

DRAFT

Kuala Lumpur Statement

Sustainability Science A Science based Approach to Realize the Future We Want for All

Kuala Lumpur 4, 5 April, 2013

The international workshop titled “A science based approach to realise the future we want for all” was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 4 to 5 April, 2013. It was organized by UNESCO and LESTARI, UKM in collaboration with ISTIC and MEXT-Japan and was attended by a number of eminent international delegates.

This workshop was held at a critical juncture in time, ahead of the transition from MDGS to Post-2015 Agenda which presents a once-in-a-generation chance to fundamentally change global economy towards a “Green Economy” – to build a knowledge economy and a knowledge society by mobilizing Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). If science is to have a meaningful impact on the post 2015 development agenda both the science and development communities need to learn from the experience of the MDGs. We need to recognize the dual impact S&T has had in human development in recent centuries, via science-based revolutions, such as the industrial revolution, the medical revolution, the green revolution, and the transportation revolution. These science-based revolutions have brought unprecedented economic progress and welfare for many, but on the other hand: 1) too many people were left out, and 2) the economic benefits came at huge environmental costs, the scope and impact of which we have hardly begun to understand.

Sustainable solutions, whether at the global, regional or country level, require creativity, new advances in scientific knowledge, discoveries and innovations. Innovation geared towards sustainable development has the potential to lift economic growth, create green jobs, boost social development while at the same time contributing to environmental protection and conservation. The development of solutions to these key global challenges, and the transition towards ‘green societies’ will require the mobilization of a wave of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. It will also require a clear strategy that puts science and education at its core. The innovations to transform our societies towards sustainability must be based on sound science, technology and innovation (STI). In implementation of ‘Sustainability Science’ approach, there is a need to apply a forward looking approach that aims to maximize the benefits and minimizes possible negative spin-offs from new S&T based innovations and developments. In that respect we need to learn from lessons in the past. Besides, it is also clear that we need to ‘educate for a sustainable future’; to generate greater societal and political awareness and support towards addressing key global challenges.

Due to the diverse and often challenging social, economic, and educational contexts in Asia-Pacific countries, there is need to foster development and implementation of integrated policies, strategies, and management models within the sustainability science framework, in order to improve the living standards for local communities, and foster cooperation among countries for sustainable development.

Based on mutual respect and trust, and on shared experiences, the participants collectively recognized and acknowledged Sustainability Science as an important tool/methodology and affirmed the following statement:

- 1) Complexities and interrelationships of key global challenges require that “Sustainability Science” needs to be implemented through a unified integrated approach between the social and human sciences and the natural sciences. It is recommended to the governing

- bodies that UNESCO may promote this integrated approach into the next medium-term strategy (C/4) and the programme and budget (C/5).
- 2) Interrelated complex sustainability challenges in society are deeply related to people's perceptions, sense of values, social systems and behaviour, which also interact with government policy and overall world perspectives. All interested parties need to continue to develop governance dialogues and standardized sustainability science methodologies which addresses issues of equity, good governance and reverses unsustainable practices at all levels.
 - 3) UNESCO may make substantial contribution by bringing all the key players together by supporting existing sustainability science networks for sharing of associated tool sets and concepts and a support mechanism for agreed action plans to be implemented with targets and timelines.
 - 4) There is a need for developing sustainability indicators to monitor progress towards agreed goals and publish results to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer.
 - 5) The Asia-Pacific region can take a lead in promoting 'policy relevant science and science relevant policy' to make evidence based national transformations required for sustainable development.
 - 6) It is recommended to establish pilot demonstration projects for applying sustainability science using existing networks such UNESCO IHP, MAB and IOC. Sustainability demo sites need to be conducive to scientific and social research, including database and case studies, the results of which should be disseminated among all stakeholders for informed decision-making. Learning alliances between sites and universities/research institutes should be fostered to promote working relationships and on-site visits by researchers, professors, and students.
 - 7) There is a need to develop human resources by designing modular sustainability science curricula to tackle global challenges through cooperation among various fields. In particular, considering the collaboration and relations with Education for Sustainable Development, implement and accelerate education to foster knowledge and wisdom which makes wiser use of science, cultivated through tradition from primary education levels.
 - 8) Decision makers need scientifically credible and independent information to implement sustainable development goals. There may be possibility to establish UNESCO chairs and category-2 centres linked with the developing the sustainability science approach to provide independent and reliable knowledge base and policy advice to international, regional and national stakeholders.
 - 9) South-South-North cooperation is critical for the successful implementation of the sustainability approach. The progress made between Asia and Africa cooperation through connectivity tools need to be fostered further for capacity building at all levels. It is recommended to organize an Asia-Africa summit on sustainability science.
 - 10) Sustainability Science Networks need to be established to proactively promote this approach at all levels.

Endorsed by the participants of the "A science based approach to realise the future we want for all" held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 4 to 5 April, 2013.

05 April 2013