session project development

(Ms. Lindsey HIGGS / Ms. Jacqueline GROTH)

#### Summary

*UNESCO – through its ‘Youth Visioning for Island Living’ Project Fund – will provide start-up support for young people in order to realize concrete follow-up projects promoting sustainable development in their communities. This training session will focus on how to develop and submit a project proposal and how to go about putting your project idea into practice on the ground. We are interested in YOUR project ideas!*

The skills-building workshop on project development provided participants with information and practical examples on how to develop, implement and evaluate a concrete project linked to the themes of Youth Visioning for Island Living. It also provided a space for discussing specific project ideas with a view to developing them into a sound project proposal.



Following a short introduction on the themes and working modalities of Youth Visioning, participants were divided in two groups based on their language requirements. Each group then chose a concrete example of a project idea and in several steps discussed on how to define and develop the main elements of a project proposal. Having clarified the different steps involved in designing a project, participants then split into smaller groups and discussed a number of different scenarios they might be confronted with when implementing the project on the ground

(such as lack of community support and participation, over-spending, challenges involved in managing a team etc). In a final part, the facilitators highlighted different modalities for project documentation and evaluation, based on the requirements and guidelines established for all Youth Visioning projects.

The session was met with great interest by the participants. However, they were encouraged to take the time upon their return to further work on these issues, rather than preparing a project proposal on the spot. To this end, they were provided with all relevant contact information and references related to the Youth Visioning Project Fund and offered technical assistance in developing own initiatives by the Youth Visioning Committee.

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**For more information:**

[www.youthvisioning.org](http://www.youthvisioning.org)

### 3.2.5. Communication and networking

(Ms. Maria Helena HENRIQUES MUELLER)

#### Summary

*New communication technologies have to be used to open spaces of dialogue for and with young people, create discussion fora, and facilitate networking between young people and between youth organizations. New communication technologies can also be used by young people for accessing information and can be an educational tool for their personal development and integration into society. This seminar will explore possible mechanisms, challenges and opportunities with a view to harnessing the potential of ICTs for youth empowerment in the Pacific region. It will also discuss how to ensure that ‘connections’ made during the days of the Festival are consolidated and intensified in its follow-up.*

Youth is a transient stage but the needs of youth exist in a specific time and space dimension. Youth participation is the mechanism that allows young people to connect to others and be

sensitive to the nature of information needed by young people to address current challenges. For this reason, young people and their youth structures need to be involved in youth-targeted actions in order to ensure continuity. They are the privileged partners of UNESCO's action with and for youth.

Everyone recognizes the talent of young people in the conception, design and circulation of messages. Young people are experts in communication and networking. In order for these skills to flourish in the Pacific Islands region, UNESCO invites interested young people to put together a project proposal to create an info-structure. What is that? It is a multi-media center in order to ensure: media training in all kinds of media, Internet-based information on a multiplicity of matters of interest to young people (see UNESCO INFOYOUTH network).



The project proposal could contemplate an info-structure where radio and computers (5-10) would reinforce each other's capacity in training young leaders on specific contents, identify local content, actors and forms of expression to circulate the message, deal with HIV/AIDS prevention as a matter of significant interest to young people.

There were several good examples of isolated good practice and a few young participants introduced examples in the fields of health, radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, Internet, Independent media websites and combinations of various media. In order to put together this proposal approximately 20 young people have already created a yahoo-based group in order to discuss types of media, people in charge, budget and placement of the info-structure.

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[http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=20998&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=20998&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) (Section for Youth, communication feature)

[http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=1537&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1537&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) (UNESCO, Youth and Information Society)

### 3.2.6. Cultural diversity and sustainable development

(Mr. Mali VOI)



'Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development' was the theme given for the Culture Sector to elaborate at the Youth Festival in Tahiti. In theory any knowledge could be used for social, cultural and economic development, whether such knowledge is traditional, contemporary or scientific. This idea basically promotes cultural diversity even within mono-cultural societies. Individuals choose as and when they move within the mainstream or the society is flexible enough to allow individual creativity to take place. In other words modern societies are so mobile and mixed with many different peoples, flexibility of societies need to provide in their mainstream activities of diversity of the people. Even with families individual differences are seen as diversity within families.

Use of any knowledge system to sustain social, cultural and economic development of people: In framing that theory, it was translated into practice citing Intangible Heritage: Dolphin calling project at North Malaita (Solomon Islands) for tourism development. It should be noted that traditionally dolphins were mass slaughtered for their teeth to pay for a bride in Malaita Province of Solomon Islands. To save the dolphins, UNESCO through the promotion of safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage negotiated with the traditional knowledge owners if they were to re-consider the traditional use of the dolphin teeth to having to bring tourists to see their skill of calling

dolphins to appear at the harbour for viewing and then let them go in their wild. An agreement was reached to change the traditional use of dolphin teeth to nature and cultural tourism from which they can earn money towards social, cultural and economic development.

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For more information:

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[http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=2225&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=2225&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

(Intangible Cultural Heritage)

### 3.2.7. Empowering youth through national policies and programmes

(Ms. Maria Helena HENRIQUES MUELLER)

#### Summary

*The development of national youth policies and programmes is crucial for the empowerment of young people to lead healthy and productive lives and to participate meaningfully in all spheres of society. This seminar will explore the essential elements regarding the formulation, implementation and evaluation of strategies, which are, in equal part, a policy FOR and WITH youth.*

This seminar aimed at highlighting UNESCO's strategy of action with and for young people and to provide participants with examples of recent initiatives in UNESCO's fields of mandate, i.e. education, culture, the sciences and communication.

The presentation highlighted the global situation of youth development as well as the manifold challenges faced by young people during the different transitions to adulthood. It then discussed the main dimensions of UNESCO's youth policy, which defines youth participation in relation to five major interrelated functions:

- Ensure the presence of young women and men in UNESCO bodies (Secretariat, Delegations, National Commissions) as well as in workshops, meetings and conferences organized by UNESCO or its partners – the **governance function**
- Develop partnerships between UNESCO and young people, to solicit and integrate their views and priorities and collaborate with them in setting up projects and programmes in the areas of the Organization's competence -the **programming function**
- Provide assistance to Member States in mainstreaming youth issues into their policies and programmes in order to create spaces and opportunities for empowering young people and giving recognition, visibility and credibility to their contributions - the **policy development function**
- Act as a clearing house of information concerning youth, disseminate publications and information material, prepare and sustain campaigns and coordinate action with other UN agencies and programmes - the **advocacy function**
- Monitor and evaluate projects targeting and involving young people and promote research on youth development – the **monitoring function**

The presentation then outlined the ten major areas for youth development included in the 'World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond' (WPAY) and discussed the five new dimensions which were added at the ten-year review of the WPAY at the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly in 2005 (globalization, ICTS, intergenerational dialogue, HIV/AIDS and youth in conflict).



Assisting Member States in the development of participatory and integrates national youth policies and programmes is a priority for UNESCO's action in

the field of youth. Thus, UNESCO calls on Member States to **commit themselves** to youth policies, to foster research and data collection on youth development and to assist young people in building networks with youth NGOs in other countries. The monitoring of results and impact assessments of youth-specific public policies is another area of concern: UNESCO, through the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, is currently contributing to a joint UN agency effort aimed at designing indicators for each of the priority areas outlined in the WAPY. In addition, UNESCO/Brasilia has developed a three-dimensional Youth Development Index (based on data for education, health and income of young people), which allows Governments and civil society to assess progress over time.

The seminar furthermore discussed the main elements and the impact of youth participation and concluded with the observation that eventually, a national youth policy must seek to create new spaces for participation (schools, companies, virtual networks, media) to support the creation of an intercultural present and future (encounters between different groups, cultures, generations, languages, traditions, beliefs, religions).

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[www.unesco.org/youth](http://www.unesco.org/youth)

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001345/134502e.pdf> (Empowering youth through national policies – UNESCO's contribution)

### **3.3. UNESCO Information Booth**

Throughout the Festival, UNESCO provided an information stand with publications and toolkits relating to SIDS, ESD and its strategy of action with and for young people. Our presence at the stand provided a good opportunity to meet delegations and to discuss issues of specific interest to the participants.

### **3.4. Pacific Youth Charter**

Upon request by the organizers and following discussions prior to the event with UPJ and SPC, Ms Lindsey Higgs and Ms Jacqueline Groth participated as resource persons during each daily meeting of the Drafting Committee, composed of a junior representative of each of the 25 delegations present. As UNESCO did not have control over working the methodology adopted by the junior delegates, assistance provided consisted in interpretation (French – English) as needed, suggestions for format of group work and the moderation of the adoption process at the final day of the Festival.

The draft Pacific Youth Charter adopted (see annex 2) reflects the wealth of discussions held in conference sessions and workshops and highlights a shared, but rather general, vision of young people for the development of the region. All delegations committed to further developing the Declaration in their home countries in order to meet the specific needs and aspirations of young people at the national level.

## **4. Outcomes and perspectives for follow-up**

The Pacific Youth Festival provided an unprecedented and invaluable opportunity for young people from throughout the Pacific region to get together, debate and exchange their experience, and, most importantly, to define common preoccupations and recommendations for action, reflected in the discussions held in numerous workshops and conference sessions and the draft Pacific Youth Charter.

Notwithstanding the very late involvement of UNESCO, the Organization's presence at the Pacific Youth Festival proved very worthwhile, was highly appreciated by the Organizers and allowed for opening up new possibilities for cooperation and the consolidation of existing youth-centred initiatives. Most of the festival participants were not familiar with UNESCO's work prior to the meeting but a considerable interest was generated through our contributions, thus increasing the Organization's visibility among young people and decision-makers in the region.

With Fiji having committed to hosting a follow-up event in 2009, the Pacific Youth Festival already shows signs of sustainability.

#### **4.1. 'Youth Visioning for Island Living'**

The Festival provided a good opportunity to disseminate information on the 'Youth Visioning for Island Living' (YV) Initiative to a wide audience of young people. YV brochures were widely distributed and an overview of Youth Visioning and its relation to the Barbados +10 meeting was presented during the conference on 'Sustainable Development- an international perspective' to an audience of approximately 100 people and again during the workshops on YV and project development (approximately 45 participants in each workshop).

As there are a number of YV projects underway in the Pacific region, the main aim was to raise awareness about the initiative during the Pacific Youth Festival and to provide the participants with opportunities to learn about how they could submit project proposals. Those who are interested in implementing a project have all the necessary information to prepare a proposal and send it to the YV Committee. In fact, since the Festival, a proposal from the Marshall Islands has been received and interest has been expressed by young people in the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Papua New Guinea.

#### **4.2. Implementation of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development**

The conference session and workshop organized on the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development provided an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about the goals, objectives and expected outcomes of the DESD in addressing regional priorities in education and to enhance youth participation in the design and implementation of the Decade. As a result of these sessions, a youth network group was established to be involved in further consultations on the development of the Pacific ESD Framework and Pacific Regional ESD projects. In addition, a youth participant from Papua New Guinea was identified to participate in UNESCO's Pacific ESD Working Group as a youth representative. This involvement of youth aims to ensure that the ESD Framework and regional projects will be practical, integrate a youth dimension and serve the needs of the people at the grassroots level.

UNESCO/Apia will coordinate the further integration of youth responses on ESD in the Pacific and continue liaising with youth representatives identified at the Festival.

#### **4.3. Communication and networking**

A major objective of UNESCO's presence at the Festival was to explore with young people their requirements and ideas related to the establishment of effective mechanisms of communication and networking in the region. Following a workshop organized on this issue, a group of active young people committed to elaborating a project proposal for the establishment of a Youth Communication Centre in the region.

The Section for Youth is currently following the youth-led discussions pertaining to the development of a project proposal for the establishment of a Youth Communication Centre in the region (this group includes youth representatives from French Polynesia, Samoa, Australia, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Tonga, Fiji and New Caledonia). In addition, the Section will explore potential support mechanisms for other project proposals related to communication, submitted by Festival delegates.

#### **4.4. Youth policies and programmes**

There is significant interest in both French Polynesia and New Caledonia to forge closer ties with UNESCO in the region. In the follow-up to the Festival, the Section for Youth has held a working meeting with the Delegation of French Polynesia in Paris, which aimed at identifying priorities for follow-up. Another working meeting with representatives of the Union Polynésienne de la jeunesse (UPJ) is scheduled to take place in Paris in November 2006.

#### **4.5. Promotion and preservation of cultural and natural heritage**

Fostering a greater youth involvement in the promotion and preservation of cultural and natural heritage emerged as another major priority for follow-up. In Tahiti, the Chief of the Section for Youth held a meeting with representatives of JCI (Junior Chamber International), an organization which is actively involved in the process of developing three sites in the Marquesas Islands to be classified World Heritage sites. With a view to strengthening youth participation in the promotion and preservation of natural and cultural heritage, JCI requires technical assistance in order to establish a youth & heritage programme (possibly linked to ASP net).

Discussions to this end were continued on the occasion of the roundtable 'Youth and Heritage', organized as part of the thematic week on youth, which took place in UNESCO Headquarters from 14 to 18 August 2006. Young representatives of the Student Association of French Polynesia actively participated in this roundtable and highlighted their concerns and aspirations as to how to mobilize young people to become more actively involved in promoting natural and cultural heritage. As a follow-up, the Section for Youth will facilitate further discussions and contacts with the World Heritage Centre and the Intangible Heritage Section, youth organizations in the region and relevant experts.

#### **4.6. Networking and Partnerships**

During the festival, the UNESCO team held several meetings with delegations, officials from different Governments (French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Cook Islands) and other organizations in order to share UNESCO's activities with and for young people and explore opportunities for future collaboration.

**Oceania Football Association:** OFC is very interested in integrating UNESCO's methodologies pertaining to sports and value education in its programmes. Discussions are currently underway as to developing a MOU with a view to fostering this cooperation.

**Preparatory meeting with Fiji delegation prior to the Festival:** A discussion was conducted to elaborate issues pertinent to sustainable development, globalization and sustainable consumption. The final workshop outline was prepared based on insights gained from the discussions with the Fiji youth.

**Fiji Delegation De-briefing (Suva, 4 August)**

Seema Deo also attended the debriefing sessions organized by Fiji youth delegates, which offered an opportunity to discuss the Festival experience and make recommendations and plans for its follow-up.

**Youth Network of the Australian National Commission to UNESCO:** Australia (and New Zealand) youth are particularly interested in providing support to Pacific island countries. This needs to be well managed so as not to take opportunities from Pacific Youth but to enable the skills and resources available in Australia and NZ to be of use to Pacific countries.

## 5. Lessons learnt – how to do better next time

- Given the fact that the Festival was the first of its kind in the region involving around 900 participants, there were a number of challenges as regards its format and working methods. Organizers had chosen nine complex themes for debate, which were discussed in 6 plenary sessions, 17 conference sessions and more than 50 workshops/seminars. As conference sessions and workshops were scheduled simultaneously, audiences for conferences were smaller than anticipated. In addition, some participants voiced concerns about the lack of youth-led spaces and time for discussion (due to the fact that conferences and plenary sessions were almost exclusively adult-led). With a view to the second edition of the Pacific Youth Festival, it is thus suggested to expand youth-led and youth-owned spaces.
- Assuring the visibility and maximising the impact of UNESCO's presence at the Festival constituted a major challenge. Despite a great interest of participants, workshops and seminars run by UNESCO were scheduled only once during the week. In order to remedy this situation, the UNESCO team widely disseminated information leaflets, promoted its presence at the info booth and held several individual meetings with country delegations.
- There was no formal exhibition highlighting the mandate and work of UNESCO. This is a potential area for future development as many people approaching the UNESCO stand were interested in what UNESCO does, where its offices are and who they might contact for different issues. Additionally, there may have been benefit in having a small, self-explanatory exhibition on ESD and the Decade (in addition to the materials displayed and disseminated at the stand).
- The development of the Pacific Youth Charter proved a time-consuming process that resulted in a general document, now to be revised and further elaborated within each country. In order to harness the full potential of the Charter as a policy and advocacy tool, it is crucial that organizers and partners fully support these processes at the national level



## **Annex**

- 1) Pacific Youth Charter**
- 2) UNESCO information leaflet 'Young people take action for sustainable development'**
- 3) Selected press coverage**
- 4) Links for more information**
- 5) Brief: Organization of Regional UNESCO Youth Fora in 2006-2007**