

Theme for the 29th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society for Environmental Education (Tokyo)

Looking Back the Root of Environmental Education: LIFE, Environment and People

The year 2020 marks the 30th year since the establishment of the Japanese Society for Environmental Education. Japanese Environmental Education started 60 years ago as a form of Education for Nature Conservation or Pollution Education. Current contents, methods, subjects, targets, locations and programs are so various and diverse depending on how it expands.

Internationally, Environmental Education activities have been conducted for about a half century. Environmental Education—transformed from ‘education for environment’ to ‘education for creating sustainable society,’ which is also known as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), driven by various arguments—is, today, at the stage of Education for Sustainable Development Goals (ESDGs) that responds to ‘a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity’ and “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs) targeting to be achieved by the year 2030.

Keeping above in our minds, I would like to have exchange of our thoughts to ascertain its future by looking back the root of environmental education and hundred flowers bloomed from it at the 29th Annual Meeting in Tokyo.

Theme for the Annual Meeting

Looking Back the Root of Environmental Education: LIFE, Environment and People

- ◆ **LIFE:** “Life” is the root of energy for an individual living thing to live and take actions, “Journal of Life” is a continuous story of histories of living things that has been continuing for 3.8 billion years transcending a span of a life time of an individual living thing, “LIFE” is what we recognize as people facing an issue of “death” and “Living Activities” is what we conduct every day as people.
- ◆ **Environment:** the place for LIFE and the world surrounding all living things and affecting each other through various relationships. The world/place for the “Life” is “Nature,” the world/place for “LIFE” is the “World of LIFE” and the world/place for people’s “Living Activities” is “Historical Society.”
- ◆ **People:** People—as a living thing, as a social being and as a presence of “LIFE”—lives dynamically by involving with different environments including “Nature,” “Historical Society” and “World of LIFE” in various ways. That dynamism, departing from mutual relationship of support between LIFE and Environment, also includes history of destroying LIFE, Environment and People by conducting inappropriate or excessive development. To turn around this negative sense, Today’s SDGs (17 goals) consists of 5 pillars.¹

¹ United Nations, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015

- ① *People: We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.*
- ② *Planet: We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.*
- ③ *Prosperity: We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.*
- ④ *Peace: We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.*
- ⑤ *Partnership: We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.*

As a year just before the 30th anniversary of the Society, I hope every one of us participating here will look back yourself, seek the roots of your own environmental education, muse and reflect where it is going, share your emerging thoughts with others, find seeds and germinations of new Environmental Education and start nourishing that germination of LIFE with great care in this 29th annual meeting.

HARAKO Eiichiro, Executive Director

The 29th Annual Meeting of JSFEE Executive Committee