

TOMORROW TODAY



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

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TOMORROW TODAY

Published for and on behalf of UNESCO

Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising those of future generations. To move towards such development, we have to learn our way out of current social, economic and environmental problems in order to live sustainably. Deep societal changes are required to achieve this complex and challenging task. Certain values, behaviours and lifestyles need to be developed and education remains the most important means to bring about such a positive transformation.

This implies new ways of teaching and learning. It is not enough to provide learners with knowledge about the current sustainability problems the world is facing, from climate change to food security and poverty. Education for sustainable development (ESD) also encourages interdisciplinary, holistic approaches to teaching and learning, addressing all three pillars of sustainable development – society, environment and economy – with culture as an essential underlying dimension. Furthermore, ESD is based on learner-centred teaching and participatory learning that promotes critical and creative thinking in the educational process.

In December 2002, the United Nations General Assembly put in place a United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), running from 2005 to 2014. UNESCO was designated to lead the DESD, which aims at changing the approach to education so that it integrates the principles, values and practices of sustainable development. Its primary goal is to: “encourage Governments to consider the inclusion... of measures to implement the Decade in their respective education systems... and national development plans.” (United Nations General Assembly resolution 59/237).

The DESD seeks to promote the integration of the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning, in order to address the social, economic, cultural and environmental problems of the 21st century. The vision of the Decade is a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education with a view to building a sustainable future.

Tudor Rose and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have collaborated to create *Tomorrow Today* for the DESD. This



Irina Bokova, Director-General, UNESCO

“Tomorrow Today sets out the opportunities and emerging challenges in the area of sustainable development, and identifies innovative means for addressing them. This book provides some answers as to how, through education, we can prepare a better future for all. I thank our partner Tudor Rose and all the contributors who have made Tomorrow Today possible.”



Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP

“The publication of Tomorrow Today by UNESCO is a contribution to the ongoing dialogue on integrating principles and practices of sustainable development in all aspects of education and learning – an idea engendered by the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD).”

innovative public-private partnership combines the professional publishing and marketing skills of Tudor Rose with the global knowledge, extensive organisational relationships and international development interests of UNESCO.

Tomorrow Today is a fully illustrated 192-page book with more than 75 authors relating their work in education for sustainable development at international, regional, national, municipal and local levels of activity. Their commentaries draw upon experiences around the world, reflecting how people are using education to improve the sustainability of their development.

The book reflects the progress and challenges in these fields, highlighting good practices in a wide variety of societies and disciplines. By focusing on the experiences and livelihoods of people, especially those in vulnerable human habitats, it illustrates the benefits of experience and institutional commitment in promoting future sustainable development.

This endeavour is a striking example of sharing respective resources to engage many official governmental and international organisations, institutional and professional interests. It showcases the extent and variety of their efforts to make the world a better place.

Contents

- I Background
- II Education for sustainable development and today’s global challenges
- III What is learning for sustainable development?
- IV Implementing education for sustainable development
- V Measuring learning, measuring change
- VI Learning for tomorrow.

Authors were selected by invitation, representing a wide variety of disciplines and geographies. They represent the views of international agencies, regional/national government ministries and parastatal agencies responsible for ESD, NGOs, scientific and academic institutions, private sector bodies embracing ESD, and local community leaders with exemplary ESD projects, typically in vulnerable developing nations.

The partnership between Tudor Rose and UNESCO that *Tomorrow Today* represents will contribute to the international dialogue that unfolds for the remainder of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.



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