

## PARTNERSHIP AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

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### **Abstract**

The pursuit of sustainable development requires humanity to tackle common problems and tensions, as well as to recognize new challenges. Among these tasks, it becomes important to open new opportunities for exchange, cooperation and solidarity, both at the international and regional and local levels.

Unfortunately, in the modern world we are witnessing the growth of cultural and religious intolerance, political confrontation, and military conflicts in different parts of the world. Therefore, the topic of developing cooperation and partnership is important in humanitarian research, including pedagogical science.

Education for Sustainable Development is the practice of exploring ways to achieve global and local sustainable communities. In this article, we refer to the experience of a classical university and a public environmental organization in the eastern region of the Russian Federation – the Republic of Buryatia. Facilitating networking, exchange and interaction among stakeholders in ESD – all of this contributes to improving the quality of education in ESD.

**Key words:** Education for sustainable development, interaction, partnership, cooperation, environmental education, ethical knowledge.

### **Introduction**

The Global Program 2030 for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals provides for the participation of the population

and the strengthening of the role of various social groups in the development of all community-based initiatives in the field of environmental protection. To achieve sustainability, countries agreed that Governments, civil society, researchers, academia, and the private sector must work together.

In Russia, in the early 1990s, there was freedom, openness to ideas, a wave of information from foreign organizations, which gave an additional impetus to the development of environmental education. Efforts to reorient the educational system to ensure sustainability in Russia were made academically, not by government agencies. Today, it has become clear that only *cooperation and partnership* will allow us to continue the successful development of ESD.

Over the past years, Russian education has accumulated its own experience in implementing the practical tasks of ESD, aimed at making society learn to live more environmentally, economically, and socially. Education for sustainable development is viewed in Russia as the “successor” of environmental education, which studies not only natural processes and human impact on them, but also the way of the economy, lifestyle, social structure - issues in which social, cultural and environmental problems are woven into a single whole. In pedagogical science, issues related to various aspects of education for sustainable development have also become more actively considered: philosophical foundations (N.M. Mamedov), biological foundations (V.G. Gorshkov, V.I. Danilov-Danilyan, D.N. Kavtaradze, K.Ya. Kondrat'ev, K.S. Losev, psychological foundations (V.I. Panov, S.D. Deryabo, V.A. Yasvin, general pedagogical as development oversubject forms and content (A.N. Zakhlebny, E.N. Dzyatkovskaya, the development of social partnership and new interactive technologies (N.Zh. Dagbaeva), socio-cultural aspects (S.N. Glazachev, D.S. Ermakov, methodical (V.N. Kalinin, N.V. Koryakina, additional education of teachers (V. Alekseev, L. Khaludorova).

The main conclusion that all scientists come to is that sustainable development of the state and society cannot occur if there is no constant learning, acquisition and comprehension of new

experience. The concept of sustainable development includes not only environmental issues, but also issues related to the population, their standard of living, health, human rights, economics, peace and security issues, which should be reflected in the school education system.

A special role in solving the problems of ESD, of course, is assigned to *educational organizations*; in particular, I will show some examples of cooperation of the Buryat State University. In order to promote ESD, we develop relationships with all those who can support the ideas of ESD-educational organizations such as kindergartens, schools, colleges, national parks and nature reserves, and the mass-media. At the same time, our university acts as an organizer, catalyst and communicator, acting in all social groups of society.

### **Research methodology**

In the last decade, *non-governmental organizations* and individual representatives of civil society have been most active. In our opinion, it is NGOs that have created a certain fashion for ecology in recent years, due to the “ecological” brand, products from local manufacturers have become in demand, and this can be considered an integral element of improving the quality of life. Through educational projects, the population receives information about the importance of making an informed choice in favor of ecological products, rational use of natural resources and a responsible approach to outdoor recreation, waste recycling, saving water and electricity.

Another important conclusion over the past three decades is the need to link together the three most important concepts of *ecology, culture, and education*. Connected in a single educational activity, they give quite good results in practice.

In my presentation, I will give some examples of successful projects of our NGO, which I have been heading for more than 20 years – *the Baikal Information Center Gran*. All projects are aimed at solving one of the 17 tasks of the Global Program, and at developing partnerships between different organizations and people. At the

same time, partnership and cooperation in various projects were carried out at different levels: regional, national, and international.

Thus, to solve one of the tasks of ESD - to remove the tension between tradition and innovation, the project “We speak without an accent” was aimed. Especially in the region of Lake Baikal, we consider it important to preserve not only the biological, but also the cultural diversity of the indigenous peoples inhabiting the shores of the great lake: the Buryats and the Evenks. At the same time, in our projects, we look for what is common in the cultures of the peoples inhabiting Buryatia, in such aspects of culture as national cuisine, ethnosport, and national holidays.

It is also obvious that education for sustainable development plays an important role in the integration of the world community, since environmental problems are global, requiring consideration of the interests of different countries and regions. We have successfully completed international projects; one of them is realizing more than 12 years. This is the project “Biological and Cultural Diversity of the regions: Buryatia – Lower Saxony”, which has been implemented since 2006, which was very successful before the pandemic time. Within the framework of this project, numerous exchange programs were implemented for schoolchildren and teachers from Russia to Germany and vice versa. The project promoted cultural exchange and strengthened international relations. The essence of Russian-German cooperation is to instill in students a respectful attitude both to the system of values inherent in the carriers of another country, based on the principle of the equivalence of different cultures, and to develop the personality of schoolchildren in the multicultural space of Eurasia.

On another topic was an international project with our Canadian colleagues to provide quality education for indigenous peoples “Reorienting Education and Training Systems to Improve the Education Outcomes of Indigenous Youth” coordinated by The UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability at York University (Canada). First results of this project were presented at the international Conference in Okayama City in 2019.

During the pandemic, the role and activity of NGOs on the Internet

has increased: non-profit organizations post their achievements on their websites, for example, in our organization you can find an online version of the unique training manual on Lake Baikal “Baikal Box”, as well as an online game <http://bicgran.ru>.

We presented this project to Mongolian teachers in 2016 and worked fruitfully with them, and there were even plans to create a similar book on Hubsugul. The purpose of the workshop is not only to exchange learning experiences, but also to search for new forms of cooperation in the field of environmental education in the lakeside areas.

In turn, Mongolian scientists and teachers took part in an international seminar on Lake Baikal in the summer. The name of the international workshop- speaks for itself - “Environmental education in the lake areas: practical experience and innovative technologies.”

## **Conclusions**

Despite the accumulated positive examples, there are many challenges in developing partnerships in education for sustainable development. Among the problems of developing partnership in education for sustainable development is the rejection of the ideas of sustainability by the entire Russian society. Unfortunately, the ministries of education in the center and in the Russian regions have not adopted any legislative documents that would facilitate the work of teachers and scientists.

We have nearest perspectives and plans to develop partnership on different levels, including the possibilities to promote collaboration with our Mongolian colleagues. Among them are:

- promoting the building of open societies for sustainable development;
- ensuring access to justice;
- strengthening the means of achieving sustainable development;
- revitalizing global partnership mechanisms etc...

Having the similar ethnic roots we can work out the joint projects through the consistent assimilation of knowledge about their native culture, equipping students with the ability to critically analyze

any information in order to avoid distorted conclusions, as well as the formation of a tolerant attitude towards cultural differences - qualities necessary for life in a multicultural world.

Indeed, the growth of integration processes in the modern world community has intensified the study of the possibilities of intercultural dialogue in various spheres of society and at various levels of communication.

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