

Urgent need for education on climate change and for sustainable development

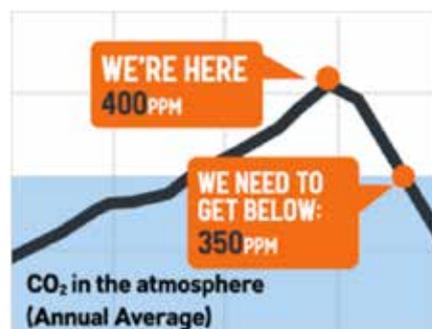
Houston, we have a problem!’ These famous words attributed to an astronaut on the troubled 1970 Apollo 13 flight to the moon are very apt for all of us today as ‘spaceship earth’ hurtles further into a deeper emergency, towards a point of no return. We have a very BIG global problem: there is an enormous mismatch between the escalating global climate change threat and the current slow and insufficient global, national and local responses to address it.

A brief reminder of some key aspects of the BIG problem: an increase in global temperature by more than 2 degrees Celsius is the majority definition (Copenhagen Accord 2009) of what would constitute intolerably dangerous



climate change. A key contributor to increasing temperatures is the burning of fossil fuels. In order to stay below a 2 degree increase, scientists have estimated that humans can pour roughly 565 more gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. At present emission rates, (31 gigatons globally in 2011 and rising) 565 gigatons will be reached by **2028!** With known reserves of 2,795 gigatons, fossil fuel corporations unless stopped, plan on utilising 5 times this safe amount.

The consensus maximum target level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is 350 parts per million (ppm) (COP 15). This number is so important that an organisation



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The education sector constituency needs to embrace ESD more fully and bring it more strongly into the international education-specific post-2015 policy discussions and advocacy agenda.

called **350.org** has been set up to focus the world's attention, and to advocate for action. Independently recorded studies have shown we are currently at 400 ppm and we are adding 2 ppm every year.

'Unless we are able to rapidly turn that around and return to below 350 ppm this century, we risk triggering tipping points and irreversible impacts that could send climate change spinning truly beyond our control'. Bill McGibbon, Founder of 350.org

Focusing on ESD is timely given the recent speeches at the high level UN Climate Summit in New York in September 2014. Both the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon and the US President Barak Obama affirmed that climate change was the biggest threat facing humanity. Along with others they urged for the world to respond more fully, quickly, collaboratively and systematically.

The growing urgency makes it even more important for ESD to be centrally integrated into the new post 2015 development agenda and the post 2015 education specific agenda currently being debated by the international community. These are parallel but linked processes requiring a variety of advocacy strategies. On the one hand ESD and collaboration with

the education sector, need to be given greater prominence in the climate change and sustainable development forums and in their emergent action strategies.

ESD needs to be understood in a broader framework that seeks to integrate values, principles and practices of development which sustainably address the social, economic, cultural, and environmental and challenges that people face. This means ESD strategies are needed for communities, for policy and law makers, for corporations, and for the media. All need to be made aware of the issues, of what is at stake, and of the urgency to respond. This requires amongst other things greater collaboration of key sustainable development and finance ministries and other actors with the education ministries and education sector more broadly.

ESD needs to be about more than 'adaptation' in terms of educating people to *adjust* to the impact of climate change, (such as disaster risk reduction education) important though this is. It also needs to be about 'mitigation' in the sense of attempting to *stop or reduce* the impact of climate change. This requires ESD to address the global, national and local economic and development paradigms and systems that drive the causes of human induced climate change, with a view to finding and educating about more sustainable alternatives. This includes a serious debate at all levels about what we mean by sustainable development, and what it is not. However, this is politically much more difficult, given the vested interests in maintaining the status quo.

Greater commitment is needed to develop national level longer term integrated ESD strategies. Further, adequate financing for ESD has been lacking for decades. ESD needs to be promoted as a cross-cutting strategy in the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), yet it is explicitly mentioned only twice in the Outcomes Document of the UN Open Working Group (OWG) on the SDGs.

On the other hand, the education sector constituency needs to embrace ESD more fully and bring it more strongly into the international education specific post 2015 policy discussions and advocacy agenda. The cherished aim of the education sector to *'ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030'* (Muscat Agreement May 2014) is also under threat if ESD is minimised and climate change increases. ESD has not been prominent in education sector specific forums to date. Determined advocacy including mustering support from education ministries and policy makers will be needed to ensure that ESD will be articulated and integrated broadly into the proposed Education Framework of Action.

Finding sustainable development alternatives will require enormous international collaboration, and national whole- of-government and whole-of-society approaches.

Education (especially ESD) is an essential part of the solution, but as it currently stands is not making a sufficient impact in raising awareness, including of the urgency of the problem, and in mobilising support and action for the change that is needed to steer 'spaceship earth' in a more sustainable, survivable direction.

EDITORIAL

ESD as a catalyst for action on sustainable development

- By Naomi Kamijo, ASPBAE Executive Council member representing East Asia

The post-2015 development agenda process includes both efforts to accelerate the progress of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and prepare to set Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There is a broad agreement on the need for close linkages between the two processes to arrive at one global development agenda for the post-2015 period. In addition, sustainable development is regarded as its center. In this context, international debates count on not only education as a human right but also education for social development and sustainable development. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is expected to play an important role as a catalyst for action.

According to World Bank data, global poverty indicators show that the poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP - % of population) was 43.1% and 20.6% in 1990 and 2010 respectively. The number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day (PPP) was 1,908 million in 1990 and 1,215 million in 2010. The situation has not improved in sub-Saharan Africa and South India since then. Development Goal 1 (Target 1.C) - halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger between 1990 and 2015 - will not be reached. The impact of economic globalisation has led to income disparity within both so-called developed countries and developing countries.

As an environmental agenda, environmental issues, such as climate change, biodiversity, desertification etc., have been emerging as the central issues of the post-2015 processes. Our societies face these unprecedented challenges and education plays a fundamental role in addressing such global issues.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) should occupy a prominent role in post-2015 processes as a congregative approach to solving global issues and

realising sustainable societies. The synergies between Education for Sustainable Development and Education for All (EFA) were addressed in the UNESCO publication, *'EFA-ESD Dialogue: educating for a sustainable world'*, in 2008. ESD and EFA have mutually complementary relationships with each other. EFA is primarily concerned with formal education programmes and provides the widest number of people with opportunities to participate in such programmes. ESD encompasses not only formal education, training, and raising public awareness, but also considers how entrenched learning through socialisation may need to be challenged (Wade & Parker, 2008).



Sustainable development includes two perspectives - environmental sustainability and social justice. ESD must approach both these critical and inter-dependent issues simultaneously.

Towards the end of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), we are accelerating the debates on ESD as a core concept of the education agenda based on the ESD-EFA dialogue at global and regional levels.

ASPBAE has been working on this since the Rio Summit held in

Brazil in 1992, with the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), and others. The ASPBAE Executive Council in 2010 agreed that Education for Sustainable Development should be a cross-cutting theme to be mainstreamed in ASPBAE's programmes. We call it *'Education in a Climate Changing World'*.

This coming November, the World Conference on ESD will be held in Nagoya, Japan. Linking with this, the Kominkan-CLC International Conference on ESD will be held in October in Okayama, Japan. ASPBAE will be participating in both these events and will push advocacy based on its position to promote the future vision of ESD and to advocate for action towards creating sustainable societies.

Envisioning education for sustainable development in the post-2015 agenda in the Philippines

- By Addie Unsi, National Coordinator, E-Net Philippines



To reverse the impact of disasters and better prepare for up-coming disasters, Disaster Risk Reduction education is a crucial component of the education sector in the Philippines.

The Philippines comes second on the world's list of countries most frequently hit by disasters. The average number of typhoons to hit the country every year is twenty. The southern part of the country is experiencing both typhoons and armed-conflict, which devastated many lives. Last year, typhoon 'Yolanda' was a super typhoon that hit the country. The death toll according to official report was more than 8,000 and billions of dollars were lost in damaged or destroyed properties. In every disaster, children and women are the most affected.

Disasters have a devastating impact on communities, including physical harm, loss of life, and wide-reaching psychosocial harm. Disasters have caused damage or destruction of school facilities, disruption of learning, limited access to schooling, and decreased quality of education. It badly affects both teachers and students.

To reverse the impact of disasters and better prepare for up-coming disasters, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) education is a crucial component of the education sector in the Philippines. The Department of Education (DepEd) is mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) in school policies and programmes. It has created structures to facilitate DRRM

activities within the department, conducted capacity building activities for teachers, orientation and drills for students, and produced materials on disaster education.

To make schools and communities resilient to disasters, the Civil Society Network for Education Reforms (E-Net Philippines) is involved in advocacy and programmes on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) education. In the aftermath of Typhoon 'Ondoy' in 2009, E-Net Philippines conducted a series of capacity building activities with its member organisations, especially with day care workers and teachers, to strengthen their abilities in disaster preparedness and response. One of the concrete outputs was a 'hazard map' (sketch/map of a dangerous phenomenon, substance, human activity or condition that may cause loss of life, injury, property damage, loss of livelihood and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage) that identified hazards and risks in the day care centers and within the community where E-Net members are operating. Aside from the hazard maps, the participants also drew their DRRM maps which showed areas for evacuation, actions for preventing risks, and opportunities for harnessing local resources and knowledge to make the daycare centers and the community resilient and sustainable.

Through the trainings, members developed their confidence to advocate their Local Government Units (LGUs) to implement DRRM in their municipalities. In Pasig City for example, the Pasig Kapitbarangay Volunteers Association (PKBVA) and the Kaisahan ng Ugnayan ng Maralitang Pasigueno, or Association of Urban Community in Pasig (KUMPAS), worked directly with the municipal DRRM agency in conducting

disaster preparedness trainings in their barangays (villages). They also worked directly with the Mayor and legislators in passing policies and developing programmes for disaster preparedness and strategically sustainable development.

From pilot initiatives on DRR education in Manila, E-Net Philippines has scaled up the initiative to its members and the general public. This has led to advocacy measures with the Department of Education to strengthen their mandate in DRR education. E-Net Philippines has included the topic of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in many discussions around Education for All (EFA) as a broader framework for DRR education and achieving the Education for All goals in disaster-stricken areas. E-Net has advocated for climate change-sensitive budgeting through the Alternative Budget Initiative together with Social Watch Philippines. E-Net is working closely with the Climate Change cluster of Social Watch as well as with the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) on this advocacy. This concerted effort led to the issuance of a memorandum of President Benigno Aquino III that mandated all government agencies to ensure a climate change-sensitive budget in their annual national proposals.

To build on efforts already made by the Department of Education and to encourage discussions on disaster management and preparedness in schools, E-Net Philippines also reviewed the Education for Sustainable Development exemplars produced by the Department of Education but which remained a pilot project. One of the books produced in the project is DRRM and Social Studies for secondary students which offered knowledge and skills in building social awareness and

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cohesion towards a resilient community. With permission from DepED, and in partnership with ASPBAE, the coalition re-printed 1,500 copies of this book and distributed it to secondary school teachers and day care teachers in its network. Part of the dissemination is the teachers' capacity building on Education for Sustainable Development and specific guidelines in using the resource book. E-Net members also visited schools during the training and using the DRRM guidelines, engaged principals and teachers in making the schools disaster-prepared. It was to the participants' benefit also that they learned some good practices from the schools as well such how they prepare disaster-preparedness maps and plans.

In the 7th General Assembly of the network, E-Net Philippines agreed to mainstream climate change, disaster risk education, and sustainable living themes of education in its policy and programme agendas, and for this purpose initiated a working group on 'Lifelong Learning and Education for Sustainable Development' (LLL&ESD). Its key future advocacy agenda is working with the Department of Education and its members in translating ESD into education policies, programmes, curricula, and learning materials for education in schools and communities.



E-Net Philippines has intensified ESD advocacy to make education in the Philippines responsive to a climate changing world, putting this at the core of its post-2015 education agenda.

The impact of slow and fast disasters

- By Kartikeya V. Sarabhai, Centre for Environmental Education (CEE), Ahmedabad, India

At the Centre for Environment Education (CEE), we first got involved in a post-disaster rehabilitation programme after the Kachchh earthquake in 2001. It was a disaster that struck close to home. In Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Western India, approximately 100 multi-storied buildings collapsed and 750 people lost their lives. In Kachchh, the epicenter of the earthquake, more than 17,000



Key elements of ESD are to increase participation, encourage critical thinking, and enable people to make right choices and consider alternatives.

people died. Since CEE's establishment in 1984, we have worked on development projects and in capacity building initiatives in both rural and urban areas. Over the years, we have worked on issues related to water, agriculture, livelihood, and waste management. As environmental educators, we questioned what our role should be in addressing situations related to natural disasters. Developing long term solutions with the local community, we realised how so much of what we did in terms of water conservation, waste management, rebuilding livelihoods, and greening programmes were similar to the larger programme on sustainability.

What is different in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programmes as compared to other development programmes is the attitude of people. Disasters bring with them a realisation to fix things and the immediacy of the need. There is a hunger for solutions and a sharing of experiences. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) finds a unique acceptability. ESD is about empowerment, making critical choices, and thinking of the sustainability aspect of those choices. In DRR, one hardly needs to convince people why it is required as they have themselves witnessed a disaster. However, with longer term environmental disasters, be it climate change or the loss of diversity, people need more convincing to realise the impact.

However, it is important that such projects only facilitate local initiatives and do not take away leadership from the community. When CEE was rebuilding houses in Vavania village in Gujarat with UNDP and TATA support, it had a social team that met the community and encouraged them to articulate their requirements (such as where they would like to build their stove). Community members met the architects only after this intervention. Participation requires capacity building.

Key elements of ESD are to increase participation, encourage critical thinking, and enable people to make right choices and consider alternatives. Sustainable development takes into consideration the environment, economy, culture, and society. It is important to include culture in ESD initiatives as people living in a particular region follow practices that have been tested overtime. During CEE's work in Kashmir post the 2005 earthquake, it found that in traditional households, sheep were kept in the basement so that the heat generated from the animals would keep the house warm. It is important for an architect to study traditional practices in reconstructing houses.

The human mind, capable of so much, is still limited by its own experience of scale and time. A disaster, such as an earthquake, tsunami, or a plane crash that takes place in a flash is recognised as a disaster. Climate change or the loss of biodiversity happen at a slower pace which people do not see as clearly. It is the scale and size that makes a difference. Environmental disasters happen at a slow pace and if not for ESD, can take years for communities to realise their impact.

The challenges to disaster risk reduction education in the South Pacific

- By *Timote M. Vaioleti, IMPAECT/University of Waikato, New Zealand; and ASPBAE Executive Council member representing the South Pacific*

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2014 (IPCC) report confirms its 1990 research that a 30-50cm sea level rise projected by 2050 will threaten low lying islands, and that a 1m rise by 2100 ‘would render some island countries uninhabitable’. This article addresses the challenges to disaster risk reduction education, how Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) can respond to these challenges, and share initiatives to address disaster education and ESD in the South Pacific.

CHALLENGES TO DISASTER RISK REDUCTION EDUCATION

There is seemingly a Cartesian and fatalistic position taken by Pacific people when it comes to disasters. There is an acceptance that nature is a separate but an integral entity in a (super) natural relationship with humankind. Abundance, famine, tsunami, or typhoon can be a reward or retribution. From another perspective, western education brought reason and universality which came to dominate content and pedagogies over local ways resulting in disconnection with local contexts and needs. References to rising sea levels and intensification of weather conditions, which are the most likely cause of disasters for low-lying nations are almost non-existent

in their school curriculum. In an exercise carried out for UNESCO and the Kiribati Ministry of Education (MOE) to identify climate change (CC) topics in the Kiribati curriculum, the following emerged:

In mapping the national curriculum, a tick was given to every topic that teach awareness of CC, adaptation to CC, mitigation against CC, and related issues to CC. The surprise omission was the absence of topics taught on adaptation.

WHAT SHOULD EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD) COVER IN THE REGION?

There are three pillars of ESD - society, environment, and economy. The essential driver of these pillars is culture, its survival, and continuity. Thaman’s (2010) solution to these issues is to hold on to local philosophies and cultures, especially in terms of resilience strategies.

Thaman suggests that Pacific ancestors had survived over thousands of years through awareness and adaptation. Future communities’ continuity will come from appropriate formal and non-formal education that develop

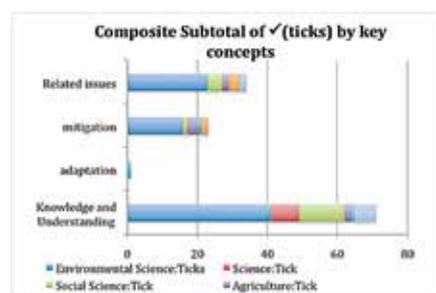
culture, sports, contextualise tourism, and other businesses unique to the region, a type of differentiation that takes advantage of their geography and history.

SOME INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS DISASTER EDUCATION AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Working closely, the Kiribati Curriculum Development and Resource Centre (CDRC) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) developed a book called ‘*Children take action – A Climate Change Story*’ to improve literacy skills and the basics of climate change, which is available in schools.

The Australian International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative funded the printing of the book and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)/Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) have since translated it into te-Kiribati.

Climate change is an international issue and international collaborative efforts are being made to educate people in the Pacific on ESD.



Adapted from Vaioleti et. al (2011, p. 46)



The ASPBAE-ACCU partnership – garnering the momentum for education in a climate changing world

The Asia Pacific Cultural Centre of UNESCO, or ACCU, is a non-profit organisation which works, in line with the principles of UNESCO since 1971, based in Tokyo, Japan. The Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) related programme is being funded by the Japan Fund-in-Trust, and is entitled the ‘*ACCU-UNESCO Asia-Pacific ESD Programme under UNESCO for the Promotion of Education for Sustainable Development*’ (ACCU-UNESCO ESD Programme).

ASPBAE was selected as one of five civil society organisations (out of 29) in the Asia Pacific region to be funded by ACCU as a Centre of Excellence (COE), initially for a period of five years. ASPBAE was chosen due to its previous work in the area of ESD and its potential to promote ESD in the region during the United Nations Decade for Sustainable Development. The other four civil society organisations that were chosen included the Dhaka Ahsania Mission (Bangladesh), University of South Pacific (Fiji), TVE Asia Pacific (Education through Television, Sri Lanka), and Thailand Environment Institute, or TEI, (Thailand). Each of these organisations were chosen because they had a proven high effectiveness and social impact in terms of project implementation and management in ESD-related activities in the last ten years, have the capability to continue to contribute to ESD, and have a large network nationally or regionally in the Asia Pacific.

The COE-ESD programme was seen by ASPBAE as an important opportunity to develop the relationship with ACCU

and with the other COEs in the region, and to extend upon its programmes and activities. The development of these relationships was assisted by the invitation from ACCU to attend particular events early on in the programme. In August 2006, ASPBAE Secretary-General, Maria Khan, and Programme Manager, Bernie Lovegrove, participated in a meeting in Tokyo, Japan, to promote ASPBAE’s proposal to ACCU and to meet the other COE representatives. In December 2006, after ASPBAE was selected for the programme, ACCU invited a representative from each COE to participate in the 10th Asia Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) International Conference – ‘*Learning Together for Tomorrow: Education for Sustainable Development*’, held in Bangkok, Thailand. An additional 2 days was set aside for the COE representatives to draft the COE mission statement, strengthen inter-COE collaboration, better understand issues related to monitoring and evaluation, and to plan for future meetings.

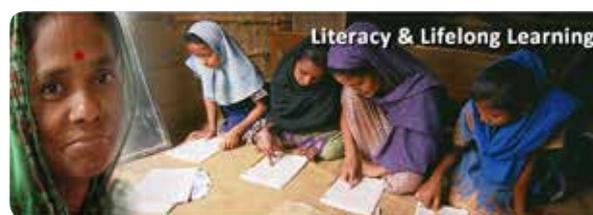
The COE-ESD programme involves connecting the key concerns of indigenous peoples’ education, women’s empowerment, national and regional level education policy advocacy, literacy research and advocacy, and specific awareness-raising on education for sustainable development. It also involves linking national level activities with sub-regional, regional, and international activities.

Connecting the people of the Asia-Pacific,
fostering learning



ACCU also funded an Innovations Program (IP) which provided small grants for 2 years for in-country civil society projects. One role that the COEs played was to act as technical support for IP projects where they had suitable expertise. ASPBAE committed to provide this support, as well as to act as a model organisation conscious of the ESD agenda, to act purposefully and effectively on the ACCU agenda, to work with and influence other stakeholders regarding ESD, and to use its resources and capabilities to support other organisation in their efforts to act on ESD. ASPBAE committed to advocate for integrating the ESD agenda into policy, programmes, and practices at various levels and to document good ESD practices.

ASPBAE will continue to support and increase its engagement with members working in the area of climate change at several events across the region, bringing the issue into the broader advocacy work of Education for All (EFA) and within the framework of ESD. ASPBAE will also participate in policy events, civil society platforms, and forums on ESD, with a special focus on the post-Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), Education for All, and the Millennium Development Goal agendas.



The COE-ESD programme has provided ASPBAE with the opportunity to articulate more clearly the linkages of its programmes to the ESD agenda and to raise awareness of ESD amongst its members and partners.

FLASHBACK

Breaking Barriers and Strengthening Links Between Environmental Education and Action

The following are excerpts from an article that appeared in 'Leaves' magazine, the Newsletter of the Environmental Education Programme of ASPBAE, in January 1998.

A set of principles on adult education and community environmental education is being developed from the experiences of educators from the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE). The principles recognise that environmental education is a lifelong process that involves all of us as learners and educators; is interdisciplinary; integrates the historical, political, social, economic, and cultural contexts; covers a wide learning spectrum from awareness, understanding, to action; values indigenous and local knowledge; recognises the role of both women and men in environmental protection, while contributing to the empowerment of women; is contextualised to the local and global realities; and explores participatory and creative learning methods that are culturally appropriate.

ASPBAE asserts that environmental education is a lifelong learning process and recognises that ecological problems should be seen and addressed within a socio-economic and cultural context. ASPBAE plays a facilitating role within a regional education framework of environment agencies and individuals and facilitates opportunities for these groups to exchange, learn from each other's experiences, and participate in policy advocacy on environmental education at regional and international levels. The programmes' current focus is on strengthening linkages and interaction between environmental education and community action. Its main strategies include information and dissemination,

module development, research and documentation of good practice, training, and advocacy.

In the Asia South Pacific region, ASPBAE recognised the valuable and fruitful contribution made by two major active groups in strengthening the regional environmental movement. These two groups, broadly categorised as 'Environmental Educators' and 'Environmental Activists' have, through their sustained work on environmental issues and concerns, contributed in charting a more sustainable development path in policy and grassroots work over the last decade. Unfortunately, there have been limited opportunities for these two groups to converge and define ways by which each of their specialised roles may find complementation.

With the theme "Breaking Barriers and Strengthening Links Between Environmental Education and Action", ASPBAE and the Centre for Environmental Education (CEE), Ahmedabad, initiated, through a workshop, a process of exchange among environmental

activists, educators, and advocates on expanding the scope and definition of environmental education to include advocacy and activism, particularly at the community level. The workshop was also envisaged to provide opportunities to assist educators and the activists in developing their skills in environmental work and to highlight recommendations which will help share the future direction of ASPBAE's Environmental Education Programme.



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