

THE PERTH DECLARATION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

We, the participants at the 2007 World Conference on Science and Technology Education, held in Perth, Western Australia, 9 - 12 July 2007, and comprising more than 1000 science and technology educators from 50 nations worldwide; believing in the importance of science and technology for **sustainable, responsible, global** goals, and in the need to bridge the gap between science and technology and the public.

Express concern at the lack of recognition of science education as a vehicle for meeting national educational goals, and social and economic needs;

Observe a widespread lack of student interest in current school science and technology education and of its relevance to them;

Note the shortage in many countries of specialist teachers of science and technology;

And consider that the rapid changes taking place in science and technology and their applications must be reflected in the planning, teaching and learning of science and technology.

Resolved to recommend to Governments:

- To promote critical awareness of the contribution of science and technology to personal, social, economic and environmental wellbeing through building partnerships with national stakeholders and the media;
- To initiate revisions of the curriculum for school science and technology that will increase student interest in and recognition of the roles of science and technology in society;
- To promote from the primary years onwards the career opportunities that stem from the study of science and technology;
- To recruit graduates into science and technology teaching and to value, support and retain them with appropriate rewards;
- To resource and promote continuous, effective professional development for science and technology teachers in order to meet changing student needs and societal aspirations;
- To recognise and support the significant role of teacher associations in building a quality professional learning community for science and technology;
- To resource the development of relevant and effective assessment processes so that learners achieve essential life skills, meet academic and vocational standards and personal aspirations;
- To engage in greater international cooperation to ensure the provision of well-trained science and technology teachers to meet current and future challenges;
- To call on UNESCO to integrate its science and technology education endeavour as fundamental to achieving educational, environmental, cultural, social and sustainable development goals.

We, the participants, are committed to ensuring that students are scientifically and technologically literate and able to contribute to sustainable, responsible, global goals in their respective nations.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES

Prepared by Margaret Austin

July 2007

- The 192 Member States of UNESCO meet for the General Conference in October 2007 beginning on the 16th and lasting for three weeks. The Delegation is likely to be led by a Minister and if not by the Chair of the National Commission.
- The General Conference will be preceded by the Executive Board of 58 nations. This is the Cabinet to whom the Secretariat reports. They will consider the Draft Programme and Budget and make recommendations to the General Conference for adoption.
- The General Conference begins with a Plenary session where the Head of Delegation has the opportunity to speak for 8 minutes. The Education, Science, Social Science, Culture, Communications, Administration and other minor commissions meet for 4-5 days during the General Conference. Three minute and not more than four minute interventions on the agenda items are allowed – this means that every second counts.
- The principal agenda items this year will centre on the Medium Term Strategy – known as the 34C/4 and the Programme and Budget for 2008-09 known as the 34C/5. There will also be a number of Draft Resolutions for debate but if they require financial input from UNESCO are most likely to be rejected.
- An Education Ministers Roundtable and a Science Minister Round table are scheduled to occur during the Conference. These are attended by the DG Mr Matsuura and ADG's of the respective sectors.
- **In order to gain traction for the Perth Declaration and the Forum Strategy it is necessary for the Governments of Member States to raise the principles in the documents and to draw attention to the documents by name in interventions at the Executive Board and the General Conference in the Plenary speeches and the Commission debates.**
- To secure this input briefing must be provided to the Minister with responsibility for UNESCO, the Ministry to which it is attached and the National Commission which will be preparing the interventions. It would be a good idea to brief the Paris Embassy as well to keep them in the loop. Usually one or possibly two people would have responsibility for servicing UNESCO as the Permanent Delegate – Australia is Anne Siswicki (wrong spelling) NZ Linda Te Puni.
- When the issue is drawn to the attention of the ADGs by the Member States the secretariat will respond in the report of the ADGs to the Executive Board and the General Conference with input into the ADG's speech in response to the interventions. This is the opportunity for people like Orlando to make addition comments when preparing the ADG's response to the interventions.
- The timetable and agendas for the General Conference can be found on the website under www.unesco.org
- The C4 and C5 documents are also on the website and if a preamble can be prepared which shows how the Perth Declaration relates to the Objectives set out them it will reinforce the seriousness of the contents. I would argue strongly that they are directly related to Quality Education and in particular to the role of the teacher. As far as I know the C4 document is complete but the C5 document is unlikely to be available until the end of July.
- Gaining support for the proposals is essential through briefing a range of groups in touch with Government – the Royal Society, the Academy, the Teacher Associations, the Teacher Unions, the Teacher Council, the VC's committee, the Science Deans at Universities and Institutes of Technology, Teachers Colleges etc
- Direct contact with Minister of Education and Science to brief him/her and provide suggested wording for interventions would be appropriate.

- Delegations to the General Conference should be advised to make appointments to brief secretariat staff on the proposals. Orlando would advise for Education and Tony Marjoram for Science.
- The Pacific Member States meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9.00am in Room XVI in Bonvin – opportunity should be taken to get it on to the agenda through the Fijian Minister of Education who is on the Executive Board. The ASPAC (Asia and Pacific), the Commonwealth, the Francophonie, the Caribbean, and possibly other groups meet regularly during the General Conference and briefing can be provided through delegations.
- The **five** Regional National Commissions (Europe, ASPAC, Arab, The Americas, Africa) also meet as do the Presidents of National Commissions. The Presidents and the Pacific MS have already sought to meet with the Director General and the Declaration can be added to the agendas.