

Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD NEWSLETTER



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The 7th Beijing International Forum on ESD ESD towards the Mainstream of World Education



The 7th Beijing International Forum on ESD and the 4th Asia-Pacific Expert Meeting on ESD was held in Beijing and Hebei during October 26-29, 2016. 18 experts from UNESCO and 13 countries as well as 320 delegates from 14 provinces of China attended this meeting

Mr. Charles Hopkins, Chair of International Network of Teacher Education Institutions for UNESCO, Co-director of Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD, Mr. Aaron Benavot, Director of UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, Ms. Ushio Miura, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Bangkok, Mr. Liu Limin, Vice Minister of Chinese Ministry of Education, Mr. Zhou Jiagui, Deputy Secretary-General of China National Commission for UNESCO and Mr. Zhangli, Director of Research Center of Education Development, Chinese Ministry of Education, etc., gave keynote speeches in the opening ceremony and seminars. In their speeches, they shared their understandings of SDG4.7 in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and GAP on ESD. Dr. Shi Gendong, Executive Director of Chinese National Working Committee for UNESCO on ESD, Co-director of Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD hosted the opening ceremony and delivered a keynote speech.

Interpreting important UNESCO documents >>>

All participants attending the Forum agreed that the following 5 documents should be the guidance of ESD implementation in Asian-Pacific countries:

- D1. *Shaping the Future We Want*
- D2. *UNESCO Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development*
- D3. *Agenda 2030: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*
- D4. *Education 2030: Framework for Action*
- D5. *Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all. Global Education Monitoring Report*

According to foreign experts who attended this meeting, Beijing International Forum did a great job in summarizing serial documents and advocating ESD. Beijing Declaration is a milestone in ESD development and will have great influence on ESD research and training programs of other countries.

Beijing Declaration >>>

Recognising the urgent need for worldwide integration of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into the mainstream of all education systems, over 300 ESD experts from more than 15 countries jointly make this Declaration to promote policy advocacy and enhance the systemic implementation of Education 2030.

Increasingly sustainable development (SD) is becoming the guiding theme of global social, economic and cultural development. Education, public awareness and training are recognized as crucial elements in implementing SD. Hence in summarizing and examining the outcomes of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005 - 2014 (UN DESD), nations call for the mainstreaming of ESD into formal, non-formal and informal education systems. There is global agreement to scale up the UN DESD programme and move ESD from the education periphery to become firmly embedded as a core purpose of all education systems. To achieve this vision, a series of important documents on SD and ESD have been issued by the UN and UNESCO since 2014.

Showcasing new ESD cases >>>



Based on seven themes of the forum, representatives from University of Edinburgh, Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education, the Learning Teacher Network, Miyagi University, Sultan Idris Education University, Mongolian National University of Education, etc. report on excellent cases in the field of policy, curriculum, teaching, innovative study, evaluation in basic education, early childhood education, technical and vocational education, higher education, adult education, education for the senior citizen.

This forum featured 16 primary, secondary schools and kindergartens which achieved a lot in updating learning contents, improving pedagogy and learning environment, achieving learning outcomes, participating in the transformation to green society. They introduced their successful cases respectively. Technological innovations exhibited during the conference were highly praised and popular among the audience.

Chancheng District in Guangdong Province, Puto District in Shanghai, Shijingshan District in Beijing were granted as National ESD Exemplary District while Tongzhou District, Fangshan District, Chaoyang District in Beijing were approved of as National Experimental District. Certificates and medals were awarded to excellent schools and teachers.

Some representatives said that UNESCO documents tell us how to get to know ESD while rich experience in China tell us how to operate. They also spoke highly of the experimental districts and schools, regarding them as exemplary and role model for others.

Developing ESD cooperation networks >>>

The advisory institutions of the Forum comprise Chinese National Working Committee for UNESCO on ESD, the Asia-Pacific Office of UNESCO and the Research Center of Education Development of Chinese Ministry of Education. Besides, the Forum is hosted by Secretariat, Chinese National Working Committee for UNESCO on ESD, DaAi City Investment Holdings Co. Ltd and Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD. The Forum perfectly illustrated an ESD strategic framework under the cooperation of the government, research institutes, enterprises and NGOs.



The 4th Asia-Pacific Expert Meeting on ESD was held during the forum. The meeting certified 7 scholars from China, Mongolia, Germany and Japan as new expert members for API-ESD, and the DaAi Institute also offered Foreign Expert Certificate to experts from Canada, Germany, Sweden and Japan.



Setting the goal and direction of ESD >>>

After learning ESD documents from UN, UNESCO and evaluating the excellent ESD cases, the representatives reach the consensus that ESD is speeding up towards the mainstream of world education, and becoming the dominant trend concerning global educational reform and innovation. Five strategies are put forward in Beijing Declaration: a. Provide professional development for school leaders, educators and trainers; b. Redesign schools towards ESD and create Regional and National Networks; c. Engage civil society through the cultivation and sharing of innovative ESD case studies; d. Conduct research on ESD theory, policy and practice; e. Step up monitoring and evaluation activities.

It is believed that fruitful achievements from the 7th Beijing International Forum on ESD will act as new engine for the further implementation of SDG4.7 in 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and GAP.

Magnus Persson: A True ESD Hero

Magnus Persson is President and Coordinator of the Learning Teacher Network, an international, educational and non-profit association that organises professionals in 43 countries at all levels of education. For the past fourteen years he has been leading the development of the Network into a dynamic organisation that targets front-line matters in education, organises capacity building of educators on an international platform, and addresses the active implementation of ESD. As manager of the Network, he has chaired numerous conferences, coordinated centralised European projects, been the editor of 'state of art' publications, and created successful international collaboration. Magnus is the focal point of the Network in the relation with UNESCO in the implementation of GAP, where the Learning Teacher Network is an official UNESCO GAP Key Partner.



Magnus Persson is also Senior Manager at the Local Education Authority in Karlstad, Sweden, where during his 30 year career he has been working as head teacher, quality report manager, and international coordinator in education.

Magnus Persson, President and Coordinator of the Learning Teacher Network, died of heart attack 11th November, 2016. He was 62.

Magnus Persson has been engaged in coordinating work and researches on ESD for a long time. As President and Coordinator of the Learning Teacher Network, Chief expert of International Network of Teacher Education Institutions for UNESCO and Deputy Director of Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD, he spreads ESD theories with great passion, guides teenager practice on ESD and takes an active part in researches and documents of important issues on world ESD. He is a great ESD senior expert in the world, a respectable enabler to promote world ESD, and a true ESD hero in the 21st century. In recent decade, he visited China for many times to investigate ESD experience of China and put forward many valuable suggestions. His death is a great loss for the cooperation between China and Sweden and even the progress of world ESD.

Magnus Persson is a true ESD hero and he will always be with us.

Magnus Persson's keynote speech in the Forum >>>

On 29, October, Magnus Persson, Network Coordinator of the Learning Teacher Network and Deputy Director of Asia-Pacific Institute for ESD, delivered a keynote speech, titled *National policy, school curriculum and student innovation on SD and ESD in Sweden*, in the closing ceremony of The 7th Beijing International Forum on ESD.

His presentation portrays the development of national policy and the results of ESD policies in Sweden; introduces the national processes and achievements in Sweden; and, describes school curricula including cases of learning innovation in relation to ESD. His presentation also reflects on some obstacles and challenges, but in particular highlight the possibilities embedded in the current development in Sweden, where new national strategies now could be “making a true difference” in education and training.

According to Mr. Magnus, after some years of slow process, Sweden is now actively placing the implementation of ESD on the national agenda. Since 2014 a range of the most influential organizations in Sweden in the field of ESD - universities, national authorities, non-governmental and civil organizations, and others - are in a united process of discussing and forming the content of a national strategy for the implementation of the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD. Based on these recommendations, and in correspondence to the framework of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), the Swedish Government is soon expected to propose national policies, initiatives and action plans on Quality Education and ESD.