



MEMBER OF |
**Greening
Education
Partnership**
Getting every learner climate-ready



GREENING EDUCATION FOR 30 YEARS

Getting every learner climate-ready

This publication was developed by the Foundation for Environmental Education on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Eco-Schools and Young Reporters for the Environment programme.

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Cover picture: Photo by Jaana Süld as part of the Eco-Schools 'Growing With Your Food' photo competition in Estonia.



This special publication marks the Eco-Schools 30th Anniversary
'Year of Action on Climate Change Education 2024'

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The Eco-Schools programme plays a pivotal role in cultivating a generation of environmentally conscious citizens who are not only aware of the pressing ecological issues, but also equipped with the desire, knowledge, and skills to actively contribute to sustainable practices in their communities. There is an urgency to disrupt conventional educational paradigms to embed sustainability as a core value, urging for transformative learning experiences that challenge existing norms and foster a deeper understanding of our interconnectedness with the natural world. The programme has demonstrated its potential and needs scaling up as an essential element of Quality Education.

Professor Arjen E.J. Wals, Wageningen University and UNESCO Chair of Social Learning and Sustainable Development.

There has never been a bigger opportunity to bring about the educational change our children and young people deserve, and our natural world needs. We have seen the value of our programmes in supporting schools and their local communities to understand and address their priority climate change challenges. FEE have the members at the national level, programmes and people across the world and, through the Greening Education Partnership, we now have the political will to enable rapid expansion of ESD and Climate Change Education across education systems worldwide.

Lesley Jones, President of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).



The FEE Network

Established in 1981, Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) is the world's largest environmental education organisation with member organisations in 85 countries. Our vision is a sustainable world in which Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) creates positive change for all.



105
Member Organisations

85
Countries

FEE's education programmes are all based on **action-orientated and holistic learning cycles** with proven success in greening all levels of education from early childhood to tertiary education. Our strength comes from our members who work directly with over **14 million young people**.

FEE's 10-year strategy, **GAIA 20:30**, aims to empower people to take climate action, protect biodiversity, and reduce environmental pollution through ESD in collaboration with our members and partners worldwide.



- Preserve existing and create new **forests/natural areas**
- Promote sustainable management of the **coastal zone**
- Combat **pollinator and insect loss**
- Raise awareness of and support actions to **remove invasive alien species**



- Ensure FEE's policies and programmes meet its environmental goals
- Increase **climate change knowledge** to drive **impactful action**
- Support actions for **climate resiliency**
- Accelerate the transition to **climate neutrality**



- Reduce **litter and waste**
- Promote responsible **production and consumption**
- Increase knowledge and take action to **reduce invisible pollutants**
- Promote the **circular economy model**



FEE

The Roadmap to Greening Education

At the UN's Transforming Education Summit held in September 2022 the UN Secretary-General highlighted Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a key element of quality education. The Greening Education Partnership (GEP) was launched by the UN as a collaborative platform to mainstream the experience and practices of programmes such as Eco-Schools through education systems globally to support education transformation.

GEP is structured around four key pillars of education transformation in a Whole Institution Approach (WIA):

Greening Schools

Greening Curriculum

Greening teacher training and education systems' capacities

Greening Communities

Each pillar has a specific goal that participating Member States will be asked to report on. Reaching the ambitious goals of GEP by 2030 will require a coordinated effort and the support of governments will be critical.



Pioneering ESD for three decades, FEE's global network holds the experience, programmes and tools to support and create a long-lasting, positive impact on education systems worldwide.

FEE is proud to be an active part of the GEP Advisory Board and co-lead of GEP Pillar 1 on Greening Schools.

Consider us your natural partner for Greening Education.



Pillar 1 - Greening Schools



TARGET All countries will have adopted a green school accreditation scheme with at least 50% schools, colleges, and universities with green accreditation and operating sustainably by 2030.

Greening Schools with FEE

Eco-Schools is the biggest and most established network of learning institutions actively integrating ESD since 1994. The Eco-Schools Seven-Step framework guides schools from early years to higher education to achieve the internationally recognised Green Flag standard of excellence.



The Eco-School methodology embeds ESD in a whole institution approach (WIA) which integrates sustainability principles throughout all aspects of an educational institution, including curriculum content and pedagogy, facilities and operations, campus culture, and engagement with the local community. Promoting Project Based Learning approaches, Eco-Schools helps all schools engage with, understand and address their key climate change and education challenges no matter their size and scale.



Aligned with GEP quality standards, the Eco-Schools programme provides an experienced and trusted means to reach the target of GEP Pillar One in your country .



The Eco-Schools Green Flag is an internationally recognised standard of excellence in ESD which awards successful implementation of a WIA.



FEE's GREENING EDUCATION IMPACT IN 2024

FEE member organisations are supporting schools to meet GEP Quality Standards through Eco-Schools in **75 countries** with schools in a further 23 countries being directly supported by FEE HQ.



Almost 50,000 schools globally working towards the Eco-Schools Green Flag standard of excellence and a whole institution approach through the Eco-Schools Seven Steps.

FEE's **30 years of experience** were used to support the development of the GEP Green School Standards.



Over **50%** of schools have already adopted the Eco-Schools programme in **7 countries** (Malta, Mauritius, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Ireland)!

183 higher education institutions (HEIs) are working to integrate ESD in a whole institution approach via FEE EcoCampus.



Integrating nature connection and biodiversity education through Learning about Ecosystems and Forests (LEAF)

LEAF advocates for outdoor learning and hands-on experiences, allowing students to connect with nature and develop a deeper understanding of the natural world. Today, over **25 countries** run the LEAF programme, with over **665,000** learners and **20,000** educators involved in outdoor learning.

Through the LEAF programme FEE is supporting the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and leading Challenge 6.1 Ecosystem Restoration Education with our partners NAAEE and UNESCO.

We support the



2023 marked the 25th anniversary of the FEE EcoCampus programme!

As hubs for innovation and critical thinking, universities and HEIs are important sites of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and included as part of the UN's Greening Education Partnership.

Since its evolution to continue the legacy of Eco-Schools into tertiary level education, FEE EcoCampus has expanded to **18** countries worldwide with **183** registered campus' currently working to implement sustainability and climate action in a whole-institution approach via our student-centred Seven-Step methodology.



In 2024 we are restructuring FEE EcoCampus with new offerings for the post-16 age-group to further support the targets of GEP.



1st International Conference of FEE EcoCampus "Getting Higher Level Education Climate Ready" Lisbon, Portugal, 26-28 April 2024

The 1st International Conference of FEE EcoCampus was held on April 26-27, 2024. Organised by ABAAE, FEE and the ESELx – Escola Superior de Educação de Lisboa (Lisbon School of Education) of the Polytechnic University of Lisbon (IPL) where the event was held, the conference welcomed **110** attendees, including students, academics, facilities staff, and administrators from **15** countries. **75** different projects were presented in parallel and plenary sessions, workshops and a poster exhibition.

Among the plenary sessions was a 90-minute workshop organised by FEE which aimed to contextualise UNESCO's draft Green Schools Quality Standards, and define what a quality 'Whole Institution Approach' (WIA) looks like in the tertiary education sector.



Pillar 2 - Greening Curriculum



TARGET

The number of countries which include climate education in school curricula at the pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels will have at least doubled from the current ~ 45% by 2030.

Greening Curricula with FEE

FEE members are working to integrate ESD and climate change education in thousands of nurseries, schools, and colleges. The Eco-Schools Seven Step process guides a whole institution approach in which schools identify their most pressing environmental challenges, re-orientate curriculum learning around these and co-create solutions to address them. The result is meaningful place-based and project-based learning whereby students can understand, act upon and make an immediate impact towards climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Several FEE members, including Malaysia, Uzbekistan and Montenegro, are already leading the way in creating a GEP roadmap in partnership with their national Ministries of Education.



836,000 people signed a petition calling for universal, quality climate change education as part of the relay Running Out of Time.

National FEE member organisations are working in partnership with **1656** different government bodies to implement ESD policies and strategies in education systems.



32000 Eco-Schools are already greening their curriculums in **38** countries which have committed to integrating climate change education in their national education systems.

Running Out Of Time

In 2022, FEE was a principal partner of Running Out of Time, a truly one-of-a-kind relay race from Glasgow, host of COP26, to Sharm el-Sheikh, host of COP27. This non-stop, 40-day relay crossed through 18 countries calling for universal access to quality climate change education in every country.



Pillar 3 - Greening Teacher Training & Education Systems' Capacities

TARGET All school leaders and at least 1 teacher per school will have been trained on how to integrate climate education into teaching and learning throughout the school by 2030.



Greening Teacher Training with FEE

In 2021, FEE launched our online learning site, FEE Academy, to support the professional development and capacity building of our members and their networks in ESD and Climate Change Education approaches and strategies. Courses available for teachers include:

- 'Climate Change Education - From Knowledge to Action' developed by our partner, Office for Climate Education
- 'Eco-Schools Seven Steps - A Project Based Learning Best Practice'
- 'Learning & Teaching about the SDGs'.



7,000 users on our FEE Academy online platform for teacher training with **17 courses** available in eight languages.



Capacity developed amongst education staff in **75 member organisations** to carry out teacher training and training of trainers at national level.

896 teachers trained on ESD project learning pedagogies and climate change education in 2023 via FEEs Moodle-based online learning courses.



Climate Change Education: From Knowledge to Action

In 2023 FEE teamed up with Office for Climate Education (OCE) to launch an innovative online free course to help primary and middle school teachers to develop solid scientific knowledge and useful pedagogical skills to tackle climate change in the classroom.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNESCO
AND THE FOUNDATION LA MAIN À LA PÂTE

Pillar 4 - Greening Communities

TARGET

All countries will be able to report at least three different ways learning opportunities are made available for adults outside the formal education system to develop the skills, attitudes, and actions which will foster community resilience to tackle climate change by 2030.



300,000 young people taking local action on climate change Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE).



4.9 million people from communities in 43 countries taking direct action through YRE student campaigns.

2232 community, private and public sector partners working with FEE members to support climate change education



FEE Global Action Days 2024

Empowering Tomorrow: Climate Ready through Positive Actions

During the Climate Ready - Global Action Days that took place between 22nd April and 3rd May 2024, **over 400,000** participants from **116 countries** worked on actions linked to circular economy, ecosystem restoration, climate resilience and food security.

The Litter Less Campaign

Achieving community action on litter and waste pollution

For the last 13 years our Litter Less Campaign has engaged more than **5 million students** in over **33 countries**. Sponsored by the Mars Wrigley Foundation, students have built environmental literacy and developed hands-on strategies to reduce and prevent litter and waste in their school and local community.



LITTER LESS
CAMPAIGN



**Young Reporters
for the environment**



Greening Communities for 30 Years with YRE

In 2024, FEE celebrates the 30th anniversary year of the Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) programme. In that time, the programme has gone beyond traditional education boundaries, to actively engage young adults from both formal (schools) and non-formal (community groups) educational settings.

Established in 1994, YRE has evolved into a global movement, annually engaging **nearly half a million** young adults, aged 18 to 25 years, to raise awareness and take action on pressing environmental issues. With the support of ASPnet and The World Scouting Organisation Movement, young people from **61 nations** take part in the YRE international competition.

The Young Reporters for the Environment programme is more than just journalism; it's a leadership initiative, with a particular focus on critical expression. Over the past three decades, we have seen how young reporters have emerged as leaders in their communities, inspiring others and spearheading meaningful environmental action, representing FEE at events such as COP.

YRE is also a key programme to support the Greening Education Partnership Pillar 4 – Greening Communities.



Partners:



unesco
Associated Schools
Network



Transforming Education for the Future

The quote from John Dewey over a century ago is still relevant when we are facing existential challenges, including environmental crises:

"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. Education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living."

With the impact of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution clearly visible, I regard any education systems that are not empowering youth to adapt and mitigate environmental challenges as outdated. It may seem simplistic to say due to numerous external factors, but it's a reality that our educational systems have often been reactionary, trailing behind crises instead of preempting the catastrophic situations we find ourselves in.

The future of education must evolve into a transformative force that empowers students to envision and shape a sustainable future, embedding environmental stewardship into the curriculum and fostering hands-on, action-based learning. This can cultivate a generation of environmentally conscious leaders, enhancing the quality of education. Quality education should engage with real-life problems now, encouraging lifelong learning for a sustainable future.

Education for sustainable development is crucial in addressing climate change and ensuring a healthier planet for future generations. The GEP represents a significant opportunity to unite and reform our educational systems, enabling us not just to survive but to thrive. By adopting green accreditations and sustainable operations, educational institutions can set a direction that educates and empowers students to actively participate in sustainable development. This necessitates a shift towards a whole-school approach, where every student, teacher, staff member, and parent collaborate towards a shared vision of comprehensive education and well-being on one planet that is our only home.



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The Greening Education Partnership is an independent and inclusive community of practice on the role of education in tackling climate change. It is led by national governments, intergovernmental organizations, youth, civil society organizations, and the private sector, among others.

The Secretariat is hosted by UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris.

For more information, please contact gep@unesco.org