



**LEAVES, A Newsletter of the
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the environment and sustainable development

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From the Editor, Request for information for upcoming newsletters

This newsletter is an opportunity for IEF members to share their experiences, activities, and initiatives that are taking place at the community level on environment, climate change and sustainability. All members are welcome to contribute information about related activities, upcoming conferences, news from like-minded organizations, recommended websites, book reviews, etc. Please send information to newsletter@ief.org

Please share the *Leaves* newsletter and IEF membership information with family, friends, and associates and encourage interested persons to consider becoming a member of the IEF.

UN conference adopts declaration calling for urgent action on education for sustainable development



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Group photo at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Photo: UNESCO

12 November 2014 – The World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, closed today with a declaration urging action to mainstream education in the United Nations post-2015 development agenda.

The Aichi-Nagoya Declaration calls on all nations to implement the Global Action Programme on ESD to move the relevant agenda forward.

In his closing remarks, Qian Tang, who is Assistant Director-General for Education at the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – a conference co-organizer along with Japan – said the declaration is instrumental in helping streamline education in national post-2015 development agendas.

“We were able to share successful initiatives from all over the world, to help government representatives and other key stakeholders formulate new goals and objectives. We have shaped these into a Roadmap for ESD that will implement the Global Action Programme,” Mr. Tang said.

More than 1,000 participants gathered for the three-day conference under the theme “Learning Today for a Sustainable Future.”

Among them were 76 ministerial-level representatives of UNESCO Member States, non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector and UN agencies, as well as individual experts and youth participants from 150 countries.

The Action Plan is a follow up to the UN Decade of ESD, which is ending this year. It will generate and scale up ESD actions in each of five priority areas of policy support, whole –institution approaches, educators, youth, and local communities.

UNESCO has called on stakeholders to make specific contributions to launch the GAP. Stakeholders from 80 countries have responded with 363 commitments.

The Aichi-Nagoya Declaration adopted unanimously today, builds on the achievements of the Decade and the deliberations and stakeholder meetings which were held last week in Okayama.

The Declaration also ensures that the outcomes of the Conference will be taken into account at the World Education Forum 2015 to be held in Incheon, Republic of Korea.

Representing the host country, Japan’s State Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Hideki Niwa said “ESD will not end with the last year of the Decade of ESD. Instead let us recharge our efforts for ESD with even greater commitment, making the most of the experiences we have gained so far.”



The final Global Monitoring and Evaluation Report, **'Shaping the Future We Want'**, focuses on the outcomes of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development around the world and demonstrates how education has advanced as a critical tool for moving societies towards sustainability.

To download a copy of 'Shaping the Future We Want':

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002301/230171e.pdf>

To download a copy of The Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development:

http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/pdf/Aichi-Nagoya_Declaration_EN.pdf?utm_source=UNESCO+ESD+Zoom+Newsletter+-+English&utm_campaign=11422126fc-

[ESD_Zoom_English_October_2014_2_10_10_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c90467b0a5-11422126fc-](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/pdf/Aichi-Nagoya_Declaration_EN.pdf?utm_source=UNESCO+ESD+Zoom+Newsletter+-+English&utm_campaign=11422126fc-ESD_Zoom_English_October_2014_2_10_10_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c90467b0a5-11422126fc-173975749&ct=t(ESD_Zoom_English_October_2014_2_10_10_2014)&mc_cid=11422126fc&mc_eid=c462d61586)

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Peter Adriance, IEF Board member, who participated on the official U.S. delegation to the world conference as a member of the U.S. Partnership for ESD, also hosted a poster session on, "Advancing Non-Formal ESD through Faith Communities" which features the ESD work of 13 U.S.-based faith groups, including the Baha'i Faith.

Launching of the Global Action Programme



[http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco-world-conference-on-esd-2014/esd-after-2014/global-action-programme/launching/?utm_source=UNESCO+ESD+Zoom+Newsletter+-+English&utm_campaign=11422126fc-ESD_Zoom_English_October_2014_2_10_10_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c90467b0a5-11422126fc-173975749&ct=t\(ESD_Zoom_English_October_2014_2_10_10_2014\)&mc_cid=11422126fc&mc_eid=c462d61586](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco-world-conference-on-esd-2014/esd-after-2014/global-action-programme/launching/?utm_source=UNESCO+ESD+Zoom+Newsletter+-+English&utm_campaign=11422126fc-ESD_Zoom_English_October_2014_2_10_10_2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c90467b0a5-11422126fc-173975749&ct=t(ESD_Zoom_English_October_2014_2_10_10_2014)&mc_cid=11422126fc&mc_eid=c462d61586)

After three waves of submissions this year, this map shows where ESD stakeholders have made 360 launch commitments to support the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD that will be launched on the 12th of November. The map of all unedited GAP Commitments is now available online GAP Launch Commitments are plans for concrete activities that support one or more of the five Priority Action Areas. They can be activities targeting specific beneficiaries and/or ESD stakeholders, including advocacy and/or fund-raising efforts.

Stakeholders making GAP Launch Commitments can be organizations or institutions from countries or from regional or global communities, including public and private, formal and non-formal, and education and non-education sectors. Stakeholders with large-scale activities that go beyond the national level were particularly encouraged to submit a GAP Launch Commitment.

For UNESCO, GAP Launch Commitments help identify partners with whom it can form partner networks. GAP Launch Commitments will also provide an important basis for the periodic reporting on GAP implementation planned by UNESCO.

Interested stakeholders can still submit a **GAP Commitment [doc]** to [esddecade\(at\)unesco.org](mailto:esddecade(at)unesco.org) (indicating 'GAP Commitment' in the email subject line). Details of the GAP are provided in a **Roadmap** for the Implementation of the GAP on ESD launched at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Japan

Two declarations capture the hopes and visions of youth from around the world for a more sustainable future



Stakeholder meetings, held prior to the World Conference on ESD, have resulted in two declarations from students and teachers from UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet) and from youth more generally. Both declarations voice clear hopes and visions for a more sustainable future through ESD with young people playing a critical role.

To download the Joint Declaration of UNESCO's ASPnet click [here >>](#)

To download the Youth Statement click [here >>](#)

To view a photo gallery of participants from Youth events click [here >>](#)

10th European Center for Peace and Development (ECPD) Conference



The 10th ECPD International Conference on National Reconciliation, Religious Tolerance and Human Security in the Balkans took place in Belgrade, Serbia, on 23-26 October 2014. As for the two previous years, the conference was held in the beautiful Belgrade City Hall. It had the theme "The New Balkans and European Union: Peace, Development, Integration". This was the seventh conference of the European Center for Peace and Development, affiliated with the UN-chartered University for Peace, in which IEF has participated through Arthur Dahl.

The conference opened with messages from former UN Secretary-General and President of the ECPD Honorary Council, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and from former Director-General of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, which can be viewed at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B-OKwAhAKfyPNjJFUUpXN1E3bWc/view?usp=sharing>. The keynote speaker was Erhard Busek, former Vice-Chancellor of Austria and Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. There were three plenary sessions on the New Balkans in the contemporary world realities, East-West relations impact on the development of the Balkans, and New Balkans: reconciliation, tolerance and human security, with 40 papers by distinguished academics, diplomats and former political leaders from all the Balkan countries, Western Europe, Russia, Kazakhstan, U.S.A., Japan and beyond. A special session commemorated fifty years of the G77. The conference was followed by the Second ECPD Youth Forum, where Arthur Dahl chaired a session and presented a paper on "Hope for Balkan Youth in the Contemporary World Reality" available on the IEF web site at <http://iefworld.org/ddahl14g> and the abstract follows here.

Second ECPD Youth Forum, Belgrade, Serbia, 25 October 2014

Hope for Balkan Youth in the Contemporary World Reality

Arthur Lyon Dahl, International Environment Forum, Geneva, Switzerland

ABSTRACT

The youth are the future of the Balkans, and they are the best educated and most networked generation in history. But youth today are faced with an economic crisis, lack of employment, social challenges and environmental risks that threaten their future. Faced with threats of global collapse to which governments seem incapable of responding, youth have the options of denial, depression, retreat into nationalism or fundamentalism, revolution, or constructive change. To empower Balkan youth with hope through constructive change, we need to give them a vision of a higher human purpose; an understanding of the forces driving change and the nature of the transformation taking place in Europe and the world; a concept of a better society and values worth working for; and a recognition that their individual behaviour and contributions to their local community are entirely their own responsibility.

Read the full article at: <http://iefworld.org/ddahl14g>



PERL International Conference: A Decade of Responsible Living: Preparing, Engaging, Responding and Learning. REGISTER NOW!!!

<http://www.perlprojects.org/news-events/news/perl-international-conference-a-decade-of-responsible-living-preparing-engaging-responding-and-learning>

Welcome on March 10-11, 2015 to the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

The conference will focus on the future and its challenges, using the experience of a decade of dedicated activity by PERL partners. The goal of the conference is to encourage a new decade of innovative initiatives about responsible living.



The PERL international conference will be retrospective, showing what has been accomplished by the CNN/PERL networks in relation to the development of policies about sustainable lifestyles; the creation of awareness about consumer citizenship, civic involvement and environmental stewardship; the adaptation and implementation of teaching methods and materials; and research, projects and publications about education for responsible living. The conference will also be interactive and illustrative providing insights/case studies/best practices through presentations, exhibitions, world café, round tables, etc. Additionally, the conference will examine ways of contributing to processes leading to a more just and sustainable world for all.

The deadline for submission of abstracts to the upcoming PERL international conference has passed and over 50 interesting abstracts have been received. In addition, plans are being made to hold several workshops at the conference, including an interdisciplinary symposium coordinated by PERL partner, The International Environment Forum.



UNESCO CHAIR and UNITWIN Program for Education about Sustainable Lifestyles

Victoria W. Thoresen, IEF Board Member, (photographed here with Tanja Hegge, Secretary-General of UNESCO Commission Norway) will hold the first UNESCO Chair for Education about Sustainable Lifestyles.

Hedmark University College in Norway received approval from UNESCO for their application to establish a UNESCO Chair and UNITWIN Programme on Education about Sustainable Lifestyles (2014-2020). This is the first UNESCO Chair established in Norway on any subject. The Education for Sustainable Lifestyles UNITWIN program partners will come together for their first face-to-face consultation on March 12, 2015 in Paris. The establishment of the UNESCO Chair and UNITWIN programme provides the opportunity for continuing the activities of PERL beyond the period of the EU Erasmus Academic Network grant which ends 30 September 2015.

Paul Hanley - Eleven.

Victoria, BC, Canada: Friesen Press, 2014. 400 p. Book review by Arthur Dahl

IEF member Paul Hanley has just published a most remarkable book. "Eleven" starts from the premise that "Eleven billion people will share this planet by century's end. Adding 4 billion to an already overburdened world will force everyone to change everything." This is not just another catalogue of all the things going wrong, although there is an element of that at the beginning, but a very hopeful view of how a transition to sustainability within planetary limits is possible even for our expanding population. Hanley is a journalist and specialist on agriculture, editor of an earlier book "The Spirit of Agriculture" in 2005. He has consulted and distilled the wisdom of many researchers and thinkers into a coherent reflection on our society and our future.

The first part of the book is a deep critique of the consumer society and the present world economy founded on the growth paradigm. He shows how we are drowning in materialism, trapped in addictions, turned into passive consumers and spectators, burdened with useless wars, and unaware that the system has been designed to exploit us and steer wealth to a tiny group of ultra-wealthy at the top. At the same time, we are rapidly destroying the ecosphere on which we ultimately depend for life and risk the collapse of civilization. Despite all this, he documents the seeds of a new culture growing, drawing inspiration from the recent experience of the Baha'i community around the world.

The second part of the book looks at the new agriculture that will be needed to feed 11 billion people. He shows that reducing waste, restoring ecosystems and regenerating soils, and providing a new ethical framework for agriculture based on social equity, can allow agriculture to again become the basis of an emerging world civilization. This is not just theory, but based on projects in China and elsewhere that are already showing the practicality of his recommendations.

The third part of the book shows that ethics are everything. The real transformation need is in our worldview, away from both anthropocentric and ecocentric polarizations of the relationship between humanity and nature, and toward a recognition of the unity of socio-ecological systems of which we are an intimate part. We have unwittingly taken over the management of the ecosphere by impacting it everywhere, and need to take up the responsibility to manage it wisely. Hanley explores the deep relationship between our inner and outer worlds, finding support in science for perspectives that are compatible with the Baha'i view of the world, without directly mentioning the Baha'i Faith. At the end of the book, he describes in some detail the transformational model that the Baha'i community is trying to demonstrate in the world.

This is a wide-ranging book, alternating personal anecdotes and the deep reflections of current thinkers, challenging our assumptions and proposing ways ahead. You are certain to find much in it that will motivate you to dedicate your life in service to the coming 11 billion people and to the planet on which they will be building an ever-advancing world civilization.

A more complete review is in preparation for the IEF web site.

The latest on climate change from IPCC

Report by Arthur Dahl

The **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change** (IPCC) completed the work on its Fifth Assessment Report with the approval of the **Synthesis Report** in Copenhagen on 1 November 2014. On 3 November I was able to attend a presentation of the most important findings of the report during four hours at the University of Bern, Switzerland, by the Chair of the IPCC, the Co-Chairs of Working Group I and key contributors to the report, in the presence of the Swiss Minister for the Environment, Transportation, Energy and Communication.

The new Synthesis Report combines the content of the three Working Group reports I (the physical science basis), II (impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptation) and III (mitigation of climate change) into an integral perspective and emphasizes cross-cutting issues. Over 800 scientists have worked for 5 years and reviewed thousands of scientific papers and petabytes of data to update the best available science on climate change as the basis for government action through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change meeting in Lima in December and in Paris next year.

The language of this report is the strongest ever. "Human influence on the climate system is clear, and recent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history. Recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems. Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to millennia. The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished, and sea level has risen. Anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions have increased since the pre-industrial era, driven largely by economic and population growth, and are now higher

than ever. This has led to atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide that are unprecedented in at least the last 800,000 years. Their effects, together with those of other anthropogenic drivers, have been detected throughout the climate system and are extremely likely to have been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century. In recent decades, changes in climate have caused impacts on natural and human systems on all continents and across the oceans. Impacts are due to observed climate change, irrespective of its cause, indicating the sensitivity of natural and human systems to changing climate."

"Continued emission of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, increasing the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems. Limiting climate change would require substantial and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions which, together with adaptation, can limit climate change risks. Surface temperature is projected to rise over the 21st century under all assessed emission scenarios. It is very likely that heat waves will occur more often and last longer, and that extreme precipitation events will become more intense and frequent in many regions. The ocean will continue to warm and acidify, and global mean sea level to rise. Climate change will amplify existing risks and create new risks for natural and human systems. Risks are unevenly distributed and are generally greater for disadvantaged people and communities in countries at all levels of development. Many aspects of climate change and associated impacts will continue for centuries, even if anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are stopped. The risks of abrupt or irreversible changes increase as the magnitude of the warming increases."

It is worth emphasizing that the quotes above are based on the best scientific literature and have been reviewed word by word and agreed as accurate by all the governments in the IPCC.

Some of the new conclusions are quite striking. The past three decades have all been successively warmer. It is the oceans that have been absorbing 90% of the heat, raising ocean temperatures. Climate change impacts are already under way. Greenhouse gas emissions have accelerated since 2000 and are higher than they have ever been in the earth's history. Of a total carbon budget for greenhouse gases of 790 gigatonnes of carbon, we had already emitted 515 by 2011, leaving only 275 remaining before we overshoot the 2°C limit. The window for action is rapidly closing, and we must have a carbon-neutral economy by the end of the century, with a major reduction in carbon emissions of 40-70% already by 2050. Without mitigation, we face a very high risk of severe, widespread, and irreversible impacts globally. In their language, this means a greater than 95% confidence limit. The impacts already attributed to climate change show how sensitive human and natural systems are. For example, they say there is no way to save coral reefs (my own scientific specialty), even with only 2°C of warming.

We have the technologies to make the transition, and it would cost only 0.06% of global GDP annually, much less than the costs of a rapidly changing climate and rising seas. There appear overall to be strong economic and social benefits from the transition, but obviously the fossil fuel and transport parts of the economy would lose out and will resist any change.

On the human side, climate change will amplify existing risks and create new ones, and these risks are not evenly distributed. The report redefines vulnerability as a propensity and predisposition to experience harm. Human inequalities drive vulnerabilities to climate change. It is marginalized groups, by gender, race, class or ethnicity, in every society, that will suffer the most.

One of the significant innovations in the 5th Assessment has been the inclusion for the first time of the ethical dimension, especially in chapter 3 of the Working Group III report. Prof. John Broome of the University of Oxford, one of the authors of this part of the report, emphasized at the meeting that climate change is an ethical problem. People,

mostly the wealthy, who generate greenhouse gases, harm other people, especially the poor, while delaying mitigation shifts the burden to future generations. Policy makers who must pick among options must make ethical judgments, and while the IPCC is not prescriptive, it has provided a framework for these judgments. Economics also makes moral judgments, like having enough life boats on a ship in the unlikely event that it sinks. In the case of climate change, the science shows similar events with a low probability but very high consequences.

Prof. Broome explained that morality or ethics can take two perspectives, and raise a series of relevant questions. The first perspective is what is owed to people, their rights and duties, generally labeled as justice or equity. For example, how should the burden of action be shared? How should we respond to the injustice to the poor? How do we consider historical responsibility?

The second perspective is one of values, promoting good and preventing harm, making the world a better place. How do we ensure the well-being of people? How do we protect the natural value of species and ecosystems? What is our responsibility for cultural values? Beyond this, how can different values be combined, be aggregated, or weighed against each other? How do we weigh the well-being of future generations against those being asked to sacrifice now? Money has a different value for the poor and the rich, with the same amount allowing one to educate a child, and the other to have a night out. This is ignored in most cost-benefit analysis, which thus systematically discriminates against the poor.

As the Synthesis Report puts it: "Effective decision making to limit climate change and its effects can be informed by a wide range of analytical approaches for evaluating expected risks and benefits, recognizing the importance of governance, ethical dimensions, equity, value judgments, economic assessments and diverse perceptions and responses to risk and uncertainty." Let us hope that the politicians acknowledge their ethical responsibility.

You can download the *Synthesis Report summary for policy makers* of 40 pages at http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/SYR_AR5_SPM.pdf



1,000 Climate Vigils Worldwide on Dec. 7 - #LightForLima

A **strong international agreement** is a key part of the fight against climate change. This December, representatives of the world's governments are meeting in Lima, Peru to build towards such an agreement in the coming year.

Let's show these leaders that we want them to succeed.

I invite you to take part in #LightForLima, a global series of vigils on the evening of December 7 – right in the middle of the Lima meetings. Yes – I want to get involved in #LightForLima, and to use the free vigil resources.

As part of the OurVoices.net campaign, #LightForLima will help organize vigils in countries around the world. **We're aiming for 1,000 vigils** – in cities, suburbs and rural communities. In houses of worship and in public squares. We're even inviting people to keep a vigil in their own homes!

Groups are already organizing vigils in Washington DC, New York, and London, in Canada, Australia and India, and more. I urge you to plan a vigil in your community!

Solar-Lit!

#LightForLima is going one step beyond the traditional candle-lit vigil. Faith communities in the US and UK can purchase a solar lamp to power your vigil renewably.

Every lamp purchased will ensure that two more lamps are sent to rural homes in Africa which lack electricity. This will give children light so that they can read and study at night, and will replace dirty kerosene lights whose fumes sicken millions of people who use them because they have no alternative.

Get Involved

Time is running out for a strong climate agreement. We need to show world leaders that people of all faiths and spiritualities support their efforts to reach such an agreement. Please, please get involved in #LightForLima and show that you care.

In faith,
Rev. Fletcher Harper
Executive Director

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PS - Please get involved in #LightForLima right now. Invite members of your congregation, parish and community to get involved. We provide the resources you need to succeed. There's no time to waste.