

Education for Sustainable Development

United Nations World Decade
2005 - 2014



ESD - What does it mean?



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It means education that enables people to foresee, face up to and solve the problems that threaten life on our planet. It also signifies education that disseminates the values and principles that are the basis of sustainable development (intergenerational equity, gender parity, social tolerance, poverty reduction, environmental protection and restoration, natural resource conservation, and just and peaceful societies). Lastly, it means education that highlights the complexity and interdependence of three spheres, the environment, society – broadly defined to include culture – and the economy.

These are all challenges to be taken up during the Decade. The aims of the Decade are more specifically to:

- help improve the quality of education and learning through ESD;
- assist countries in achieving progress towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals through ESD efforts;
- give countries new opportunities to incorporate ESD into their educational reform;
- facilitate the formation of networks and interaction among ESD stakeholders.

To achieve these aims, all Decade stakeholders will endeavour to:

- **promote and improve the quality of education:** the aim will be to refocus lifelong education on the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values needed by citizens to improve their quality of life;
- **reorient the curricula:** from pre-school to university, education must be rethought and reformed to be a vehicle of knowledge, thought patterns and values needed to build a sustainable world;
- **raise public awareness** of the concept of sustainable development: raising awareness will make it possible to develop enlightened, active and responsible citizenship locally, nationally and internationally;
- **educate the employed:** continuing technical and vocational education of directors and workers, particularly those in trade and industry, will be enriched to enable them to adopt sustainable modes of production and consumption.

This section is an excerpt from the English summary of the UN Decade International Implementation Scheme (IIS).

International Implementation Scheme (pdf-document)

