

Organizations contributing to this submission: York University, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), International Association of Universities (IAU)

Websites:

York <https://yorku.ca> and <https://yorku.ca/unescochair>

IAU <https://www.iau-aiu.net/> and <https://www.iau-aiu.net/HESD>

IIUM <https://www.iium.edu.my/> and <https://centre.iium.edu.my/sejahtera/>

Focal point for this joint submission: Katrin Kohl, Executive Coordinator, UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability, Global Focal Point SDG 4, IAU Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development Cluster. Contact: kkohl@edu.yorku.ca; unescochair@edu.yorku.ca

Chapeau

The *Summit of the Future* (SOTF) presents a unique opportunity to reunite member states and societies in a global consensus for sustainability to accelerate progress towards the *2030 Agenda* and the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs). Following the midway-point of the *2030 Agenda* with the rather modest results in achieving the SDGs, the breakthroughs from the *SDG Summit* with an agreement on six transitional investment pathwaythe

crucial role of quality education as a cross-cutting accelerator for all 17 SDGs needs to be further elevated.

Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education (SDG 4) that gives learners of all ages the knowledge, skills, values,

cognitive, and behavioral. Grounded in transdisciplinarity, ESD engages learners with diverse knowledges to work towards desirable futures in response to pressing challenges of our times. Therefore, – when transformative and with sustainability as a purpose – education has unique potential for the individual and for societies to achieve a more just and equitable world. Formally recognized as a **key enabler of all SDGs** in 2017/2019/2021 and most recently in December 2023, quality education with ESD at the core deserves mentioning in each chapter of the Pact for the Future.

Higher education can be a facilitator, bringing together various stakeholders and combining teaching and learning, research, community engagement and collaborative partnerships. Participatory knowledge building, sharing, mobilization and transfer are at the core of all streams of its mandate. Thus, higher education is well positioned in society and at the science-policy interface to support societal change with evidence-based recommendations and to model sustainable development in practice at the global and local level.

One specific example of creating a shared vision for ESD from the perspective of higher education is the *ESD Statement* developed by the *UNITWIN Network on ESD & Societal Transformation*.

References:

UNESCO. (2020). *Education for Sustainable Development. A Roadmap*. UNESCO.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374802>.

UNESCO. (2022c). *Knowledge-driven actions: Transforming higher education for global sustainability. Independent Expert Group on the Universities and the 2030 Agenda*. UNESCO.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380519>.

Partnerships (SDG 17) need to be at the center of the discussions at the Summit of the Future or any future roadmap for a sustainable transformation. Global challenges and crises can best be addressed through cooperation, not isolation. Specifically, higher education institutions work across borders and navigating intercultural contexts is more frequent in academia. The benefits of bringing different approaches, disciplines, and cultures together are reflected in the innovative output from research, the creation of new knowledge and practice from universities. Due to their strong commitment to institutional autonomy, they are in some cases uniquely placed to also advise governments and foster dialogue.

Following the example of the UNFCCC Paris Agreement in adding educational tools as well as the arts as forms of implementation and expression (e.g. *Youth Climate Report* recognized under Article 6) and addressing Indigenous/traditional knowledge (to al 6)

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

Member states are hoped to support partnerships for the enhancement and application of open educational resources globally, such as the *Joint Committee on UNESCO OER Recommendation*, hosted by the SDG Academy. In addition, enhancing the understanding and application of open science efforts could be crucial to create new transdisciplinary knowledge, e. g., *IAU's Expert Group on Open Science*.

Addressing youth perspectives in the conversation, especially on the potential of artificial intelligence, its ethical dimensions, with artificial intimacy fundamentally changing future human relationships, is crucial, e.g., with the *SDG Student Hub* at *York University*.

References:

SDG Academy launches Joint Committee on UNESCO OER Recommendation. (2023).

<https://sdgacademy.org/advancing-the-unesco-oer-recommendation/>

IAU Expert Group on Open Science. (2023). <https://iau-aiu.net/technology>

SDSN SDG Student Hub. (2023) <https://www.sdsnyouth.org/initiatives/sdg-students-program>

York SDG Student Hub. 2023). <https://www.yorku.ca/sustainability/getinvolved/sdg-student-hub/>

