

The following key resources are available at: <http://en.unesco.org/esd-repo>

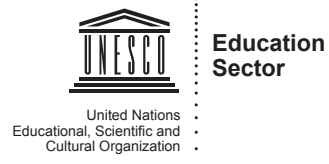
- ▶ Action for Climate Empowerment: Guidelines for accelerating solutions through education, training and public awareness
- ▶ Getting Climate-Ready - a guide for schools on climate action
- ▶ Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives
- ▶ Climate Change in the classroom: UNESCO course for Secondary Teachers
- ▶ Not just hot air: Putting climate change education into practice
- ▶ YouthXchange Guidebooks on Climate Change, on Biodiversity and on Green Skills
- ▶ Climate Change Starter's Guidebook: an issues guide for education planners and practitioners
- ▶ Technical guidance on Disaster Risk Reduction in school curricula
- ▶ Video clip: Learning to address climate change

#### UNESCO Education Sector

Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and the foundation on which to build peace and drive sustainable development. UNESCO is the United Nations' specialized agency for education and the Education Sector provides global and regional leadership in education, strengthens national education systems and responds to contemporary global challenges through education with a special focus on gender equality and Africa.

#### The Global Education 2030 Agenda

UNESCO, as the United Nations' specialized agency for education, is entrusted to lead and coordinate the Education 2030 Agenda, which is part of a global movement to eradicate poverty through 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Education, essential to achieve all of these goals, has its own dedicated Goal 4, which aims to *"ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."* The Education 2030 Framework for Action provides guidance for the implementation of this ambitious goal and commitments.



2571.18 ED-2017/WS/49 REV

## Stay in touch

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🌐 <https://on.unesco.org/esd>

🐦 #esdfor2030

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# Changing minds, not the climate

## The role of education





## Tackling climate change through Education for Sustainable Development

Education is the most powerful element in preparing societies for the global challenges that climate change brings. It equips individuals, communities and the wider world with the understanding, skills and attitudes to engage in shaping green, low emission and climate-resilient societies.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is not an 'extra' but rather an integral part of any strategy to combat the effects of climate change, put into practice a global agreement and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It acts to raise awareness and change behaviours and attitudes and enables people to make informed decisions about their lives.

.....  
"Education can bring about a fundamental shift in how we think, act,"  
.....

The heads of UNESCO and UNFCCC agree that "education provides the skills people need to thrive in the new sustainable economy, working in areas such as renewable energy, smart agriculture, forest rehabilitation, the design of resource-efficient cities, and sound management of healthy ecosystems. Perhaps most important, education can bring about a fundamental shift in how we think, act, and discharge our responsibilities toward one another and the planet."

ESD is increasingly recognized around the world as a key enabler for a more sustainable future (see box below).

The power of education in climate change responses was acknowledged at the Paris Climate Conference (COP21) in 2015. When delegates from 195 countries drafted the Paris Agreement, Article 12 on education was the first to be agreed upon. The following COPs reiterated the importance of ESD in achieving the global agendas.

### An enabling international policy environment

The important role of education in addressing climate change and sustainable development has been confirmed by several international agreements:

- Article 12 of the **Paris Agreement, the outcome document of COP21**, stresses that: "Parties shall cooperate in taking measures... to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information..."
- The **Sustainable Development Goals** on education (Goal 4) and climate change (Goal 13) recognize the importance of ESD and education's role in climate change responses. Target 4.7 urges that "by 2030 all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. ..." Target 13.3 calls to "improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change. ..."
- **The Lima Ministerial Declaration on Education and Awareness-raising**, adopted at COP20, calls for including climate change in school curricula and development plans.
- **The Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on ESD** was adopted at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD (2014 in Japan) and reaffirms ESD as a vital means of implementation for sustainable development.
- **Article 6** of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is dedicated to education, training, public awareness and access to information related to climate change.

## What is UNESCO's role?

UNESCO promotes climate change education through ESD. It helps learners understand the causes and consequences of climate change, prepares them to live with its impacts, and empowers them to adopt more sustainable lifestyles.

Climate change is a thematic focus across all five Priority Action Areas of the **Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD**, the official follow-up to the UN Decade of ESD. UNESCO launched the GAP at the World Conference on ESD in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, in November 2014.

### About the GAP: Accelerating progress towards a sustainable future

The Global Action Programme aims "to generate and scale up action in all levels and areas of education and learning to accelerate progress towards sustainable development". It focuses on five priorities, considered key leverage points to advance the ESD agenda including climate change education.

These five Action Areas are:

- advancing policy support for mainstreaming ESD into both education and sustainable development policies;
- transforming learning and training environments through whole-institution approaches;
- building capacities of teachers, educators and trainers;
- empowering and mobilizing youth;
- accelerating sustainable solutions at local level in communities.

See GAP Information Folder for further information:

<http://en.unesco.org/gap>

## What does UNESCO do?

- coordinates and implements the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD
- fosters efforts to make education a more central part of the international response to climate change
- facilitates dialogue and exchange of experiences on climate change education through international expert meetings
- supports countries to integrate climate change education into their school systems through capacity building and a whole-school approach
- mobilizes schools for climate action through its Associated Schools Network (ASPnet)
- offers free access to educational resources online and develops technical guidance materials and teaching and learning resources, such as its 6-day online course for secondary teachers 'Climate Change in the classroom'
- raises awareness and promote good practices through its GAP Clearinghouse, the UNESCO-Japan Prize on ESD and the UNESCO Green Citizens project
- works with 13 UN agencies to promote climate change education at high-level events such as the annual UN Climate Change Conferences (COPs) through the UN Alliance on Action for Climate Empowerment