



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO, Climate Change Education and COP22



Tackling climate change through Education for Sustainable Development

Education is a key vector to prepare societies for global changes. It plays a critical role in achieving sustainable development goals and putting into practice a global agreement on climate change.

Education plays a paramount role in raising awareness and promoting behavioural change for climate change mitigation and adaptation. It helps increase the climate change mitigation and adaptation capacity of communities by enabling individuals to make informed decisions.

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.”

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is increasingly recognized around the world as an effective enabler for a more sustainable future. Building climate change awareness and building capacities for adaptation and mitigation are critical dimensions of ESD.

The critical role of education in climate change responses was clearly recognized at the Paris Climate Conference (COP21) in December 2015. COP22 in Marrakesh provides the opportunity to ensure that climate change education is put into practice.

Education for Sustainable Development is about shaping a better tomorrow for all – and it must start today.

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 critical 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 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://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002462/246270E.pdf>

UNESCO's action:

- UNESCO coordinates and implements the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD
- UNESCO fosters efforts to make education a more central part of the international response to climate change
- UNESCO facilitates dialogue and exchange of experiences on climate change education through international expert meetings
- UNESCO supports countries to integrate climate change education into their school systems through capacity building and a whole-school approach
- UNESCO mobilizes schools for climate action through the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet)
- UNESCO develops technical guidance materials and teaching and learning resources, such as its 6-day online course ‘Climate Change in the classroom: UNESCO course for secondary teachers on climate change education for sustainable development’
- UNESCO offers free access to educational resources through its online clearinghouse
- UNESCO 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 Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness. (See back cover for list of UNESCO-organized events at COP22)

UNESCO education events for COP22 on Monday, 14 November 2016 (Education Day):

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| 11.00-17.00 | Short ESD-related discussion rounds facilitated by UNESCO, GAP key partners and ASPnet teachers. Topics will include: the role of teachers and students; water education; greening technical and vocational education (TVET). | Green Zone, UNESCO Pavilion |
| 12.30-13.00 | Press conference: Launch of the Global Education Monitoring Report publication "PLANET: Education for environmental sustainability and green growth" | Blue Zone, Rabat Room |
| 13.15-14.45 | High-level panel discussion: "Education - A key driver to scale-up climate action" with UNESCO's Director-General Irina Bokova and HRH Princess Lalla Hasna of Morocco. Co-organized with other UN agencies and Moroccan partners. | Blue Zone, Pacific Room |
| 17.00-18.30 | Round table session: "Sustainability starts with educators" bringing together practitioners and experts from around the world. Co-organized with Education International and the Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection. | Green Zone, Room 7 |
| 18.30-20.00 | UN side-event: "Leaving No One Behind in Climate Change Education" raising awareness on and discussing the role and initiatives of marginalized groups such as indigenous people, women, refugees and people with disabilities. Co-organized with other UN agencies. | Blue Zone, Pacific Room |
| All day | Thematic booth on education (SDG 4) within the regular UN exhibition space, providing information and publications on UNESCO's Climate Change Education and ESD work and programmes | Blue Zone, SDG 4 Booth (Island 13C) |

More information on the events can be found at:

<http://en.unesco.org/events/thematic-day-education-climate-cop-22>

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*
- *Not just hot air: Putting climate change education into practice*
- *Climate Change in the classroom: UNESCO course for Secondary Teachers*
- *UNESCO/UNEP YouthXchange Guidebooks on Climate Change, on Biodiversity and on Green Skills*
- *Climate Change Starter's Guidebook: an issues guide for education planners and practitioners*
- *Towards a learning culture of safety and resilience: Technical guidance on Disaster Risk Reduction in school curricula*
- *Disaster risk reduction in school curricula: Case studies from thirty countries*
- *Video Clip: Learning to address climate change*

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