

STATEMENT OF CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*Adopted by the participants of the Third Sub-regional Central Asian Conference on Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development
(Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan, November 10-11, 2004)*

To be sent to:

- Presidents of Central Asian (CA) countries
- Ministers of Environmental Protection of CA countries
- Ministers of Education of CA countries
- Oblast Akims, Oblast Departments for Environmental Protection and Education
- Private sector
- International organizations: UNESCO, UNEP, UNECE, OSCE, European Commission, UNU/IAS, British Council, Embassies of donor-countries: Great Britain, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Japan and etc.
- UN CSD, ICSD and CA CSD.

We, the participants of the “Third Sub-regional Central-Asian Conference on Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development”, representatives of the Ministries of education and environmental protection of Central Asia, NGOs, science, pedagogical and environmental community, international organizations: UNESCO, OSCE Office in Almaty, CAREC, Embassy of Great Britain in the Republic of Kazakhstan and businesses:

- Recognizing that environmental education (EE) and education for sustainable development (ESD) are of critical importance for the realization of our responsibility with regard to conservation of natural environment and the mere life on the planet and as such they should be in the basis of contemporary education,
- Understanding that the final goal of ESD is children education and development of new attitude to environment on the part of future generation and that today we live due to the resources borrowed from future generations,
- Welcoming the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), announced by UN at the initiative of UNESCO and the Government of Japan,
- Supporting and participating in the processes of UNECE Strategy development “Education for Sustainable Development” and Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development for Asian-Pacific region,
- Reminding that EE has been announced as a sub-regional priority of Central-Asian Initiative on Sustainable Development and is a part of Environmental Strategy of EECCA countries, welcoming support and tangible contribution of CAREC into the development of cross-sector cooperation and EE programmes and ESD in Central Asia,

Have decided as follows:

1. **To recognize EE and ESD important priorities** of achievement of sustainable development goals and an important precondition for the implementation of sub-regional and national sustainable development programmes.

2. **To welcome and support** joint efforts of Ministries of education and environmental protection with the participation of educational organizations, NGOs and other parties concerned by way of supporting further activity of Joint Central-Asian Working Group on EE and ESD, recognized by international partners as a “unique way of decision-making in Central Asia”.
3. **To offer partners** at the global, regional (Europe and Asia) and sub-regional levels to support the following priority directions of EE and ESD in CA:

❖ **For public bodies and parliaments of CA countries:**

- *Within the framework of the UN Decade on ESD and Central-Asian Initiative to support further development of the ongoing Central-Asian Programme on EE and ESD into the Interstate Programme financed out of the budget sources, which provides for integration of environmental issues into the existing state programmes in the area of education, poverty control, gender issues and etc.*
- *To continue work with regard to legal analysis of legislation in CA countries in the sphere of EE:*
 - To contribute the countries in working out and development of legislative basis on EE and ESD and revision of all the state programmes given global changes in order to match EE-related legislation in different CA countries
 - To initiate the development of the Law on State Policy in the Area of EE given international experience.
 - To come up with the proposal on the inclusion of issues on mandatory EE funding into the laws on environmental protection of CA countries.
- *To introduce a system approach to the development of EE standards, environmentalization of subjects and assessment of the necessity as to introduction of a special subject “ecology”:*
 - To support countries in development of their state EE-related standards and necessary educational programmes on EE and ESD, given global and regional priorities in the area of EE and ESD.
 - To begin development of a mechanism necessary to take into account recommendations of NGOs, science, teachers, international organizations and other stakeholders when developing state educational standards.
 - To integrate some EE-related sections into all the state programmes of CA countries (on biodiversity, on climate change, on desertification and etc.)
 - To implement environmentalization of school subject and/or to introduce the subject “Ecology” into educational programmes/curricula (into the state component).
 - To set up and support a network of special environmental schools and pre-schools in CA.
- *To contribute to integration of EE issues into the State programmes and State budgets of CA countries, as an indicator of EE priority within the state policy of sub-regional countries:*
 - To set up an Interstate Commission to assess EE and ESD potential in CA.
 - To adopt an Interstate Programme on continuous EE in CA and to implement a pilot project on its introduction in pilot schools (kindergarten – high schools – higher schools – IQA).
 - To recommend National Commissions on SD (CSD) of CA countries to include into their work-plans issues of EE and ESD and in this way to contribute to the development of EE and ESD in Central Asian nations.

- To address the Parliaments of CA countries through Ministries of education, environmental protection, economy and finances with respect to allocation of resources for the implementation of national and sub-regional EE and ESD programmes in CA countries and also for the fulfillment of the efforts of creative teachers working in the area of EE and ESD.
- To work towards introduction of EE-related issues into state budgets of CA countries and targeted funding (the fees for environmental pollution – for EE). To stipulate resources for amendment of already developed and approved of environmental programmes.
- *To devise an incentive and rewarding system for the teachers that make a significant contribution to EE and ESD development and to cover EE –related issues in mass media on a regular basis:*
 - To develop the practice of common international sub-regional project implementation in the area of EE, including EE-based competitions with the involvement of well-known and outstanding researchers and cultural workers of CA.
 - To contribute to the dissemination of project implementation experience and publications of public association/NGOs in CA.
 - To practice special informational campaigns for the Parliament Deputies and other decision-makers.
 - To institute annual competition among schools of CA with respect to contribution to EE in the following areas: training manuals, eco-school, eco-camp, institute eco-course and etc.
 - To institute a prize (breastplate, diploma or something else) with the aim to raise the image and motivation of teachers working in this sphere.
 - To cover the experience of teachers on TV at the expense of the Ministry of Education budget, to publish the opinion of teachers and the outcomes of conferences, seminars and meetings related to EE and ESD in CA mass media.
 - To contribute to capacity building of young leaders in the area of sustainable development.
 - To set up a common Central Asian TV environmental programme for the promotion of environmental knowledge and environmental education, to enhance the role of mass media in EE promotion.
 - To reflect issues of environmental education in youth-oriented educational programmes.
 - To raise the awareness of students of senior courses of economic and law faculties on issues of sustainable development.
 - To use the potential of political parties and religious organizations for EE promotion.
- *To contribute to staged-wise setting up and development of EE and ESD centers at the national level with a Coordination Center in Bishkek, which is to be supported by the Government of Kyrgyz Republic as a follow-up of the Meeting of ministers of education and environmental protection in Bishkek in April 2004. To use the potential of CA WG on EE and ESD and CA team of expert-trainers on EE and ESD. Within the framework of Coordination Center in Bishkek to address priority sub-regional EE and ESD-related issues:*
 - To form an institutional base for ESD development in CA,
 - To develop strategy, concept and EE-related standards common for CA countries,
 - To improve training and retraining of the staff, members of all levels of education and management of environmental protection,

- To set up Centers of EE in CA for the managerial staff (decision-makers).
- ❖ **For local authorities:** to consider of crucial importance the development of EE and ESD at the local level. To suggest requesting oblast Departments of Environmental Protection and Education of CA:
- To provide for the fund allocation for EE (separate line) in the regional and local budgets.
 - To set up oblast consultative public EE-related Councils (there should be representatives of public structures, oblast Education Department, Department of Environmental Protection, akimats/khakimats, institutes of qualification advancement, NGO/NNO) that will coordinate issues of EE at the local level, monitor programmes and budget money earmarked at EE development.
 - To put up together material-technical base for EE Center development at the local level at the expense of budget money, collected by ministers of environmental protection through charging fees for environment pollution.
 - To more actively work with civil specialists at the local level and involve them into the work with EE.
 - As a positive example – to use and disseminate experience of cooperation of the Government and NGO in Karaganda oblast – publication of manuals on ecology for secondary schools at the expense of fees collected for environmental pollution (NGOs EcoObraz, EcoCenter, Otrazheniye, and Karaganda Oblast Territorial Department of Environmental Protection).
- ❖ **For NGO, NNO and PA:** To carry out work targeted at bringing up the image of public associations (PA) in the opinion of public bodies, including:
- Mandatory involvement of representatives of PA into the working group on programme discussion.
 - Capacity-building of research in the field of EE.
 - Advancement of professional level of PA representatives.
 - Involvement of local PA into the work of EE Centers.
 - Holding an EE advocacy campaign – to devise a set of documents for the public structures.
 - To initiate the activity to make NGO/NNO work-outs available with local bodies for them to be included into their budgets (through addressing decision-makers).
- ❖ **For international organizations:**
- *To support CA initiatives aimed at the implementation of UN Decade on ESD in 2005-2014 through:*
 - Support of Interstate CA Programme on EE and ESD with integration of environmental issues into the ongoing state educational programmes, programmes on poverty control, gender issues and etc.
 - Rendering support to CA countries to integrate EE issues into state programmes and public budgets of CA countries and implementation of EE and ESD programmes and projects.
 - Support on the part of international organizations, funds and donor countries with regard to participation of CA countries in global and regional EE and ESD meetings.
 - *To welcome the presentation of OSCE Secretariat (Vienna) pertaining to methodological development «Zeleyonyi Paket» («Green Pack»), aimed at integrating concepts of sustainable development into the current educational programmes. To consider reasonable the implementation of this pack at sub-regional level in Central*

Asian countries through the Joint CA EE and ESD Working Group and CAREC EE Programme; adaptation of this pack to local conditions of the sub-region, country peculiarities and its translation into the Russian language and national languages of CA countries.

- *For CAREC:*
 - To continue support of the activity of the Joint CA Working Group on EE and ESD and CA team of experts – trainers on EE and ESD;
 - To take part in development and implementation in the CA sub-region of the project on Green Pack dissemination at sub-regional level through EE CAREC Programme in collaboration with the Joint CA Working Group on EE and ESD; to adapt the pack to the local conditions of the sub-region, country peculiarities and to translate it into the Russian language and national languages of CA countries.
 - To contribute to cooperation of Central Asia with other sub-regions on ESD, including through the high level Meeting of Ministers of Environmental Protection and Education of UNECE in Vilnius, Lithuania in March 17-18, 2005 and Conference of Ministers of Environmental Protection of Asian-Pacific region in March 2005, in Seoul. To contribute to effective participation of representatives of Central Asian countries in these meetings.
 - To carry out negotiations with interested organizations, private sector and donor countries on setting up and development of an Interstate EE and ESD Programme in CA as a component of Central-Asian Initiative on SD.

❖ **For private companies:**

To help and support CA countries in developing and implementation of EE and ESD programmes and projects.

- To support CA NGO, NNO and PA in their development of specific training and methodological programmes on EE and ESD (textbooks, manuals, posters, video films and etc) and in disseminating them in CA sub-region.
- To promote setting up in the regions schools of new type that specializes in the area of EE and ESD and to render them all round support.
- To support and encourage the activity of teachers-innovators and NGOs with regard to EE in the sites.

Participants express their acknowledgement to the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and CAREC for a very good organization of the meeting and invite all the stakeholders for cooperation in the area of EE and ESD.