Towards Stockholm+50 Webinar 5:
The Environment and Education -
Looking to the Future

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Education and the Environment

A look back as we move towards the future
Today

• **Context:** Stockholm and what it meant for education

• **Shifting Sands:** Education and Learning since Stockholm

• **Discussion:** The evolution of, and influences on, education and learning for the environment

• **The Future:** What should education for environment and sustainability be like in 2030? What are the implications for UNEP and other international agencies?
1. Context: Stockholm and Education

• The 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm

• The first-ever UN conference with the word “environment” in the title.

• Provided the first global set of principles for future international cooperation on environmental issues

• Began a new era of global cooperation to search for solutions to reconcile economic development and environmental management and paved the way for the concept of sustainable development
Principle 19 and Environmental Education

“Education in environmental matters, for the younger generation as well as adults, giving due consideration to the underprivileged, is essential in order to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises and communities in protecting and improving the environment in its full human dimension. It is also essential that mass media of communications avoid contributing to the deterioration of the environment, but, on the contrary, disseminate information of an educational nature on the need to protect and improve the environment in order to enable man to develop in every respect.”
International agreements and Frameworks

- Stockholm Declaration (1972) – Environmental Education
- Belgrade Charter (1975) – Goals, objectives, and principles
- Tbilisi conference (1977) – The role of Environmental Education
- Brundtland report (1987) – Sustainable Development
- The Rio Declaration (1992) – Education as the foundation of SD
- Johannesburg Declaration (2002) – UN Decade of Education
- UN SD Summit (2015) – SDG4 Quality Education
- UNFCCC ACE (2021) – Climate Change Education
Questions to Discuss
a 20-minute interactive session

1) Since the 1972 Stockholm declaration, has the status and position of education and learning in relation to the environment (and sustainability) become stronger or weaker in your opinion?

2) How has our understanding and engagement with the environment changed over the last 50 years? What has this meant for education?
2. Shifting Sands: Education and Learning since Stockholm

Education and Learning for Environment over the Decades:

- 1970s
- 1980s
- 1990s
- 2000s
- 2020s
• **Role of education:**
  (to inform; to raise awareness; to clarify; to experience; to reproduce; to shape; to empower; to critique, to transform, etc.)

• **Thematic focus of education experiences:**
  (pollution; wilderness and nature; biodiversity; energy and climate change, values, ethics, social and environmental justice circular economy; futures; regeneration)

• **Where the learning happens:**
  (specialist course; optional general course; theme to be added to geo/science; issues to be incorporated into art, RE and languages; key consideration in business schools; embedding across all curriculum; reframing of curriculum. WSA, adult education, lifelong learning, social media)

• **Role of experts and involvement of stakeholders:**
  (experts only doing teaching/ research; consultation with users; involvement of selected stakeholders; multifaceted engagement in strategy development and delivery, local knowledge; indigenous knowledge; ways of knowing)

• **Narratives and Paradigms Influencing Education and Environment:**
  (naturalist; scientific; socio-psychological; critical thinking; feminist; systems thinking; futures thinking; post-colonial; postfeminist; regenerative, posthuman, etc.)
1970s (ties with late 1960s) what has been learnt?

**To raise awareness**

**Role of education**

**Exposure to natural environment**
Focus on pollution and urban env issues

**Thematic focus of education experiences**

**Where the learning happens:**
Nature parks, school gardens, field centres, wilderness

**Role of experts and Stakeholders**

**Narratives and Paradigms Influencing Education and Environment**

**Focus on children and awareness raising and nature education**

Naturalistic

**Influencers:**
Rachel Carson
Bill Stapp
Harold Hungerford
John Disinger
Arthur Lucas
John Smyth
UNEP

**Focused on expert delivery**
1970s (ties with late 1960s)

• Focus on education as an instrument in changing environmental behaviour (linear relationship between knowledge, awareness and behaviour).

• Correlation between love for nature developed at an early age in life and good environmental decision-making later in life.

• First recognition that education about the environment needs to consider socio-economic issues.

• Influences of IEEP, UNESCO, & UNEP work.
1980s - what has been learnt?

Role of education

To clarify—science and technology have the answers. We are all responsible

Thematic focus of education experiences

Citizenship, problem-solving and issues identification

Where the learning happens:

Specialist subjects or optional themes in courses / Environmental Education Centers

Role of experts and Stakeholders

NGOs key influencers

Influencers:
Edgar Gonzalez Gaudiano; David Hicks; Javier Benayas; Roy Ballantyne; Joy Palmer; Pepe Guitirrez; UNESCO UNEP IIIEP: WWF

Narratives and Paradigms Influencing Education and Environment

Target individual attitudes and behaviour – this is controversial from the start.

International Understanding and global issues feature more prominently

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1980s

- Focus on learning and education for the **benefit** of the environment

- Strongly influenced by environmental experts, actors and NGOs.

- No one defines educational outcomes only learning for benefit of environment.

- Lack of educational frames in education and learning results in a rejection from many education establishment and experts.
1990s - What has been learnt?

Thematic focus of education experiences

Role of education
To experience and question

Biodiversity; energy; indigenous knowledge

Where the learning happens:
Early years seen as formative stage and VET sector important
Role of experts and Stakeholders
Community engagement

Narratives and Paradigms Influencing Education and Environment

Environment and Development - twin pillars

Critical education frames gain ground

Influencers:
John Huckle; John CK Lee; John Fien; Ian Robottom; John Fien; David Orr; David Hicks; Bob Stevenson; Annette Gough; Paul Hart; Bob Jickling; Daniella Tilbury; IUCN CEC
1990s

• Critical education on the rise – this reframes why and what we learn about the environment

• It seeks to transform education as well as society by tackling structural issues – individual actions are not enough

• The rise of community-based learning and education in the context of Local Agenda 21.
2000s - What has been learnt?

Role of education
To shape: From single actions to change making

Circular Economy; Transport and energy Carbon; Marine life

Thematic focus of education experiences

Where the learning happens:
Beyond traditional subjects – business schools, social learning

Narratives and Paradigms Influencing Education and Environment

Shift from people as the problem to people as agents of change.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Post-feminist and post-colonial influences

Influencers:
Stephen Sterling; Annette Gough; Heila Lotz-Sisitka; Karen Malone; Jo Ferrera; Arjen Wals; Marco Rieckmann; Justin Dillon; PCE NZ; UNESCO; UNECE

Role of experts and Stakeholders
Facilitators of social learning
2010s - What has been learnt?

**Role of education**
To empower

**Influencers:**
Meira and Gaudiano; Maria Ojala; Moacir Gadotti; Helena Kopnina

**SDGs; Food and Lifestyle Issue resolution**
Interdisciplinary investigations

**Thematic focus of education experiences**
Multi-stakeholder Engagement, co-creation

**Where the learning happens:**
Interdisciplinary investigations

**Role of experts and Stakeholders**

**Shift from people as the problem to people as agents of change.**
Move away from pointing fingers

**SDGS reinforce Learning for sustainability**

**Post-feminist and post-colonial influences**

**Narratives and Paradigms Influencing Education and Environment**
2020s - What has been learnt?

Role of education
To inform and transform
To deal with Eco-anxiety

Climate change
Return to nature
Intergenerational justice
Doughnut economics

Where the learning happens:
WIA and place based Learning
Boundary crossing
Hybrid learning

Role of experts and Stakeholders
Everyone is a stakeholder
The voice of Learners and the marginalized

Narratives and Paradigms
Influencing Education and Environment

Futures Thinking
Recovery
Regenerative Education

Influencers:
Marcia Mackenzie; Meira and Gaudiano; Maria Ojala; Helena Kopnina
UNESCO; OECD; UNEP; UNFCCC

Thematic focus of education experiences

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2020s

• The rise of climate change as a separate strand
• School Strikes and Fridays for Future
• Young people demanding a say in what and how they learn
• Also that education becomes more relevant and responsive to challenges of our day
3. Discussion: 25 minutes

The evolution of, and influences on, education and learning for the environment.

Q. How relevant is this analysis to your experience?

Q. To your region or country?

Q. To your specialisation or experience in education?

Q. To your interests or specialisation in the environment?

Q. What is missing?
4. The Future: a 15-minute interactive session

Q. What should education for environment and sustainability be like in 2030?

What should the role of UNEP and other international agencies be in helping attain this education?
In Summary
Closing Remarks
Legacy Webinars

Thank you, and please register to join the next webinars!

4 May 16:00 CET - Webinar 6: Civil Society, the Environment, & the United Nations Environment Programme

12 May 16:00 CET Webinar 5: Connecting the Dots – Making a Forceful Canon of the Rio Conventions & the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (originally 2 May)

(Date TBC) Webinar 7: Science & the Environment