

**Nagoya Declaration on
Higher Education for Sustainable Development**

1. We, the participants and supporters of the International Conference on “Higher Education for Sustainable Development: Higher Education Beyond 2014” and the associated University Student Summit on ESD, held at Nagoya University in Aichi, Japan on 9 November 2014, reaffirm previous relevant commitments including those made within the framework of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014), the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative for Rio+20, Rio+20 People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education and the IAU Iquitos Statement on Higher Education for Sustainable Development, and hereby declare our renewed commitment to and support for actions by the higher education community towards sustainable development.

2. We acknowledge the responsibility that the higher education community bears in the international pursuit of sustainable development and reaffirm our commitments and support, beyond 2014, to pursue sustainable development through the pathway of education for sustainable development, ensuring that the higher education community continues to innovate and contribute to achieving sustainable development by:
 - 2.1 Advancing the aspirations of the UN DESD to create a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from education and learn the values, attitudes and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and a positive societal transformation, through increased reorientation of education towards sustainable development.
 - 2.2 Recognizing and scaling up the accomplishments of the UN DESD, taking into account experiences and lessons learnt, and continuing the successful initiatives that have been developed throughout the Decade and, more specifically, since Rio+20; setting new goals that support a realignment of economic, social, cultural, environmental and educational frameworks in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); contributing to the development of the post-2015 frameworks, establishing new strategic partnerships as required; and supporting assessment and reporting processes to ensure capacity development, transparency and continuous enhancement of activities.
 - 2.3 Recognizing the crucial role and responsibility of higher education institutions to develop students and all types of learners into critical and creative thinkers and professionals to acquire relevant competences and capabilities for future-oriented

innovation in order to find solutions to complex, transdisciplinary and transboundary issues, and to foster understanding and practice of collective values and principles that guide attitudes and transformations, respecting the environmental limits of our planet, through education, training, research and outreach activities.

- 2.4 Supporting the implementation of the Global Action Programme (GAP) on Education for Sustainable Development as a key mechanism to mobilize stakeholders to accelerate progress towards sustainable development at all levels and areas of education and learning, and drawing on, among others, information and communication technologies including social networking, in order to accelerate progress towards sustainable development, especially in the five GAP priority action areas of advancing policy, transforming learning and training environments, building the capacities of educators and trainers, empowering and mobilizing youth, and accelerating sustainable solutions at the local level.
 - 2.5 Ensuring transformative changes in the vision and leadership of higher education, in knowledge development, learning strategies and research in relation to diverse systems of knowledge, while collaborating with stakeholders across the public and private sectors and leading by example, scaling up and mainstreaming innovative practices in learning and knowledge development, fostering community engagement through the whole-institution approach, ensuring green campus operations, and creating a conducive environment for supporting required transformative processes.
 - 2.6 Undertaking actions that are sensitive to the contexts from the local to global levels in which particular sustainability challenges are manifested and different approaches and solutions are pursued, as well as different models of supporting higher education initiatives promoting science and learning.
3. With this Declaration, we call upon world leaders to support the transformative role of higher education towards sustainable development, and commit to work together and further promote transformative learning and research by encouraging multi-stakeholder, multi-sector partnerships, communicating examples of sustainability practices, promoting broad and strong leadership and public awareness of the values of sustainable development and education for sustainable development, and recognizing the essential role and responsibility of higher education institutions towards creating sustainable societies.
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Final Version

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Annex

To ensure that the higher education community continues to innovate and contribute to achieving sustainable development in line with the goals and aspirations of the Nagoya Declaration on Higher Education for Sustainable Development, the following key issues and actions points were derived from group discussions at the International Conference on “Higher Education for Sustainable Development: Higher Education Beyond 2014”, as well as from the “University Student Summit on ESD”.

1. The Whole-institution Approach

- i. Embed sustainability across the whole institution and integrate the values and ethics of sustainability into the entire culture of higher education institutions through their policies and strategic plans.
- ii. Develop leaders on ESD through leadership programmes based on ‘turnaround’ leadership research, which places strong emphasis on capabilities and not just knowledge and skills.
- iii. Place value on the importance of institutional leadership, educating leaders on ESD, bringing them on board for crucial issues, and providing them with convincing transformative tools.
- iv. Include all academic and administrative staff as well as students in efforts to build up patience, trust and support by working with all institutional stakeholders.
- v. Design assessment processes that are evolving and co-creative, making use of a mix of different tools to facilitate the process of transformation towards sustainability ensuring that a wide variety of stakeholders, including the community, play a role in assessing higher education.
- vi. Integrate assessments into the strategy of the institution, because they are learning tools for facilitating transformation towards sustainability; develop indicators, as well as creative systems of institutional self-study and peer-review, in a cooperative manner with university managements, faculty, researchers, students and other relevant stakeholders.

- vii. Create ‘horizontal’ structures within higher education that foster links and bridge the divide between disciplines and generations, because the rigid structures and existing mindsets of higher education institutions may not be supportive of sustainability.
- viii. Emphasize the need for cultural change and a deep understanding of institutional values in order to accelerate trans-disciplinary knowledge acquisition; develop institutional frameworks that enable students and other stakeholders to co-create systemic change.

2. Engagement across Boundaries

- i. Promote long-term, multi-form and multi-stakeholder approaches to engage with society through partnerships using a common agenda, and make concerted efforts to transform people’s mindsets through innovative pedagogical actions and research that are relevant and responsive to the needs of society.
- ii. Integrate sustainability science into society using a trans-disciplinary approach, which promotes creating, sharing and implementing knowledge among different stakeholders, thereby bridging the gap between science and society.
- iii. Integrate traditional/indigenous knowledge systems and diverse worldviews into higher education towards sustainability, and apply participatory methodologies for assessment and revitalization of institutions.
- iv. Integrate science-policy inter-linkages focused on sustainable development into higher education programs; emphasize the importance of drawing upon diverse knowledge bases; strengthen bridges among different knowledge systems to foster innovations such as ‘situated learning’ and ‘learner-led’ approaches.
- v. Foster collaboration across different disciplines, with students taking inter-disciplinary learning as a key element of ESD, and develop systems to emphasize inter-disciplinary learning within a university and among different universities.
- vi. Enhance collaboration between university students and communities; since rich ESD programs for university students are often developed in community-based learning, students need to work on local challenges and find local solutions through communication with diverse local stakeholders.
- vii. Foster collaboration spanning broad ranges of diversity; the learning of students in a community is enriched by communications with other stakeholders who may have different value systems.

3. Working with Critical Sectors and Groups

- i. Recognize that transforming towards sustainability in higher education is a complex undertaking that requires engagement by all internal stakeholders including the faculty and students, as well as external stakeholders such as community groups and businesses.
- ii. Integrate financial reporting into social and environmental reporting; systems of accountability must be established for businesses that produce goods that are socially and environmentally harmful.
- iii. Academic institutions and companies should join into co-creative partnerships that involve innovation in pedagogy and co-creation of curricula, action learning/experiential opportunities for students, and solution-oriented research with case studies between businesses and academic faculty and institutions
- iv. Move from ‘learning with community’ to ‘learning as community’, taking into consideration involvement of all relevant stakeholders, looking at the institution as a system comprised of multiple stakeholders, and adopting the ‘whole of people’ approach.
- v. Create opportunities, through the use of ESD, for children and youth in the informal sector to become change agents and serve as contributing members of the community for global sustainability.
- vi. Promote technology-driven education using tailor-made digital learning, including mobile apps and online programs for youth to help them address social responsibilities, encouraging lifelong learning among children and youth.
- vii. Encourage interregional and intercontinental youth programs and projects, including mentorship across boundaries, through the RCE youth network activities.

4. Engagement with Policies

- i. Redefine research priorities and reframe research methodologies, in collaboration with partners from the broader higher education system, so that more inclusive and relevant approaches are created to address the sustainability challenge.
- ii. Engage in research that explores the issue of ethics and contributes to reducing inequalities, including giving space, time and resources, to support academic freedom.

- iii. Engage higher education institutions in contributing to the international development agenda and in creating policies and platforms that enable transformative research, and valuing and recognizing the role of universities in international key dialogues and policy-relevant documentation.
 - iv. Provide platforms, involving students and communities, for science-policy debates at the local community level and in the international arena.
 - v. Recognize the differences between developing and developed countries in the context of embedding ESD in higher education institutions.
 - vi. As human societies are increasingly urban societies and urbanisation is continuing, it is important to embed ESD in higher education based on recognition of this urban context and to make learning, research and operations of universities address urban environmental challenges.
 - vii. Give a greater focus to the writing of higher education policy across all levels, including the national and provincial level, within associations of universities and in universities themselves.
 - viii. Enhance the skills of people who work in universities to work on strategy and design change processes, and establish a clearer and common language for the development of ESD and higher education policies.
 - ix. Establish guidelines on how to influence the policy formulation process building on case studies and research on effective practices in the area.
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