



The Global citizen's Conference 2014 on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)

Opening Speech



Ms. Michiko Ueno Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

As the representative of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), I would like to say few words to begin "The Global Citizen's Conference 2014 on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)". DESD was established by a proposal from Japan and adopted at the United Nations Fifty-seventh Session of the General Assembly. This year is the last year of DESD, and there are only 75 days left until "The UNESCO World Conference on ESD", which will be held in Nagoya-city, Aichi and Okayama-city in November 2014. The world conference is expecting the participation of approximately 2,000 people from the 195 UNESCO member states. This includes ministerial-level representatives and it will be the largest UNESCO conference that Japan has hosted. Needless to say, making the end of DESD does not represent the end of ESD by any means. The world conference will review the achievements throughout the decade and discuss commitments to make more profound contributions to ESD beyond 2014. The Global Action Programme on ESD was submitted to the 37th session of the General Conference in November 2013, as a follow-up program to DESD after 2015.

I attended that general conference as the representative of Japan and expressed the importance of ESD and the world conference on ESD, to the members of UNESCO. The Global Action Programme wishes various stakeholders to promote ESD. In order to make the world conference successful and also to promote ESD beyond 2014, the collaboration of citizens, the government, NPOs, companies, communities, and youth (who take the responsibility of future earth) is necessary, and today's conference is the platform to empower this collaboration. I hope that there will be positive and meaningful discussions over the two day conference to further promote ESD and to develop proposals for the World Conference. MEXT invited public participation in creating a friendly phrase to describe ESD. More than 4,000 people applied and we decided that "learning for a better earth tomorrow" would catch people's attention and promote ESD. The word "earth" in the phrase means both "ASU (tomorrow)" and "earth". In addition, the singer-song writer Takako Shirai, who is also an official supporter for ESD-Japan, has created a song to introduce ESD and we hope this song will inform people about ESD. Ms. Shirai will be performing today so please listen to the lyrics carefully. As I mentioned earlier, there is only a short time left until the World Conference, and I hope all the participants connected to ESD, including the people here today, will work together to make the World Conference successful. Finally, I would like to thank the DESD World Festival Forum, the co-organizer Japan Council on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD-J) and all the speakers for their support. I hope that this conference will enhance our collaboration.

Supporting Speech

Ms. Tomoko Ukishima Parliamentary Vice-Minister of the Environment

Congratulations today to "The Global Citizen's Conference 2014 on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)". In order to establish a sustainable society and to develop education, Japan proposed the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The kick-off DESD event was held in 2005. From that point, countries around the world have practiced ESD for the past 10 years. The government of Japan introduced The National Action Plan in 2006 and the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has asked other ministries such as MEXT to promote ESD. As we all know, marking the last year of DESD, the UNESCO World Conference on ESD will be held in Okayama and Nagoya-city Aichi and Okayama-city this November. MOE has implemented the "+ESD Project" which allows people to register domestic local ESD activities on a website to visualizing them; it has also organized an "ESD Learning Forum" to gather together those who are engaged in ESD activities. Furthermore, MOE has developed educational programs to support the participants throughout Japan and to encourage them to work together. In July 2014, to catch public attention for the UNESCO World Conference on ESD, MOE invited participation in making a Japanese Haiku related to ESD. Approximately 2,000 haikus were submitted within a short period of time. We will soon select the haikus for awards, including an award by the Minister of the Environment. They will be presented on the label of "Oi Ocha" from ItoEn, as the official Haiku of MOE. MOE will also invite participation in submitting a picture of ESD with a message, for an "ESD Photo Communication Award". The object is to familiarize and understand ESD. We have tried various ways to promote ESD. It is important not only to make the World Conference successful but also to further promote ESD after DESD, which is ending this year. It is also important to provide opportunities for the next generations to think how to protect nature and what the future should look like. I participated in a nature camp with children a couple of times, and the experience taught me the importance of the physical touch of nature. In order to keep nature beautiful for the next generations, children need to realize the value of existing nature and to think of solutions for the environmental issues we face today. I believe that it is our duty as adults, to provide on-site opportunities to foster environmental awareness. We, as humans, make a big impact on our surrounding environment through our daily lives. It is necessary for everyone to think of what needs to be changed to ensure fulfilling lives for future generations. To that end, the collaboration of people here today is essential. Representation from the government, industrial, academic, and private sectors is required to accelerate the expansion of ESD. This, "The Global Citizen's Conference 2014 on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)" plays a big role in the collaboration which will ensure ESD's future. Finally, I would like to finish my speech with asking for your support for the bright future for our children, our country, and the world.

Co-Organizer Speech



Mr. Kazuhiko Takemoto Director, United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability

I would like to make a speech on behalf of the United Nations University (UNU) to begin the conference today. I wish to express my gratitude to all the participants, including the Parliamentary Secretary of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Ms. Ueno and the Parliamentary Secretary of the Environment, Ms. Ukishima. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the people who organized this event. UNU hosted the first, "Global citizen's Conference on the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD)" five years ago here at this venue, and since then we have helped organizing this event every year. It is truly significant that the conference has been inviting more participation of stakeholders in Japan because of the continuous and devoted hard work of the people here today. I am grateful to host the conference here again, marking the last year of DESD. The Japanese government has supported UNU to develop ESD skills and researches in multi-fields. UNU has advocated especially the project called "Regional Centres of Expertise on ESD" (RCEs), which aims to

establish a global learning space for sustainable development at local and regional communities. There are currently 129 acknowledged RCEs worldwide. In November, the 9th Global RCE Conference will be held in Okayama during the week before the UNESCO World Conference on ESD. This was mentioned by both Parliamentary Secretaries. In addition, UNU promotes ESD activities for higher education institutions through ProSPER.NET (Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research) project. This is a higher education network focused on Africa, with activities to develop next generation expertise. UNU and MOE joined hands to establish "Global Environment Outreach Centre (GEOC)", to provide information related to ESD and to develop a sustainable society through the partnership approach. UNU has led these international activities on ESD and promoted ESD activities in Japan. UNU also has played a large role in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is will be developed along the post-2015 development agenda. We will participate actively in the World Conference on ESD in Okayama-city and Nagoya-city Aichi in November and will contribute to the activities on ESD at the global level in the future; making the most of the academic skills we have gained. Finally, I would like to conclude my speech by stating I hope we be celebrating the success of this conference to gather the outcomes of our efforts for ESD and it will end with meaningful discussions for further promotion of ESD activities.



Opening Pannell



Mr. Shigeharu Kato Director-General for International Affairs and Secretary-General of Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is an "education to foster individuals to take part in creating a sustainable society". In ESD, we talk about sustainability of the earth as an eco system, as well as culture, community, justice and peace for humanity. It is important in ESD, not only to provide knowledge, but also to pick up a problems related to sustainability around you, and to take action using the knowledge. Hence, the purpose of ESD is to develop one's attitude and values. One of the activities MEXT have taken is to adopt ESD in the Basic Educational Promotion Plan. The second Plan of 2013 defines clearly the promotion of ESD. Furthermore, the government curriculum guidelines revised in 2008 and 2009, incorporated concept of ESD. Good practices of ESD, using integrated study sessions, have been identified, incorporated concept of ESD. Japan has a unique system called ASPUnivNet which is a network of universities which support activities at UNESCO Associated Schools, as their partners. The key to a successful ESD practice is to pick an objective which students can easily relate to and to implement the activity throughout the school, beyond grade and subject. This should be in collaboration with stakeholders in the community. A voluntary body has been established among various stakeholders, including the business sector, NPO, and NGO. UNESCO created a framework, Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP), to generate commitments from stakeholders around the world in five priority areas, to scale up ESD actions. The Japanese National Commission for UNESCO (JNCU) declared that the challenges for Japan are to practice ESD outside the UNESCO Associated Schools, to involve stakeholders in various communities, and to enable ESD to enhance the qualification and skills of children in the 21st century. Since Japan is one of the most advanced countries in ESD, it is our duty to expand the practice throughout the country and to contribute to other Asian countries and indeed the world.



Mr. Kazuhiko Takahashi Director of Global Environmental Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were discussed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012 and the POST2015 development agenda will be adopted at the General Assembly in the fall of 2015. One of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to achieve universal primary education (Goal2). Although ESD aims to reduce poverty and develop economics, the MDGs were formed with 8 goals. One of them focuses especially on primary education, because it is easy to set the target number and it is extremely related to poverty and economic development. The Educational goal target is to ensure that children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. ESD goals to develop the essential knowledge and technology for environmental sustainability and POST2015 Development Agenda will be discussed based on the SDGs report and other related documents. The governments may view that the SDGs formed in Rio+20 focuses on the environmental issues and it requires a different process than the POST2015 Development Agenda. Then it will be discussed separately. The problem is that there are a lot more goals in SDGs than in MDGs and the targets are extremely complicated and comprehensive. If the future debate addresses the need to integrate the goals based on MDGs, we may have to cut down the 17 SDGs or the targets in the education sector for SDGs. Japan, as the leading country of DESD, will contribute to the POST 2015 Development Agenda on ESD. Meanwhile, the discussion on the POST2015 Development Agenda will include SDGs, as well as other related issues, and the multilateral negotiation makes the outcomes unpredictable. It is necessary that the participants here today, who play a big role in the educational sector in each country, promote ESD internationally at every level of every country.



Mr. Masaaki Kobayashi Directre-General, Environmental Policy Bureau, Ministry of the Environment

Looking back over the last 10 years from the legal point of view, it shows the great impact of ESD and environment/nature which were included in the Basic Act on Education in Japan. The Environmental Education Act was improved, with lots of changes, thanks to the efforts of various people. In 2003, the Act on Enhancing Motivation on Environmental Conservation and Promoting of Environmental Education was the first law to present the basic policy and the roles of main bodies, such as the administrative, private and education sectors. This required considerable debate among representatives and the Diet. DESD revised the law greatly in 2011 to clarify the basic policy on developing a sustainable society of homes, schools, business organizations, local communities, and other places, taking in consideration the relationship between environment, society, economy, culture, etc. In addition to the existing roles of the country and citizens, a big role for local governments to adopt is to build detailed plans or conferences. Furthermore, developing educational materials now requires a registration system for human resources development and a governor has to authorize approval to provide nature field experiences. These changes show that the law has improved from simply acknowledging the people on ESD, to encouraging them to take actions in cooperation with administrative and private sectors. It is extremely important to discuss how to implement those initiatives in the future.



Mr. Kazuhiko Takemoto Director, United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability

UNU started implementing ESD programs in 2003 with the support from the Japanese government. Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) built a network to deliver ESD to local and regional communities and the Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research (ProSPER. Net) promotes integration of sustainable development into postgraduate courses and curricula among leading universities in the Asia-Pacific region. A network of RCEs worldwide aspires to achieve the goals of ESD and there are currently 129 acknowledged RCEs in the world. An RCE should have certain elements to be authorized by UNU. There are 6 RCEs in Japan, namely, Greater Sendai, Okayama, Yokohama, Kitakyushu, Chubu, and Hyogo-Kobe. It is UNU's intentions to contribute to accelerating global activities on ESD through policy-oriented research, and to develop a next generation who will play an active role in creating new policies. The RCE activities will promote the ESD activities at local levels and UNU will empower the promotion of ESD in higher education institutions through the existing activities on sustainability. It is difficult for one organization to cover all the ESD initiatives, but UNU will continue playing its role as the leading organization to promote global activities on ESD by enhancing collaboration with other regional and international networks on ESD.



Ms. Yoko Shinkai Chief Producer, Environmental Partnership Office Chubu

In Chubu area, various organizations have taken action on ESD, such as creating ESD seminars and brochures for local governments, ESD training and local activities for business organizations. As well, activities at elementary and middle schools exist in collaboration with schools and local communities. The ESD consortium for high school students created by a network of high school teachers, ESD activities by university students, NPO/NGO, local governments, and business organizations, establishing Chubu model by Chubu ESD network, etc. It is essential to establish a system to continue these movements and to make the most of the outcomes in 10 years. It is our duty to develop youth who can gather the activities and implement a dynamic activity in the area, beyond 2014. The national bodies should provide the environment for local bodies to create a new system, with unique ideas from local and national stakeholders, for the future. ESD is the education for a sustainable society and a new challenge for all humans.



Mr. Osamu Abe Professor of Rikkyo University, Director of ESD Research Center, Chair of The Japanese Society of Environmental Education, Chair of ESD-J and Representative Director of the Global Citizen's Conference on DESD

The grand design for a sustainable society that Japan should aim for is ESD, which means that ESD is the way to change an unsustainable society to a sustainable society. I believe that Japan will create a global model for reconstruction of community to be introduced not only in Asia, but also to the world, as a soft infrastructure which will scale up Japan's international presence. I hope you understand that the E for ESD stands for Communication, Education, and Public Awareness, described in the Ramsar Convention or Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as school-centered education. The outcomes of ESD activities in Japan interfere with issues such as laws in Japan and the change in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), such as ISO26000. The unique characteristics of Japan's activities on ESD are that they are often reflected in establishing a sustainable community, with a promotion system on ESD. Yet, the gap between the ESD advanced communities and non-advanced communities is large, and the recognition of the importance of ESD is still low. Moreover, the domestic activities of ESD are not connected at a national level. What is required to connect those activities in the future is to establish a national center that provides an archive system for the information, educational materials, and methods of ESD. This will be a platform for communication among participants, training for coordinators, a consulting system, and "a system to value the hard work". It must connect those activities for the future.



Mr. Tadashi Kawashima Senior Advisor for KEEP [Kiyosato Educational Experiment Project] Inc., Chairperson of the Japan Environmental Education Forum, and Board Member of the DESD World Festival Forum

There are 5 draft proposals from the Global Citizen's Conference on ESD. One is "Information Sharing", so that we can create a system to gather the activity methods, educational materials, and supporting information on ESD in one place. Then, anyone can make a use of the accomplishments. Second is "Active Role of Coordinators", to train coordinators in various sectors and to provide them with opportunities to play an active role on ESD. Third is "Value the Actions", to focus on the actions related to ESD and share the accomplishments. Fourth is "International Collaboration", to promote ESD accomplishments, to expand the idea internationally and to learn from each other. The fifth and last is "Community System", to strengthen the system at the community level to implement ESD. In order to promote those 5 proposals, a nationwide platform is necessary. The proposals suggest establishing a platform at each community level and at the national level to promote ESD.