



United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

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Agenda Item 5 (b): Preparations for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries in 2016: Draft ministerial statement

Information Paper 2

Draft ministerial statement*

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* This document was not formally edited.

ZERO DRAFT

Draft statement on education for sustainable development by the ministers of education and environment of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

We, ministers working on education and the environment from the countries of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region,

Recalling the decisions of the Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference in Belgrade in 2007, including the Declaration “Building Bridges to the Future” (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/8) and the Statement on Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/4/Add.1), made by the ministers of education and environment at the joint session on education for sustainable development (ESD), which called for the holding of future ministerial segments on ESD on a regular basis, preferably under the aegis of the EfE process, and urging countries to further strengthen efforts for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD at all levels by the end of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014),

Reconfirming our vision for the future of our diverse region that embraces common values of solidarity, equality and mutual respect between peoples, cultures, countries and generations,

Reaffirming all statements and commitments made by the ministers of education and environment at the joint session on ESD of the Belgrade Ministerial Conference and reflected in the Statement adopted there,

Recognizing the importance of ESD as a critical factor influencing the changes needed to achieve sustainable development, and more specifically in addressing the critical challenges of our region including poverty eradication, protection of human rights, disaster risk reduction and sustainable consumption and production, within the framework of greening the economy, climate change, biodiversity loss and water scarcity,

Emphasizing the key role of ESD in implementing the green economy concept by providing the necessary educational foundations to help shifting peoples’ attitudes towards sustainable development and addressing key issues for the transition to a green economy, i.e. raised awareness, public participation and sustainable consumption, as well as reskilling the labour force,

Celebrating the many successes in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, taking into consideration the findings of the Final Evaluation Report of the Implementation of the Strategy ([ECE/CEP/AC.13/2015/xxx]), in particular, the substantive good practices generated by a wide range of stakeholders of our region, as well as the achievements made on ESD indicators, whole-institution planning and teacher competences, and the important advances made in integrating ESD in education

policy and curricula and aligning education objectives with national sustainable development visions and goals,

Recognizing the central role of the ECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development in promoting ESD in the region through demonstrated successful cooperation between the environment and education sectors, as well as all other relevant sectors and stakeholders, especially educators and non-governmental organizations and networks, business, youth and the media,

Emphasizing the importance of continued cooperation between ECE and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the ECE future implementation framework for ESD and the UNESCO Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference in 2013 (37 C/Resolution 12) as a follow-up to the United Nations Decade of ESD,

Appreciating the contributions to the GAP Launch Commitments to ESD made by a large number of stakeholders of the ECE region,

Supporting the strengthening of synergies among other global and regional processes aimed at achieving ESD and sustainable development, including the EfE process, the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and its Action Plan, the Incheon Declaration of the World Education Forum 2015 (“Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all”), international environmental conventions and other relevant international, regional and national processes,

Taking into consideration that ESD will be included in the United Nations post-2015 development agenda as part of the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and therefore the UNECE Strategy on ESD will contribute to its achievement,

Recognizing that the implementation of the Strategy for ESD is a continuous, long-term and cross-cutting process that will allow for a better understanding and enhanced competencies related to all aspects of sustainable development,

Taking into account the challenges and needs identified by the ECE member States in their national implementation reports on the Strategy, and acknowledging that some countries, particularly countries with economies in transition, may continue to need donor support to carry out relevant activities,

1. *Strongly support* the continuation of the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD at regional level beyond the first decade (2005–2014) of its implementation, aligning with the first five-year phase of the GAP, which runs till 2019, as well as its follow-up phases;

2. *Commit* member States to continue advancing the three “vertical” priority action areas under the Strategy:

- (a) Ensuring there is an ESD school plan in every school;
- (b) Promoting the extension of ESD in teacher education and in training of all educators;
- (c) Reorienting technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy;

3. *Also commit* member States to continue advancing the three “horizontal” priority action areas under the Strategy:

- (a) Strengthening policy integration related to ESD;
 - (b) Informal and non-formal education [*action missing - to be revised correspondingly in the Draft future implementation framework*];
 - (c) Highlighting the important role of networks, including those of civil society, academia and science, non-governmental organizations, companies and enterprises, in implementing ESD;
4. *Urge* our Governments to allocate and mobilize substantial resources in their respective countries to ensure the development, continuation and expansion of the work on ESD, fostering national ESD processes for the implementation of the future framework;
 5. *Urge* our Governments to use ESD in implementing of the post-2015 development agenda, in particular, to achieve the SDGs dedicated to education, but also recognizing ESD as a cross-cutting theme and an efficient tool in achieving other important SDGs;
 6. *Invite* our Governments to continue monitoring the implementation process based on the experience from the previous monitoring and evaluation methodology, and to report on national progress to ECE. The future monitoring and evaluation work should be aligned as much as possible with the GAP reporting scheme, while also allowing for comparability of the reporting outcomes with previous ECE national implementation reporting exercises;
 7. *Invite* ECE to further strengthen cooperation with UNESCO, the lead agency for the GAP, as a key partner in the Partnership Network for implementing the GAP, particularly Priority Action Area 1 on “Advancing policy”, in order to make use of all available synergies;
 8. *Request* ECE to continue providing secretariat support to further advance ESD in the region by enhancing, inter alia, collaboration with the networks mentioned in the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development, namely the European network of the Man and Biosphere Programme (EUROMAB) and the relevant sites of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, the World Heritage Sites as well as the UNESCO ESD Chairs and the UNESCO ASPnet;
 9. *Decide* to extend the mandate of the Steering Committee until [2019] [2024] and request it to prepare, with the support of the ECE secretariat, a workplan for the post-2015 implementation of the Strategy for a period of five years. This should include targeted assistance activities, taking into account the results of the final evaluation report on the implementation of the Strategy, as well as needs identified by the subregional and national capacity-building activities held in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Mediterranean and those expressed by the member States;
 10. *Invite* stakeholders as well as bilateral and multilateral donors to continue contributing to and supporting the implementation process;
 11. *Reconfirm* that future ECE ministerial high-level segments should be held on a regular basis, preferably at the EfE conferences, as appropriate, providing a broad framework bringing together a wide range of stakeholders.