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

Eighteenth meeting

Geneva, 25 and 26 May 2023

Report of the Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development on its eighteenth meeting

I. Introduction

1. The eighteenth meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) was held in hybrid mode, on 25 and 26 May 2023, in Geneva.

A. Attendance

2. Delegations from the following 33 ECE member States attended the meeting: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uzbekistan.

3. Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Office for Project Services participated in the meeting.

4. Representatives of the European Union, Global Education Network Europe (GENE), the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Programme Office in Bishkek also participated in the meeting.

5. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and educational institutions attended the meeting: International Schools Association, Academia (Switzerland), Génération Maastricht, Planet'ERE (France), Partnership Network "Education for Sustainable Development in Ukraine", "Women and children of Ukraine - our future", Partnership Network on ESD in Ukraine (Ukraine), UNECE ESD Youth Network, Society for Sustainable Living/European ECO-Forum (Czechia), Regional Centre of Expertise "Ecodemia" (Belarus), Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) (Greece),



Education and Teacher Training Agency (Croatia), University of Bolton, University of Gloucestershire (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), State Ecological Academy of Postgraduate Education and Management under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine, Ilia State University (Georgia), Kyrgyz State University I. Arabaev (Kyrgyzstan), International University of La Rioja (Spain), University of Malta.

6. Independent experts from Ecuador, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Ukraine and representatives of “Playmob Limited” (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) also attended the meeting.

B. Adoption of the agenda

7. The Steering Committee adopted the agenda for its eighteenth meeting, as set out in document ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/1.

II. Outcomes of the Third High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries (Nicosia, 5 October 2022)

8. The Steering Committee was briefed on the major outcomes of the Third High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries, held on 5 October 2022 in the framework of the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, 5–7 October 2022). Emphasizing the significance of the Nicosia Ministerial Conference, the Chair of the Steering Committee highlighted key achievements, including the adoption of the Framework for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) from 2021 to 2030 (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/10) and the Nicosia Ministerial Statement on Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/11), as well as an outline of activities scheduled for implementation during the upcoming period.

9. The Steering Committee took note of the Chair’s comprehensive briefing on the outcomes of the Third High-level Meeting. Acknowledging the adoption of the Framework and the Ministerial Statement on ESD, the Committee affirmed its commitment to aligning its activities with the strategic goals outlined during the Nicosia Ministerial Conference.

10. The Steering Committee recognized the outlined activities as being instrumental in advancing the objectives of the UNECE Strategy for ESD and expressed readiness to contribute actively to their successful implementation.

III. Implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

A. Progress in implementing the Strategy: Update on the most recent developments (policies, actions, programmes, initiatives) at the national level

11. The Chair opened the discussion by highlighting the significance of periodic assessment in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The meeting acknowledged that the fifth mandatory reporting cycle had originally been scheduled for launch before the end of 2023. However, the Chair informed the Committee about the proposal to postpone the reporting cycle to 2024, in order to allow for capacity-building for national teams of experts and their familiarization with the revised reporting format. The Chair pointed out that the issue would be discussed under agenda item 5 on preparations for the next mandatory reporting cycle (2021–2025) under the Strategy.

12. The Chair apprised the Committee of the upcoming reporting cycle and outlined the approach for obtaining updates on national-level activities and initiatives. To facilitate

tracking progress, countries were invited to share information on recent outstanding activities and initiatives implemented since the seventeenth Steering Committee meeting (Geneva, May 30–31, 2022). Emphasis was placed on how the implementation of national strategies for ESD contributed to new developments and challenges in the region, aligning with the four following key strands of the Strategy’s new implementation framework (2021–2030): quality education and ESD; a whole institution approach and ESD; digital education, information and communications technology and ESD; and entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and ESD. Additionally, the cross-cutting issue of the role of youth in ESD was highlighted.

13. Several countries – including Armenia, Austria, Cyprus, Georgia, Israel, Netherlands, Romania, Tajikistan, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – expressed their interest in updating the Committee on recent outstanding activities and initiatives in ESD implemented since the seventeenth Steering Committee meeting.

14. A representative of Armenia provided insights into the national strategies for ESD, contributing to new developments and challenges, including the amendments to the Law on Ecological Education and Upbringing and the importance of including the national framework for environmental education in curricula for different studies.

15. A representative of Austria reported on achievements in implementing the UNECE Strategy for ESD during 2022 and 2023, including progress and planned measures in the formal education sector, shared good practice examples in the non-formal sector, as well as in implementing strand three on “digital education, information and communications technology and ESD”, strand four on “entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and ESD” and on promoting youth participation through cooperation.

16. A representative of Cyprus provided an update on the latest achievements in implementing the UNECE Strategy for ESD in Cyprus, including the revision of the National Strategy on ESD and Green Transition 2030, based on the four key priority strands of the new 2030 implementation framework and other programmes on ESD implementation at the global, regional and subregional levels.

17. A representative of Georgia provided an update on national efforts contributing to the implementation of the new ESD framework, including the priorities of the new National Strategy of Education and Science 2022–2030, the revision of “authorization” standards for educational institutions to ensure sustainable development both at the institutional and the programme levels, the new competence-based national curriculum and professional development for principals and teachers.

18. A representative of Israel provided information about the new climate change education policy of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Environmental Protection, including details about the school curriculum, teachers’ professional development, promotion of student initiatives on climate change, peak events reflecting a learning process throughout the school year, partnerships, the process of development of a climate change programme, participation in international activities and other important activities in the area.

19. A representative of the Netherlands shared the latest developments, including the elaboration of the new policy programme, the National Circular Economy Programme 2023–2030,¹ containing chapter 4.7 on education for the transition to a sustainable and circular economy and on developing a strategy up to 2030 aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, to be implemented by the Interministerial Working Party for Sustainable Development using the whole institution approach and involving both formal and informal levels of education. The Programme was scheduled to be launched at the end of 2023. The Committee was also informed about other programmes and activities held in 2022, such as the National Week of Economics Education and the Nature-Inclusivity Agenda 2.0.²

20. A representative of Tajikistan reported on the objectives of the main relevant State policy programmes and strategies, including the National Strategy for Education

¹ Available at www.government.nl/documents/reports/2023/09/27/national-circular-economy-programme-2023-2030.

² Available at https://issuu.com/collectiefnatuurinclusief/docs/na_159_100_agenda_natuurinclusief_2.0_100_en.

Development of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period until 2030,³ the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period until 2030⁴ and the State Programme of Ecological Education.

21. A representative of the Partnership Network “Education for Sustainable Development in Ukraine” spoke about the engagement of Ukrainian youth in activities aimed at green recovery, entrepreneurial initiatives and innovations, as well as achievements and challenges in the implementation of ESD.

22. A representative of the Department of Education of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland spoke about the Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy,⁵ published in 2022, and how it was aligned with the UNECE Strategy for ESD, focusing on the Strategy’s development, vision, strategic aims, action areas, key initiatives and partnerships.

23. A representative of Kyrgyzstan spoke about: existing problems in providing ESD, especially at the level of preschool education; and the Government’s efforts to address gaps and challenges across different levels of the education system.

24. A representative of Spain updated the Committee on progress made in implementing the ESD Strategy since the past meeting, including the basic policy and planning framework for ESD implementation, which was based on the new Organic Law for Improving Educational Quality, approved in 2020 by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, and shared details of governmental actions focused on the implementation of the Strategy at the formal, non-formal and informal education levels for the period 2021–2025 along the six priority areas and through interministerial cooperation. The speaker shared also the progress made and activities implemented along the four priority strands of the Framework for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD from 2021 to 2030 and other relevant details and plans for the future.

25. A representative of Romania spoke about the latest national developments since the Third High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministers with regard to the new policies, programmes and actions implemented in the country, such as the strategic framework for green education and actions taken at the national level in the field of environmental education and green transition.

26. A representative of Greece provided an update on developments since the previous meeting regarding projects, activities and various initiatives undertaken for the implementation of the priority areas of the 2030 implementation framework. The Committee was also informed about the new Charter of Universities for Sustainable Development,⁶ which responded to the urgent need to prepare leaders to address the challenges in introducing sustainable development principles and ESD at the university level.

27. The Chair expressed gratitude to all participating countries for sharing inspiring examples and good practices. The reported activities demonstrated a commitment to addressing ESD in the region for creating sustainable, just, prosperous and resilient societies. The secretariat was requested to take note of the reported outstanding good practices in order to inform the next progress report.

28. The Steering Committee took note of the insightful presentations made by country representatives. Acknowledging the progress achieved since the previous meeting, the Committee recognized the importance of ongoing efforts in implementing the UNECE Strategy for ESD at the national level. The depth and diversity of the presentations reflected the commitment of member States to advancing sustainable development through education, encompassing the key strands and cross-cutting issues outlined in the Strategy’s framework. The Committee also expressed appreciation for the collaboration and shared insights,

³ Available at <https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/en/2020/national-strategy-education-development-republic-tajikistan-period-until-2030-7060>.

⁴ Available at www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC195945/ (Russian only).

⁵ Available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainability-and-climate-change-strategy.

⁶ Available at http://unescochair.chem.uoa.gr/Xarta_GREEN_UNIV_ENG.pdf.

affirming its commitment to supporting and amplifying those efforts in the upcoming reporting cycle.

29. The secretariat informed the Committee that all presentations would be uploaded to the meeting website.

B. Regional framework of cooperation for sustainable development: Outcomes of the 2023 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and of the side event, organized by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development in the framework of the Forum and in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

30. The Committee received a comprehensive briefing on the main outcomes of the 2023 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, including the highlights and main messages of the progress report on implementing 2030 Agenda in the ECE region.⁷ Additionally, a representative of UNEP provided insights into the side event entitled “Unleashing the power of youth through education: Sustainable solutions for a better future”, held online on 28 March, 2023, within the framework of the Regional Forum and organized by UNEP in collaboration with UNESCO, the Steering Committee on ESD and the Geneva Environment Network. Relevant documentation, including the concept note and programme for the side event, had been made available in information paper No. 1.

31. The above-mentioned side event had built on the outcomes of key global and regional commitments made since the 2022 Regional Forum (Geneva (hybrid), 6–7 April) and how they could be used to strengthen and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the active participation of youth and the ESD network, including the United Nations Transforming Education Summit (New York, 16–19 September 2022), the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, the Third High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries, the European Year of Youth 2022, the World Youth Forum within the framework of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 6–18 November 2022) and the Youth Summit (Montreal, Canada, 5–6 December 2022) held prior to part II of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Montreal, Canada, 7–19 December 2022).

32. The side event served as a platform to connect different organizations and networks working in the areas of education and youth development, and to further strengthen the engagement of youth from the European region to support the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the power of ESD.

33. The Steering Committee took note of the information provided about the outcomes of the 2023 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and the side event entitled “Unleashing the Power of Youth through Education”. The side event had underscored the vital role of education in empowering youth and promoting sustainable solutions for a better future.

34. The Committee acknowledged the significance of the insights shared during the Regional Forum and the side event, emphasizing the importance of continued collaboration with relevant organizations to advance sustainable development through education.

⁷ *Growing Challenges for Sustainable Development: Can the UNECE Region Turn the Tide?* (United Nations publication, ECE/CES/STAT/2023/1).

C. Participation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development in the online side event “The future of regulation in the pan-European region: Horizon-scanning for a sustainable and equitable future” (5 April 2023) leading up to the seventieth session of the Commission: Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe (18–19 April 2023)

35. The Committee received a briefing on the Steering Committee’s participation in an online side event held on April 5, 2023, entitled “The future of regulation in the pan-European region: Horizon-scanning for a sustainable and equitable future” (information paper No. 2). Ms. Manana Ratiani, a Georgian Steering Committee member and observer from academia, spoke about competences for the future, supportive regulations and how to bring in the ESD perspective when building competencies to formulate regulations and policies fit for 2047 and beyond. Those competencies were needed to meet the challenges of the future and develop “regulations of the future”, ensuring that policymaking could become faster and more effective, with a more agile approach to governance that was adaptive, inclusive, sustainable and able to match the speed at which the world was changing. A coordinator of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform spoke about the youth perspective in building competencies for the future, summarizing the takeaways from the “UNECE Youth Dialogue: Shaping the future of the region” (online, 20 December 2022), and making the link with the competencies that youth must building in order to meet the challenges of the future, while bringing in the ESD perspective.

36. The event served as a precursor to the seventieth session of the Economic Commission for Europe on Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe (Geneva, 18–19 April 2023).

37. The Steering Committee expressed appreciation for the active involvement of its members in the above-mentioned online side event, which had provided a valuable platform to explore the role of regulation in the pan-European region. The insights gained during that event were expected to contribute to the discussions at the upcoming seventieth session of the Economic Commission for Europe.

38. The Committee expressed its commitment to continued engagement in such events, recognizing the importance of aligning efforts in ESD with broader regional initiatives for digital and green transformations.

IV. Update on the outcomes of the work of the Ad Hoc Group on Indicators: the final draft of the Format for reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2021–2025) and guidance for working with indicators

39. The Chair of the Steering Committee paid tribute to Mr. Roel van Raaij (national focal point from the Netherlands, retired), who had served as a distinguished member of the Committee since 2003. Mr. van Raaij had led the process of developing the Strategy’s monitoring and evaluation framework and chaired the Ad Hoc Group on Indicators, which was working on developing/updating the framework of indicators and the Format for reporting – the basis of the main national reporting exercise. The Chair, supported by several Committee members, expressed her gratitude for and appreciation of Mr. van Raaij’s outstanding contribution to the successful work and outcomes of the Committee and its expert groups throughout the past two decades.

40. The new Chair of the Ad Hoc Group on Indicators, Mr. Paul Vare, presented the outcomes of the Group’s work, highlighting the final draft of the revised reporting template “Format for reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission

for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2021–2025)” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/4), initially submitted for consideration at the fifteenth meeting of the Steering Committee (Geneva (hybrid), 19–20 October 2020). Additionally, he presented the accompanying guidance document entitled “Guidelines for the process of reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/5).

41. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Group on Indicators addressed the challenges of ECE reporting, the content and structure of the new reporting format and the new, adjusted proposed reporting timeline, to be further discussed under agenda item 5.

42. The Steering Committee approved the proposed documents – the final draft of the reporting template (“Format for reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2021–2025)” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/4)) and the guidance for working with indicators (“Guidelines for the process of reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/5)).

43. The Committee recognized the importance of those documents in streamlining the reporting process and enhancing the effectiveness of monitoring progress in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD.

V. Preparations for the next mandatory reporting cycle (2021–2025) under the Strategy

44. The Chair invited the Committee to deliberate on the reporting timeline and process for the fifth cycle of reporting, as mentioned in the previous agenda item. The Chair recalled that the final document of the template for reporting (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/4, annex II) contained a proposal that the fifth cycle be launched in 2023, immediately after the current meeting.

45. The Chair informed the Committee about a recent consultation with the new coordinator of the Ad Hoc Group on Indicators. It had been proposed that the launch of the fifth mandatory reporting cycle, initially planned for June 2023, be postponed to 2024. That proposal aimed to provide member States with ample time to build their capacity in monitoring and evaluating the Strategy’s implementation at the national level.

46. After deliberation, the Steering Committee agreed to postpone the launch of the fifth mandatory reporting cycle to 2024. The decision to postpone was made with the intention of aligning the reporting cycle with the nineteenth meeting of the Steering Committee, scheduled to be held in May 2024. The Committee approved the proposed steps of the new timeline, as detailed in information paper No. 3.

47. The decision to postpone the reporting cycle was made to ensure a comprehensive and well-prepared reporting process, allowing for the effective collection and evaluation of national implementation reports. The Committee affirmed its commitment to maintaining a robust reporting mechanism for monitoring progress in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.

48. It was emphasized that the detailed planning of capacity-building activities for facilitating the national reporting exercise would be discussed under agenda item 6.

49. In summary, the proposed new timeline for launching and carrying out the fifth mandatory reporting cycle included the following main steps:

(a) The launch of the fifth mandatory reporting cycle immediately after the nineteenth Steering Committee meeting, tentatively scheduled for April or May 2024 (depending on the availability of meeting rooms at the Palais des Nations);

(b) The deadline for the submission of national implementation reports would be 30 November 2024;

(c) The first draft of the progress report was scheduled to be presented at the twentieth Steering Committee meeting in May 2025;

(d) The final draft of the progress report was expected to be presented at the twenty-first Steering Committee meeting in May 2026.

50. Regarding the progress or evaluation report, the Committee was informed that it would be prepared on the basis of the national implementation reports and would follow the structure of the evaluation reports from the previous four mandatory reporting cycles.

VI. Planning of capacity-building activities for facilitating national reporting on implementing the new implementation framework of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) along the four priority strands

51. The Chair highlighted the importance of continued reporting by member States on national progress in the Strategy’s implementation, aligned with the new implementation framework 2021–2030. That reporting mechanism was based on the experience from the previous monitoring and evaluation methodology, ensuring comparability with previous reporting exercises.

52. It was proposed that the assistance framework should include support to national focal points for ESD in monitoring and evaluating the Strategy’s national-level implementation, developing national implementation reports, and completing the revised reporting template provided in document ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/4. That format had been updated by the Ad Hoc Group on Indicators to correspond with the four priority areas of the new implementation framework.

53. It was also proposed that a “support group” for monitoring and evaluation be established. Said support group, comprising Steering Committee experts and experienced national focal points, would assist member States in their monitoring and evaluation process through capacity-building activities, including organizing advisory workshops at various levels.

54. The new coordinator of the Ad Hoc Group on Indicators was invited to present to the Committee a proposal for expert-led online and in-person workshops (details provided in information paper No. 3), designed to help national focal points and/or national monitoring and evaluation groups organize their process of national reporting to ECE on progress in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD within the established reporting mechanism, updated in accordance with the priority areas of the new implementation framework 2021–2030, and based on the experience from the previous monitoring and evaluation methodology.

55. The Steering Committee approved the establishment of the “Support Group for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy’s Implementation” (information paper No. 3), comprising Steering Committee members and experts and to be led and coordinated by Mr. Vare, and noted that the following Committee members had expressed an interest in joining the Support Group:

- Mr. Vare, academic and expert from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (former member of the Expert Group on Competences and the Expert Group on Indicators)
- Ms. Ratiani, academic and expert from Georgia (former national focal point for Georgia and member of the Expert Group on Competences and the Expert Group on Indicators)
- Ms. Monika Reti, national focal point of Hungary (former member of the Expert Group on Indicators)

- Ms. Stella Hadjiachilleos, expert from Cyprus (experience especially at the national level and in Committee, especially deepened after preparing the latest progress report on the Strategy’s implementation (2017–2019))

56. The Chair asked the Committee members with the relevant experience and background to inform the secretariat should they be interested in joining the Support Group.

57. The Committee approved the proposed schedule (information paper No. 3) of assistance activities to be organized by the Support Group, including workshops and advisory sessions to assist national focal points in monitoring and evaluating the Strategy’s implementation at the national level, and requested the secretariat to provide the necessary secretarial support in organizing the proposed assistance activities.

58. The secretariat informed the Committee that, based on the comments to be eventually made during the planned capacity-building workshops on the two documents approved under agenda item 4 – the template for reporting and the guidance for working with indicators (see para. 40 above) – and taking into consideration the fact that the approved changes in the timeline for reporting considered under agenda item 5 had to be reflected in the template for reporting (see paras. 44–49 above), the two documents – “Format for reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2021–2025)” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/4) and “Guidelines for the process of reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/5) would be revised to reflect the final comments and submitted for final approval to the nineteenth meeting of the Steering Committee, to be held in 2024.

VII. Adoption of the final draft of the workplan for the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development from 2021 to 2025

59. The Steering Committee was invited to consider a draft workplan for the second phase (2021–2025) of the post-2015 implementation period. The workplan outlined a road map of activities for the remaining three years of the second implementation phase, aligned with the mid-term review of the ESD for 2030 global framework set for 2025. The draft workplan aimed to further the implementation of the Strategy at the national and international levels, in accordance with the mandate articulated by education and environment ministries at their Third High-level Meeting in 2022.

60. The Chair recalled that the current draft had been prepared by the secretariat based on workplan templates for the previous implementation phases and on the outline of the draft workplan for the implementation of the Strategy from 2021 to 2025 (document ECE/CEP/AC.13/2022/4). That outline had been elaborated by the Ad Hoc Group for Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Chair and the secretariat, and endorsed by the seventeenth meeting of the Committee (Geneva (hybrid), 30–31 May 2022).⁸ The draft workplan had been derived from the framework for the future implementation of the Strategy, as adopted at the Third High-level Meeting.

61. It was noted that planning of activities for the second strand on “Whole institution approach and ESD” and the fourth strand on “Entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and ESD” would be presented under agenda items 8 and 9, respectively.

62. The Committee was invited to discuss the list of activities and outputs along the four priority strands outlined in the draft workplan and to propose concrete steps of implementation, especially for strands 1 (Quality education and ESD) and 3 (Digital education, information and communications technology and ESD). That included identifying implementing partners, determining the place, date/timeline, estimating costs, and identifying funding sources.

⁸ ECE/CEP/AC.13/2022/2, para. 90.

63. The floor was opened for proposals, and representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and speakers on information and communications technology and ESD made relevant proposals for activities aimed at implementation of priority strands 1 and 3.

64. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland outlined several key ideas and forthcoming activities aligned with the first strand. In her presentation,⁹ she invited interested Committee members to participate in the Quality Education Working Group. That collaborative effort aimed to shape specific activities within the realm of quality education and reinforce the commitment of her country's Department for Education to supporting the Committee's initiatives in the field in question.

65. Furthermore, the speaker affirmed her Government's dedication to facilitating collaboration among quality professionals from member States. That commitment included establishing a dedicated network focused solely on ESD, with an emphasis on actively engaging and involving youth and students in shaping its agenda and activities.

66. In the context of advancing the third strand on "Digital education, information and communications technology and ESD", the Chair invited an academic observer from Spain, along with collaborators from the University of Bolton and Playmob Limited (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), to present the Games Realizing Effective and Affective Transformation research project. That European Union-funded initiative sought to harness the potential of digital games, game development and gaming technologies to actively engage citizens in meaningful dialogues with Governments, specifically addressing the pressing global challenge of climate change. The project underscored the transformative power of contemporary media, particularly games, in fostering positive societal change.

67. The primary objective of the presentation was to explore how the above-mentioned research project could contribute to the implementation of the third strand. It aimed to demonstrate how gaming could serve as a breakthrough method in sustainable education and youth awareness-raising efforts. Central to the project's methodology was the integration of games as an information and communications technology tool and communication channel within social networks and communities, thereby providing players with an authentic context in which their actions had real-world implications. Moreover, the project emphasized closing the loop by facilitating interactions with policy stakeholders.

68. As part of the initiative, developers had created mini-games embedded within commercial games, enabling individuals to express their opinions to policymakers on sustainable development and climate change in an informal learning and educational setting. The project further offered a framework or tool for students to assess the provision of sustainability education within their respective institutions, be they universities, colleges, or schools, and identify areas for improvement.

69. The participants subsequently engaged in a lively discussion on the proposed actions for the implementation of the first and third strands of the implementation framework.

70. The Chair thanked the speakers for their proposals and finalized decisions on the points raised during the discussion.

71. The Committee approved the adoption of the Workplan for the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development from 2021 to 2025 (document ECE/CEP/AC.13/2023/3) with the amendments (as in the "Revised document as of 23 May 2023").

72. The proposed plan of activities and outputs along the four strands, as outlined in the workplan (as in the "Revised document as of 23 May 2023"), was approved.

⁹ See <https://unece.org/environment/documents/2023/06/presentations/prof-daniella-tibury-key-sustainability-esd-competences>.

VIII. Proposal for developing an outline of activities for implementing the second strand on the whole institution (school) approach outlined in the draft workplan

73. The Steering Committee was informed about the proposal for developing an outline of activities for implementing the second strand on the whole institution (school) approach and ESD outlined in the draft workplan.

74. The Chair informed the Committee about the progress made in elaborating the proposal on planned activities for implementing the second strand on the whole institution (school) approach and ESD, as outlined in the draft workplan. That encompassed the development of guidelines and a toolkit for implementation, the collection of good practices, and the organization of capacity-building workshops, as relevant (information paper No. 4).

75. During the Third High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries, the Netherlands and Cyprus had expressed their commitment to lead the workplan activities for strand 2 on whole institution approach and ESD. Cyprus had pledged an initial amount of €150,000 for the workplan activities for the period 2023–2025, and the Netherlands had offered in-kind support for those activities. The Chair acknowledged the commitment of both countries and announced the appointment of Mr. Arjen Wals to lead the Expert group for the strategic framework on whole institution approach and ESD, with Mr. Hak van Nispen appointed to oversee work on the second deliverable – the toolkit on whole institution approach.

76. Mr. Wals presented the outline of the draft proposal for workplan activities on implementing the second strand on whole institution approach and ESD. The Chair thanked Mr. Wals for the comprehensive presentation, opening the floor for comments, questions and clarifications.

77. Mr. van Nispen presented the draft outline of the second output, the toolkit on whole institution approach and ESD. The purpose of the toolkit was to provide ideas and activities to support member States in the ECE region and other stakeholders in transitioning their institutions to sustainability based on the whole institution approach.

78. The Chair subsequently invited comments and questions from the Committee members. The Committee expressed appreciation for the draft outlines presented.

79. The Chair invited the Committee to approve the proposed drafts of outlines of activities and outputs aimed at implementing the second strand on the whole institution (school) approach, as outlined in the draft workplan.

80. The Committee approved the proposed outline of practical steps for implementing the workplan activities/outputs on strand 2 on the whole institution approach and ESD (information paper No. 4).

IX. Draft concept note and planning of the first capacity-building activity to be organized in 2023 or 2024 under the Swiss project (2023–2025) on implementing the fourth strand on “Entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and education for sustainable development” of the implementation framework of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development from 2021 to 2030

81. The Steering Committee received an update on the draft concept note for the first capacity-building activity scheduled for either 2023 or 2024 under the Swiss project (2023–2025). That activity focused on implementing the fourth strand of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) from 2021 to 2030, centred on “Entrepreneurship, employment, innovation and ESD”. Detailed information was provided

in information paper No. 5, which included the draft concept note and planning for the capacity-building activity, along with a complementary draft project proposal submitted for funding by the ECE secretariat on May 10, 2023, through the United Nations Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation. Should the project receive approval and funding, it would contribute to the overarching goals of the three-year project prepared in collaboration with and supported by the Government of Switzerland.

82. The Chair expressed gratitude to the secretariat for developing the project proposal and appreciation to the Government of Georgia for the interest it had expressed in building its capacity to implement the Strategy at the national level, particularly focusing on the fourth strand of the 2030 implementation framework. The Chair also acknowledged the contribution of the Government of Switzerland to the advancement of the implementation of that strand.

83. Furthermore, the Chair encouraged countries to indicate their preliminary interest in participating in the planned capacity-building workshop, scheduled to take place in Georgia in November or December 2023, contingent upon receipt of funds for the United Nations Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation project. Several countries expressed their interest, and the secretariat committed to keeping them informed as funds were secured and preparations for the workshop progressed.

84. Mr. Ralph Heinrich, Secretary of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships, then provided insights into the Committee's work in the field, particularly focusing on entrepreneurship, innovation and skills development.

85. Expressing appreciation for Mr. Heinrich's update, the Chair underscored the significance of collaboration between the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships and the Steering Committee on ESD. Emphasizing the value of sharing expertise and experiences, the Chair anticipated fruitful cooperation on joint events, projects and other collaborative initiatives.

86. The Steering Committee resolved to organize a capacity-building workshop on implementing the fourth strand in Tbilisi, in November or December 2023, subject to the availability of complementary funds from the United Nations Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation, and requested the secretariat to provide necessary support for organizing the workshop.

87. Lastly, the Steering Committee acknowledged the information provided by Mr. Heinrich regarding the potential for joint work between the two Committees.

X. Education for sustainable development and youth: update on the activities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform held since the previous meeting

A. Briefing on youth involvement in the Nicosia Ministerial Conference (side events, declaration, other meetings) organized during the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference)

88. The Committee received a comprehensive briefing on the involvement of youth in the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference. The update covered various aspects, including youth participation in side events, contributions to the Declaration, and engagement in other related meetings. The detailed report was provided in information paper No. 6.

89. The representatives of youth expressed their enthusiasm for participating in that important high-level event.

90. The Chair expressed appreciation for the active involvement of youth representatives in the Nicosia Ministerial Conference and acknowledged their valuable contributions to the discussions and outcomes of the Conference. She also highlighted that the active role of youth had been acknowledged in the concluding remarks of the ECE Executive Secretary, who had

expressed her satisfaction regarding the mobilization of mechanisms for youth engagement in the UNECE Region

91. The Steering Committee took note of the information about the involvement of youth in side events, the Declaration and other meetings organized during the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference.

B. Establishing an expert body drawn from youth representatives under the supervision of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development: Proposed terms of reference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Youth Task Force on Education for Sustainable Development

92. The Committee deliberated on the proposed terms of reference for the UNECE Youth Task Force on Education for Sustainable Development. The proposal outlined the purpose, objectives, composition and working modalities of the Task Force and was presented in information paper No. 7.

93. The Chair opened the floor for discussions, comments and suggestions on the proposed terms of reference. Several Committee members provided valuable input and recommendations; others needed more clarification regarding the legal status of a new expert body drawn from youth representatives and whether such a body would be entirely independent from the Steering Committee.

94. The Secretary of the Steering Committee responded to questions, clarifying that the proposed youth body to be eventually established under the Steering Committee could not be independent and that its function might be only be advisory or operational, or a combination of the two, depending on the tasks assigned to it by the parent body, as outlined in the existing Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of teams of specialists within UNECE (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1). Therefore, the body could be registered by the ECE Executive Committee as a group of youth experts functioning under the Steering Committee. The funding of the expert body's activities would be dependent on member States' willingness to make corresponding earmarked contributions. Assigning the formal title of the UNECE Youth Task Force on Education for Sustainable Development to the body would contribute to its heightened visibility and allow it to act at large with a known name. The scope of activities of the body would depend on the availability of funds to be provided to the trust fund of the Steering Committee through the member States' contributions.

95. The Chair expressed gratitude for the insightful contributions from the Committee members and emphasized the importance of establishing an effective and dynamic Youth Task Force.

96. The Committee agreed in principle to establish the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Youth Task Force on Education for Sustainable Development (information paper No. 7); and requested the Bureau to review the documents for the establishment of the Youth Task Force with the view to their finalization.¹⁰

97. The Committee requested the secretariat to undertake the required steps for establishing the UNECE Youth Task Force on ESD under the supervision of the Steering Committee.

¹⁰ In the absence of comments from the Bureau, the decision is now in force.

C. Draft plan of activities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Education for Sustainable Development Youth Platform for 2023

98. The coordinator of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform presented to the Steering Committee an activity plan for the Youth Platform in the region for 2023, for approval, as outlined in information paper No. 8.

99. The Committee took note of the information about the reported initiatives and plans and the proposed activity plan for the Youth Platform in the region for the period 2023 (information paper No. 8).

XI. Recent activities to promote education for sustainable development in other international forums

100. The Steering Committee received updates on recent global and regional initiatives aimed at promoting ESD in various international forums.

101. A representative of UNESCO provided a comprehensive overview of recent key events held since the past meeting: the United Nations Transforming Education Summit and the Greening Education Partnership. Other significant ESD events included the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC; part II of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and global initiatives such as the Global ESD-Net 2030 launch Webinar (online, 4 October 2022), the ESD-Net Regional Consultation Webinar: Europe-North America (online, 6–7 March 2023), and the Europe and North America ESD-Net 2030 Regional Meeting (Paris, 26–27 June 2023), as well as findings from various UNESCO studies published in 2022, such as *Youth Demands for Quality Climate Change Education*; “*Where Do We Stand on Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education: Findings of the 7th Consultation on the Implementation of the 1974 Recommendation Concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*”; and *The Concept of Sustainability and its Contribution towards Quality Transformative Education: Thematic Paper*. He also provided a brief overview and updates on the ESD for 2030 country initiatives among ECE member States.¹¹

102. A representative of UNEP spoke about the recent activities undertaken, among other things, in the framework of the European Environment and Health Process and the Regional Collaborative Platform of United Nations entities in the ECE region, including the issue-based coalitions on “environment and climate change”, “adolescents and youth” and “health and well-being”. He also highlighted joint efforts with ECE in advancing the ESD agenda, particularly underlining the special role of the four priority strands of the UNECE Strategy for ESD implementation framework from 2022 to 2023 as an accelerator in addressing the triple crisis of climate change, environmental pollution and biodiversity loss.¹²

103. A representative of the European Commission Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture gave an overview of the current work of the Directorate-General regarding learning for sustainability, including policy cooperation between the European Union-27 countries, guided by the 2022 Council of the European Union Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development¹³ and the preceding flagship European Green Deal.¹⁴ The speaker briefed the Committee on the activities of the European

¹¹ Presentation available at https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/UNESCO_B.Combes_ESD_for_2030_FINAL.pdf.

¹² Presentation available at https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/UNEP_activities_2023_ESD_ppt.pdf.

¹³ Available at www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/06/16/council-adopts-recommendation-to-stimulate-learning-for-the-green-transition/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Council+adopts+recommendation+to+stimulate+learning+for+the+green+transition+and+sustainable+development.

¹⁴ COM(2019) 640 final.

Union Working Group on Sustainability in School Education, including its outputs and key messages, as well on published and forthcoming thematic papers and studies, existing tools such as the GreenComp European sustainability framework for sustainability competences, designed for every phase and stage of education, the Education for Climate Coalition, the Erasmus+ funding programme, which had sustainability as a key focus embracing a number of programmes and a series of large projects, including those focused on sustainability in teacher education and other activities.¹⁵

104. A representative of GENE provided an update on the activities of GENE, focusing on the European Declaration on Global Education to 2050: The Dublin Declaration – A Strategy Framework for Improving and Increasing Global Education in Europe to 2050, adopted at the Dublin Congress on 4 November 2022. The speaker briefed the Committee on the process that had led to the development of the Dublin Declaration, the Congress that had finalized it, the content of the Declaration, progress to date and prospects regarding future progress.¹⁶

105. A representative of MIO-ECSDE briefed the Committee on recent activities carried out under the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development during the reporting period June 2022–May 2023, including the history of the Mediterranean Strategy’s adoption, its membership, main milestones, the main features of the Action Plan towards 2030 of the Strategy and an overview of a number of pilot actions with potential for upscaling.¹⁷

106. The Committee acknowledged and took note of the presentations made by the representatives of UNESCO, UNEP, the European Commission, MIO-ECSDE and GENE. The Committee expressed its commitment to collaborating closely with those organizations and other regional and global partners to advance the ESD agenda in the ECE region.

107. The comprehensive insights shared by the representatives would inform future collaborative efforts and contribute to the ongoing promotion of ESD at the international level.

XII. Participation of the Steering Committee in upcoming regional and international forums

108. The Committee members were informed about the planned participation of Committee members in upcoming regional and international events, with the intention of promoting the Committee’s work.

109. Representatives of Israel and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland shared their experience of participating in and/or hosting the twenty-sixth (Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 31 October–13 November 2021) and twenty-seventh sessions of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC, highlighting that participation in such events was important for all member States, as it provided an opportunity to highlight the importance of ESD and youth empowerment in addressing contemporary challenges and to embed education in the process.

110. The representative of Israel updated the Committee on the intention to organize a side event on the thematic “Youth, children, education and skills day” that would take place on 8 December 2023 during the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 30 November–12 December 2023) on the implementation of the four priority strands of the new implementation framework of the Strategy that would also promote the Nicosia Ministerial Conference and its objectives.

¹⁵ Presentation available at <https://unece.org/environment/documents/2023/05/presentations/european-commission-learning-sustainability-policy>.

¹⁶ Presentation available at https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/GENE_Liam_Dublin_Declar_progress.pdf.

¹⁷ Presentation available at <https://unece.org/environment/documents/2023/05/presentations/mcesd-prof-michael-scoullos-recent-activities-organized>.

111. Representatives of Luxembourg, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, UNESCO and MIO-ECSDE shared their plans to participate in, and inputs to be provided at, the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC.

112. A representative of UNEP pointed out that, in addition to aiming to attend the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC, it was also important to offer a concrete proposal from the existing Strategy for addressing the climate crisis, highlighting the role of youth in mitigating the crisis that would help to achieve the goal. He referred to a draft document jointly elaborated by UNEP and ECE entitled “Delivering on the promise of the 2030 Agenda through Education for Sustainable Development and for the Future We Want”,¹⁸ which might serve as an example of such a proposal for action. The document aimed to apply the Framework for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD from 2021 to 2030 as an accelerator to address the triple crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

113. The coordinator of the UNECE ESD Youth Platform spoke about existing impediments to the participation of youth representatives at Conferences of the Parties, highlighted that youth engagement had not improve in recent years due to accreditation issues affecting young people not part of official delegations, and appealed to Governments to help resolve said issue.

114. A representative of Kyrgyzstan reported on participation in the upcoming “Schools2030 Global Forum 2023” (Porto, Portugal, 5–7 June 2023), stating that her country had proposed that it organize and host the Schools2030 Global Forum in June 2024, with the tentative title “Education for All”, and invited the Committee to participate in the Forum.

115. The Chair also pointed to the information provided by a UNESCO representative under item 11 of the agenda (see para. 101 above) about the participation of the Steering Committee in the Europe and North America ESD-Net 2030 Regional Meeting.

116. The Committee acknowledged the presentations and took note of the information regarding planned participation in upcoming regional and international forums.

117. The Chair asked the Committee members who had not yet done so to communicate to the secretariat any plans to participate in other upcoming regional or international events, and emphasized the importance of coordination with the Chair and the Bureau for interventions representing the Steering Committee.

XIII. Strengthening synergies with other organizations and processes

118. The Chair introduced the agenda item, emphasizing the importance of strengthening synergies with other organizations and processes in the field of ESD, and invited members to share information on their experiences, initiatives or collaborations with other organizations or processes related to ESD.

119. The representative of CAREC updated the Committee on the work done by the organization in recent years, concentrating on the achievements of the annual Central Asian Leadership Programme on Environment for Sustainable Development focused on youth, whose 2023 focus would be on the theme: “Leaders of Central Asia – Youth engagement in national climate change priorities, regional collaboration and climate financing for sustainable development”. She also spoke about synergies and cooperation with the ECE Steering Committee on ESD and other ECE programmes, as well as with United Nations processes and entities, including UNFCCC and UNESCO.

120. The Committee acknowledged the shared information and experiences related to collaboration with other organizations and processes in the field of ESD, and emphasized the importance of continued efforts to strengthen synergies for the advancement of ESD goals.

¹⁸ Available at https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/UNEP_T~1.PDF.

XIV. Planning of publications for 2024 on education for sustainable development from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

121. The Chair informed the Steering Committee members about the following three publications forecast for publication in 2024:

(a) *A Practical Guide for Implementing the Whole Institution/School Approach to Education for Sustainable Development, Including Good Practice Examples and Case Studies;*

(b) *Guiding Framework for Twenty-first Century Competences for Innovation and Entrepreneurship;*

(c) *Youth Empowered: From Words to Action.*

122. The Steering Committee was invited to decide on the next steps regarding the preparation of the above-mentioned publications, including nominating the members responsible for coordinating their preparation.

123. After the discussion, the Committee agreed to postpone the publication of *A Practical Guide for Implementing the Whole Institution/School Approach* to 2025 and to forecast the release of the following two publications in 2024:

(a) *Guiding Framework for Twenty-first Century Competences for Innovation and Entrepreneurship;*

(b) *Youth Empowered: From Words to Action.*

XV. Status of the trust fund and resource requirements

124. The Secretary of the Steering Committee provided a comprehensive overview of the ESD trust fund's status, including contributions received and resource requirements for 2023/2024, as outlined in information paper No. 9. He thanked countries that had made financial contributions or had made pledges yet to be transferred for the current year, which would provide secretariat support to the activities organized by the Steering Committee. The Secretary also referred to announced in-kind contributions of Cyprus and Switzerland for implementing the workplan activities for strands two and four. The Secretary highlighted that a sound financial basis was required for the effective implementation of the future UNECE Strategy for ESD.

125. The Committee took note of the information from the secretariat that, given the current status of resources, the dedicated staff member contract was set to end in June 2023; renewal thereof was contingent on the availability of resources contributed by member States, ideally by October 2023.

126. Regarding the expenditures, it was also pointed out that, recently, the United Nations Office at Geneva had begun charging for its services, adding to the actual costs of the management of the programme.

127. Emphasis was placed on realistic financial planning for current and future workplans, in order to avoid overambitious expectations. The need for advance indications of pledges by States was underscored.

128. The Chair thanked the Governments of Cyprus, the Netherlands and Switzerland for providing contributions (financial and in-kind) for funding implementation of workplan activities.

129. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland stated that her Government was carefully considering the possibility of potentially supporting activities aimed at the implementation of the first strand on quality education.

130. Representatives of a number of other countries announced that they were planning to provide regular financial contributions to the trust fund for the current year.

131. The Chair acknowledged and thanked countries that had pledged to support the funding of the Committee's trust fund. Committee members were invited to consider alternative ways to address funding challenges, including providing in-kind contributions to various programme activities.

132. Committee members discussed funding perspectives for capacity-building activities in the next phase (2023–2025), based on the newly adopted workplan and the priorities of the implementation framework.

133. In conclusion, the Committee took note of the financial status of the trust fund, expressed gratitude for pledges, and discussed strategies to secure funding for the ongoing and future activities of the UNECE Strategy for ESD. The secretariat was mandated to send out annual letters to member States, requesting financial contributions in support of the UNECE Strategy for ESD in 2024 and beyond.

XVI. Forecast of official documents for the nineteenth meeting of the Steering Committee, to be held in 2024

134. The Chair recalled the annual procedure whereby, well in advance of the forthcoming annual meeting, the secretariat was tasked with providing a list of official documents to be prepared. Under the agenda item, the Committee deliberated on and agreed upon the list of official documents slated for the nineteenth session of the Committee in 2024.

135. The proposed documents, put forth by the secretariat as a preliminary list, included:

(a) Annotated provisional agenda for the nineteenth meeting (ECE.CEP.AC.13.2024.1);

(b) Report of the nineteenth meeting of the Steering Committee (post-session) (ECE.CEP.AC.13.2024.2);

(c) Format for reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (2021–2025) (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2024/3);

(d) Strategic Framework on Whole Institution Approach – draft proposal for workplan activity on implementing the key Strand-2 on “Whole Institution Approach and Education for Sustainable Development” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2024/4);

(e) Draft Proposal for developing a Tool Kit on “Whole Institution or Whole School Approach and Education for Sustainable Development” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2024/5).

136. Following discussions and agreement, the Chair summarized the decisions and instructed the secretariat to forecast the agreed documents for the 2024 meeting, as outlined above.

XVII. Calendar of meetings

137. The Steering Committee agreed to hold its nineteenth meeting on 29–31 May 2024, in person in Geneva (or, alternatively, on 23–25 April 2024, should the United Nations Office at Geneva conference services be unable to guarantee the availability of the meeting room for the proposed dates in May).

XVIII. Other business

138. No additional items were proposed for discussion.

139. The Steering Committee asked the secretariat to upload to the meeting website the presentations and other relevant materials discussed during the meeting.

140. Before closing the meeting, the Chair and the ECE secretariat representatives expressed their gratitude to the long-serving national focal point from the Government of

Austria, Mr. Peter Iwaniewicz, who was about to retire from his government position and also from the Steering Committee, for his active participation in the work of the Committee and for his outstanding contribution to the success of the Committee's activities throughout the period since its establishment two decades previously.

XIX. Closure of the meeting

141. The Chair provided concluding remarks and thanked the speakers and the Committee members for their constructive and efficient work and the interpreters, and officially closed the eighteenth meeting.
