



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
11 December 2012

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

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

Eighth meeting

Geneva, 21 and 22 March 2013

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Regional consultation on the assessment of and follow-up to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

Information note on the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in 2014

Note by the secretariat of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development will be co-organized in 2014 by UNESCO and the Government of Japan on the occasion of the end of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014).

2. The Conference, which will be on the theme of “Learning Today for a Sustainable Future”, will take place from 10 to 12 November 2014 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Stakeholder meetings are scheduled to take place from 4 to 8 November 2014 in Okayama, Japan.

3. The objectives of the World Conference are set out below.

1. Celebrating a decade of action: “What have we achieved, what are the lessons learned?”

4. The World Conference will carry out a stock-taking of the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) and celebrate the Decade’s achievements. The Conference will showcase initiatives, actors, networks and ideas that were inspired by the DESD and review their impact on the basis of data provided by stakeholders and collected by UNESCO. With a view to post-Decade activities, the conference will celebrate the successes of the DESD but also analyse obstacles encountered

and lessons learned. Examples of good practice from all over the world will provide insight into viable approaches to ESD and help to identify key areas for future action.

2. Reorienting education to build a better future for all: “How does education for sustainable development reinforce quality education?”

5. Education for sustainable development (ESD) allows everyone to acquire the values, competences, skills and knowledge necessary to shape a future in line with sustainable development. ESD implies integrating content related to sustainable development into education and using teaching and learning methods that help learners acquire skills, such as critical thinking and ways of motivating themselves to act for a better future. ESD helps make education relevant today. Building on the Bonn Declaration from 2009, which states that ESD “is setting a new direction for education and learning for all”, the World Conference will address the importance of ESD as an integral component of quality education in the twenty-first century.

3. Accelerating action for sustainable development: “How are sustainability challenges addressed through ESD?”

6. Sustainable development cannot be achieved by technological solutions, political regulation or financial instruments alone. Achieving sustainable development requires a fundamental change of mind sets that results in changes of action. ESD, which addresses the interdependence of environment, economy and society, can help bring this change about. The World Conference will highlight the role of ESD for the transition to green economies and societies and as a catalyst for cross-sectoral planning and implementation of programmes in areas such as climate change, biodiversity and disaster risk reduction. The World Conference will also address how ESD can help move sustainable development policy and action forward to meet different global, regional, national and local needs.

4. Setting the agenda for ESD beyond 2014: “What are the strategies for our common future?”

7. The review of the implementation of the DESD at the World Conference will lead to the development of strategies for ESD activities after 2014. With the target date of the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All objectives approaching in 2015, and two years after the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the World Conference on ESD will also highlight the crucial role ESD plays for the next set of global education and development goals. It will make concrete contributions to the post-2014 education and sustainable development agendas. ESD must continue after 2014. The Conference will help ensure that it will.

8. This is a preliminary information note on the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in 2014. Further information on the Conference programme and on how to be involved in shaping the Conference will be available at a later stage.

