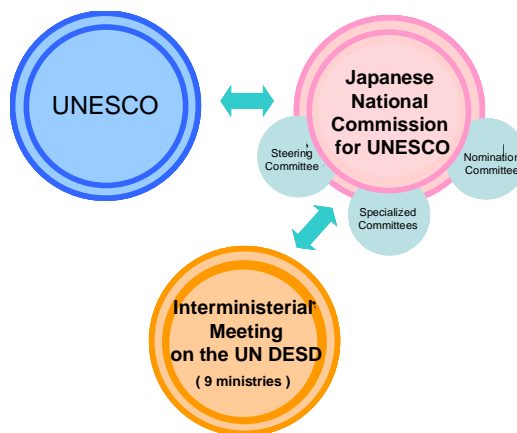


## Measures by the Government

(Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology(MEXT))

### Outline of Activities

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) works to promote United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) activities in conjunction with the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, which serves as UNESCO's domestic contact. Both collaborate closely and cooperate with UNESCO along with related ministries and agencies to implement activities for the purpose of disseminating and promoting ESD.



### Background and Issues

In December 2002, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted a resolution to designate the ten years from 2005 to 2014, as the United Nations Decade of ESD (DESD). Then, the UN designated the UNESCO as the lead agency for the promotion of the DESD.

Pursuant to this resolution, the Japanese Government has established Japan's Action Plan for the UN DESD(2006) for promoting DESD in cooperation with related ministries and stakeholders. Based on Japan's action plan for the DESD, MEXT, in cooperation with the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO and related ministries and agencies, has worked to incorporate ESD into the education system. Domestically, It had been well understanding in each education such as environment, international understanding, etc. For further challenge, to link these individual education comprehensively from an ESD perspective, and to acquire the cooperation of various stakeholders.

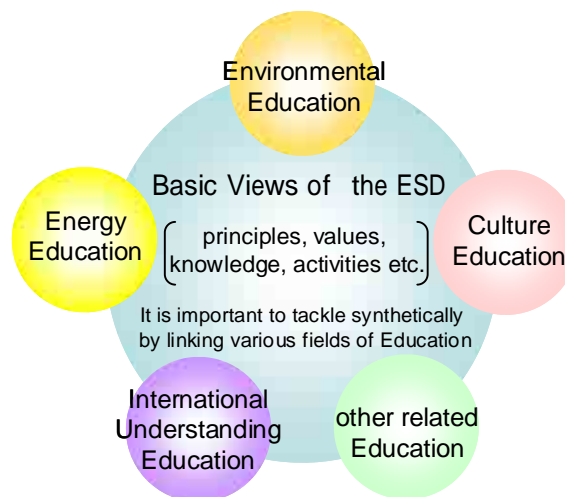
### Objectives/Goals

We aim to link various diverse forms of education already undertaking, such as environmental education and education for international understanding, comprehensively from an ESD. Towards this aim, it is imperative that we give ESD a definitive position in Japan's educational system and construct a framework for implementing it.

### ESD and educational curriculum

Before the resolution on DESD was adopted, a Period of Integrated Study was set up within the school curriculum, which has been implementing instruction related to individual issues like environmental education and education for international understanding, which spans subjects such as Science, Social Studies, etc.

Such undertakings serve as the foundation of ESD. However, in order to advance ESD effectively, these programs must be linked comprehensively and promoted continuously from the perspective of building a sustainable society.



Towards that end, MEXT has been implementing the following programs to establish ESD within Japan's educational system.

(1) Formulation of the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education

The Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education is the basic policy for promoting comprehensive and strategic measures concerned with education in Japan. It was formulated in 2008, based on the Fundamental Law of Education, which itself was revised in 2006.

Under the said plan, ESD promotion is described as follows;

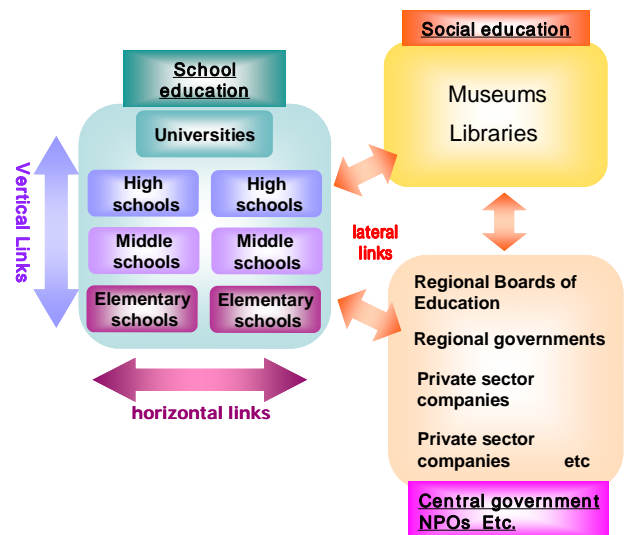
- 1) Recognizing that the concept of toward the sustainable society is becoming increasingly important within the current situation surrounding the education in Japan
- 2) Placing that the ESD, which is education for nurturing those who will build a sustainable society with raising global view, is essential for the "raison d'être" of Japanese education
- 3) And clearly specified promotion of ESD as a measure that should be undertaken over the next five years

(2) Revisions in the Courses of Study

Along with the formulation of the Basic Plan for the Promotion of Education, the Courses of Study, which serves as the Japanese national curriculum, was revised. Within each subject's content, the ESD doctrine was clearly specified, including Science, Social Studies, Moral Education, and the Period of Integrated Study.

(3) Expansion of the UNESCO Associated School network

For effective dissemination of ESD, the establishment of a network for model school-building along with a system for reinforcing such collaboration is indispensable. It is from such a standpoint (and also based on the recommendation, "Application ...of ESD," produced by the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO), that we have positioned the UNESCO Associated Schools as bases for advancing ESD and will proceed to undertake the following, with the ultimate goals of network-building and establishing 500 member schools.



- Notifying each prefectural Board of Education, etc., to set up a contact mechanism for UNESCO Associated School-membership applications
- Creating and distributing starter kit sets, including an application guide and educational materials, to serve as reference materials for undertaking ESD
- Preparations aimed at establishing a Secretariat for supporting the UNESCO Associated School network

**CONTACT**

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# Measures by the Government (Ministry of the Environment)

The Ministry of the Environment has implemented initial key programs of Japan's Plan of Implementation for UNDES, especially in community-level implementation and higher education programs.

## 1. Environmental Leadership Initiatives for Asian Sustainability: Programs at Institutions of Higher Education

### (1) Outline of the Project

The UNDES National Plan of Action that was developed by Japan in 2006 addresses the importance of implementing sustainable development programs at higher education institutions, as a first step. In terms of promoting ESD in higher education, therefore, MoEJ has launched the ELIAS (Environmental Leadership Initiatives for Asian Sustainability) for cultivating environmental leaders who will work to make eco-friendly changes to economic and social systems. (<http://www.env.go.jp/policy/edu/asia/index.html>)

In particular, MoEJ set up a panel of experts from universities, corporations, and non-profit organizations to establish the Vision for Environmental Leadership Initiatives for Asian Sustainability in Higher Education. Since 2008, the MoEJ has implemented three projects, on the basis of these visions: development for environmental leadership programs in universities; launch of a Multi-stakeholder Cooperative Consortium for Environmental Leadership Training; and building of a Network of Universities in Asia for Environmental Leadership Training.

### (2) Current situation and problems

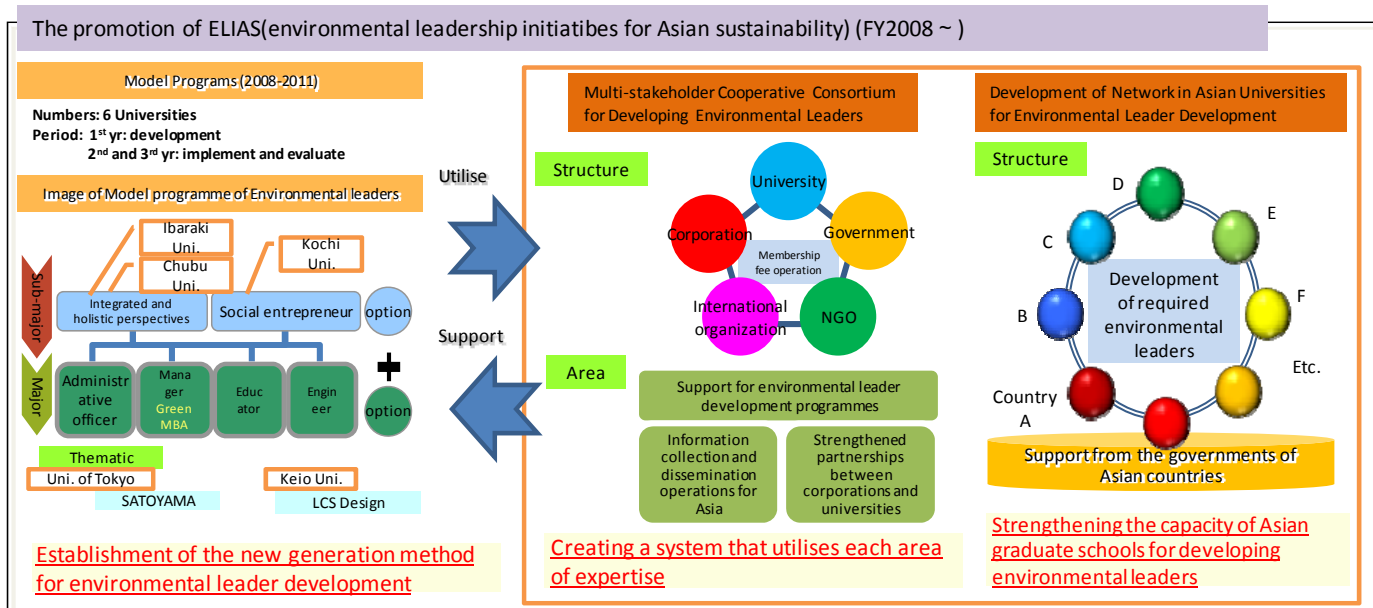
Asian countries are experiencing escalating demand for natural resources, food, and water, in addition to soaring pollution and health problems, not to mention rising greenhouse gas emissions due to rapid economic expansion and population growth.

There is an urgent need in these countries to cultivate future environmental leaders who will work to ensure sustainable development.

### (3) Objective

Aim to cultivate environmental leaders who will design and create a comprehensive social and economic system comprising business, technology, and policy.

### (4) Concrete Contents



### (5) Expected Outputs

The short-term objective is to apply the model programs for cultivating environmental leaders to Asian countries.

In the long and medium terms, we hope that change-oriented environmental leaders for a sustainable Asia are developed, and contribute to establishing a sustainable society.

## 2. UNDES D Promotion Project : Implementation in the community

### (1) Outline of the Project

The Ministry of the Environment supports community-based ESD practice in 14 model areas. The practices aim to solve the local problems for the creation of a sustainable community, with the view to sustainable development, which means promoting harmony in terms of environmental preservation and socio-economic development.

( <http://www.env.go.jp/policy/edu/esd/index.html> ) (Budget of FY2008 ¥ 12 million)

### (2) Current situation and problems

It is important for ESD practices to develop learning methods based on participation and experience in conjunction with various stakeholders. Each community is engaged in activities that address various regional issues, but they are difficult to sustain because there are no programs in place to exploit any region-specific skills and knowledge or any means to learn from each other.

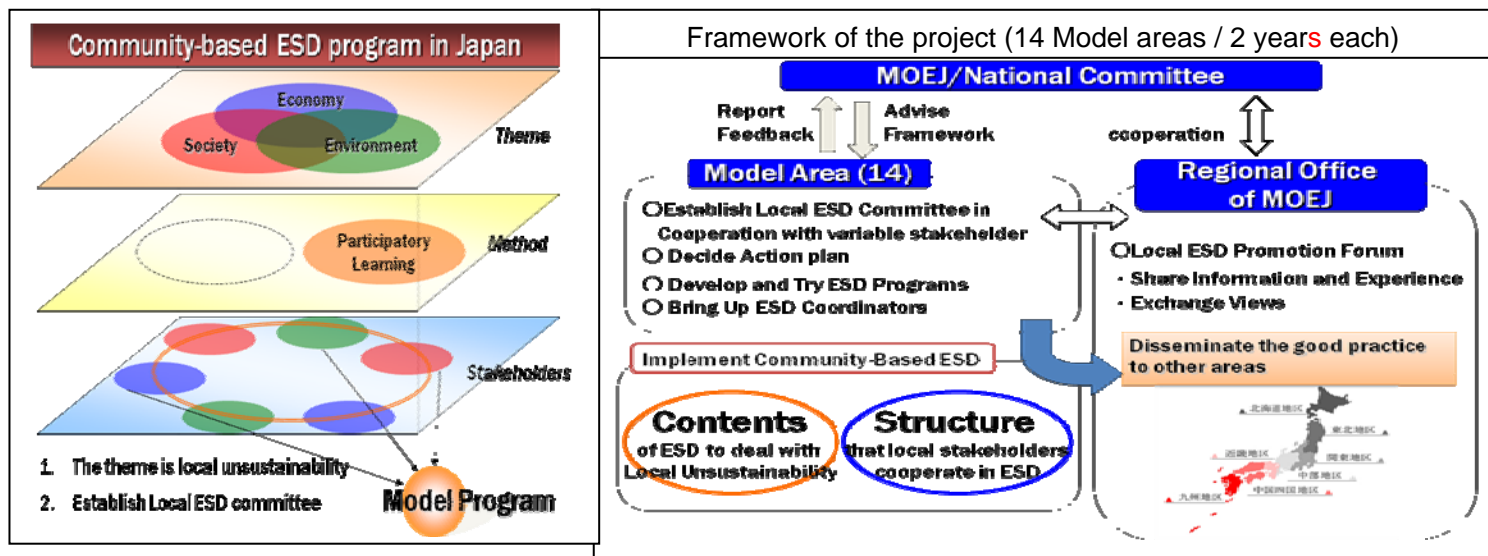
### (3) Objective

In conventional education, people have acquired knowledge of the environment, economy, and society from an independent perspective, but in the project, the MOEJ supports ESD practices that relate each theme from the viewpoint of community sustainability; establishes a committee with various stakeholders; and develops community ESD programs. Furthermore, the MOEJ aims to spread community-based ESD from real-world experience attained through ESD model efforts.

### (4) Concrete contents

In the model areas, □ in the 1st year, people who engage in model practices establish local ESD committees in cooperation with various stakeholders and determine the action plan for the 2nd year; □ In the 2nd year, they try to create educational programs, and cultivate coordinators for the creation of sustainable communities; □ moreover, they try to create ESD promotion schemes that sustain ESD practice in the region even after the conclusion of the project.

The MOEJ organizes the "Local ESD promotion forum" with various stakeholders, such as educational institutions, NPOs, enterprises, and local authorities, for the promotion of community-based ESD in 8 regional blocks, where participants can exchange information and experiences regarding ESD.



### (5) Outputs

We recognized the following points from effects of model practices for promoting community-based ESD;

- If current environmental education and learning activities are recognized as "seed programs" of ESD, many activities have the possibility to develop into more ESD fruitful programs.
- We need to cultivate coordinators by linking education-related institutions, NPOs, enterprises, and local authorities within the community.

We aim to build the scheme that will spread community-based ESD nation-wide in the near future.

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