Action Plan
of the Mediterranean Strategy on
Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD)

I. JUSTIFICATION

The World as a whole, and the Mediterranean Region in particular, face important challenges related to a complex combination of natural phenomena and, mostly, anthropogenic pressures resulting in accelerating climate variability and change, depletion or deterioration of vital natural resources, such as water, degradation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, pollution of the atmosphere, the terrestrial and aquatic environment, contamination of the food chain, impacts on health and a series of important socioeconomic consequences and phenomena related to the still prevailing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, the rapidly increasing population, migration, inequalities - including poverty and gender-related ones, as well as the various tensions including armed conflicts, terrorism and occupation exerted at least on some parts of the wider region followed by misery, displacement and mass flows of refugees. Some of the above are also related to economies characterised, in general, by low productivity and low efficiency of natural resources utilisation, while at the root of many of the tensions, one could find lack of trust and understanding frequently based on ignorance or erratic education.

Many of the above challenges could be addressed through public policies, "widening of the horizons" of societies and adaptation of individual choices and behaviours, many of which could be influenced significantly and positively through appropriate education, especially if the latter is of quality and oriented to sustainable development.

It has been repeatedly recognised that appropriate education is the prerequisite for addressing all issues related to Sustainable Development (SD) as it creates the necessary enabling environment and enhances competences as well as individual and collective social commitment for the needed transformation for creating more sustainable societies.

Despite the efforts of international organisations and countries, including governments, educational institutions, economic sectors and civil society organisations, at large, there is an urgent need throughout the Mediterranean, to promote education which could empower learners in addressing the accumulated and new challenges in a creative and optimistic way. Furthermore, a better link of education with policies, strategies and efforts promoting SD is needed for the achievement of the Global Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, in particular, SDG4 and commitments under major Conventions.

In promoting appropriate educational approaches, we are not starting from scratch. The countries of the region have already valuable experience in international cooperation on education, especially in higher education. They have followed the developments under the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (2005-2014). A number of national and subregional education networks and associations of universities, teachers education and programmes have been set up, some of which include issues linked to SD. It is noteworthy that in the national, subregional and regional level there is a wealth of experience on Environmental Education (EE) much of which have gradually integrated sustainability dimensions and evolved to ESD. The challenge is how to optimise all these

initiatives and their potential in order to promote ESD and SD at regional/Mediterranean level.

To address this challenge, which extends from the classroom to the information provided by the media and the related multidisciplinary research, international/regional cooperation on ESD has been identified as a top priority by all countries and has led to the adoption of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD), a visionary and progressive policy document which, however, is still unevenly introduced and implemented in the various countries of the region. The present Action Plan aims at facilitating the countries to set the MSESD in motion through concrete programmes and synergies.

II. PREAMBLE

The Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (MSESD) was endorsed by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministers of the Environment in Athens, on 13 May 2014. The Strategy was developed under the formal framework of the UfM, through a long participatory process involving international and national experts from universities, government departments, Non Governmental Organisations and Civil Society Organisations,in general, from the North and the South of the region in several consultations, scientifically-technically coordinated by the University of Athens/UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean and supported by the Mediterranean Educational Initiative on Environment and Sustainability (MEdIES) of the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), many of which were organised under the EU funded Horizon 2020 Capacity Building/Mediterranean Environment Programme.

The MSESD has been accepted as an integral part of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), while a specific relevant indicator has been included among those which will demonstrate the progress of the MSSD's next phase of implementation (2016-2025).

The **mandate** to develop an Action Plan for the MSESD to guide its implementation and to promote regional and sub-regional activities on ESD comes from the MSESD's statement that "A 5-year Action Plan will be developed for the promotion of regional and subregional activities on ESD, including capacity building activities at national level, taking into account the Global Action Programme of ESD as a follow-up of DESD after 2014". It will support the relevant to Public Awareness and Education part of the MSSD. The Action Plan has therefore been prepared accordingly, facilitated by the UoA UNESCO Chair on Management and Education for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean, in collaboration with MEdIES of MIO-ECSDE. Apart from inputs by the countries, and stakeholders, it has also considered the outcomes of a region-wide youth survey. The final text of the Action Plan is to be presented for adoption at the Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Education in Cyprus, on 8-9 December 2016 hosted by the Government of Cyprus, under the High Patronage of the Republic of Cyprus.

III. GOAL & OBJECTIVES

The Goal
The Goal of the Action Plan is the facilitation of the implementation of the MSESD and, as appropriate, the provisions on ESD of all other relevant Conventions and International Bodies by all the countries of the region through appropriate activities of governments and other competent stakeholders.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the Action Plan are to:

1. Facilitate through regional cooperation and activities the Ministries of Education of the region in planning and implementing their national ESD priorities as it relates to appropriate resources, thematic areas, educators' competences, etc.

2. Raise throughout the region the awareness and recognition of the fundamental role of Education, and ESD in particular as quality education, emphasizing also the developmental transformative and participatory character of ESD.

3. Ensure further support by governments and other bodies, mobilizing appropriate resources as it regards ESD mainstreaming, as called for by the MSESD.

4. Support the educational community of the region in content development for ESD along the lines described in the MSESD and for increasing human and material resources regarding the production of publically available educational materials, teacher training material, etc.

5. Assist Ministries of Environment, Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture, etc. of the region in mainstreaming their awareness and education campaigns and initiatives related to the SDGs, viewing the access to the aforementioned resources not only as basic need but also from the perspective of the human rights.

6. Provide identified priority areas to donors and supporters in regard to ESD key themes for the Mediterranean region.

7. Help the countries to fulfill their international commitments related to ESD towards UNESCO and other International Organisations.

8. Promote regional research projects building on existing regional and subregional experiences.

9. Enhance international cooperation among Educational Institutions and other stakeholders and CSOs in promoting effectively the SDGs and sustainable development approaches in the Mediterranean, through regional activities.

10. Contribute in addressing, through regional educational activities, the economic and humanitarian crises and peace issues in the region.

11. Facilitate the better synergy between educational initiatives and the private sector particularly as it concerns the optimisation of interactions within the corporate social responsibility programmes of enterprises and the "opening" to the society initiatives of educational institutions.

IV. BACKGROUND

The Action Plan is a "new generation" instrument, which could serve in an integrated way all major international commitments of the countries of the region related to ESD in a way easy to be followed by national administrations, reducing unnecessary overlaps and repetitions.

It is stressed that the Action Plan is directly related, on the one hand, to the two major relevant regional Mediterranean processes, namely: the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, under the UfM, and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) (2016-2025) of the Barcelona Convention, coordinated by UNEP/MAP, and on the other, on the promotion and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while it takes due consideration and integrates the other relevant provisions deriving from international conventions and important international developments that have occurred since May 2014.

The figure below demonstrates the dynamic relations and initiatives (presented in the following paragraphs) that were considered for the drafting of the Action Plan and which are "serviced" by it.
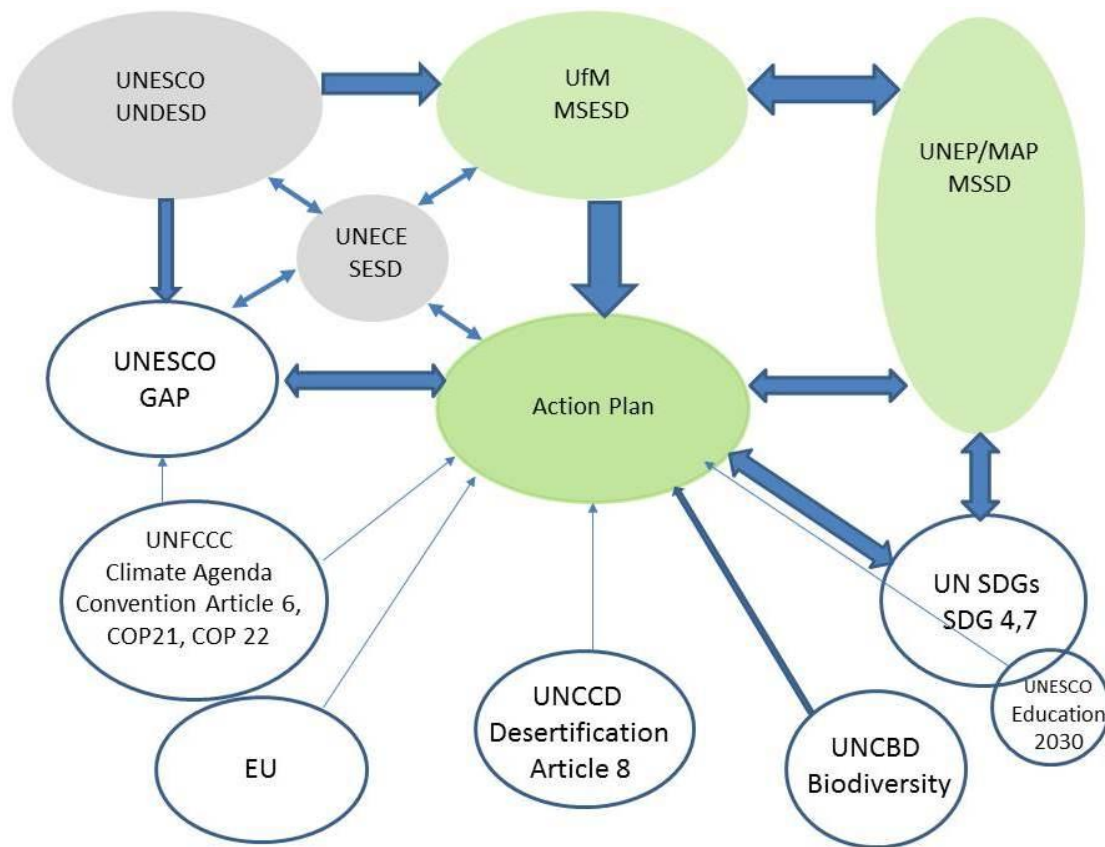
1. The **Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development** (MSESD). The Action Plan stems from and is fully aligned with it. The MSESD in its 81 Articles provides the regional Vision, defines the Aims and Objectives, the Scope and the Principles, explains the Implication for Education and proposes the Framework for Implementation identifying areas for action and national and international/regional level, while it also clarifies the modalities. The Framework for Implementation is the one providing the structural elements for the Action Plan.

AIM
The aim of the Strategy is to encourage countries of the Mediterranean to develop and incorporate ESD into their formal education systems, in all relevant subjects, and in non-formal and informal education…
OBJECTIVES:
(a) Ensure that policy, legislation and other regulatory and operational frameworks support ESD;
(b) Promote SD through formal, non-formal and informal learning;
(c) Equip educators with the competence to include SD in their teaching;
(d) Ensure that adequate tools and materials for ESD are accessible;
(e) Promote research on and development of ESD;
(f) Strengthen cooperation on ESD at all levels, including exchange of experience and technologies within the Mediterranean region

2. The **Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development** (MSSD 2016-2025) is based on the integration between socio-economic development and protection of natural resources. This principle is encapsulated in the subtitle of the Strategy: "investing in environmental sustainability to achieve social and economic development". MSSD 2016-2025 is complementary with the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production

for the Mediterranean and its Roadmap for implementation, which focuses on four priority areas: e.g. food, agriculture and fisheries; goods manufacturing; tourism; and, housing and construction. Those areas represent drivers of pollution generation and environmental pressures on the marine and coastal ecosystems but at the same time high contributors to the Mediterranean economies and to social well-being. The MSSD 2016-2025 was adopted by the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention (including the EU) gathered in the 19th Conference of Parties (Athens, 9-12 February 2016) and is articulated around 6 objectives with 29 strategic directions and 147 actions. Within this Strategy, the MSESD was accepted as an integral part while it was also included in the "Athens Declaration" as instrumental to achieve the SDGs ("The Ministers mindful of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, resolve to enhance public awareness and the role of education promoting sustainability and the implementation of the SDGs in the Mediterranean".)

In defining a regional process for the monitoring of the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025 in relation with the adaptation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the Mediterranean region, a first core set of indicators (30-40), the so-called "Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard" are under development that will be accessible and easy to communicate to decision makers. In this core set, the reference to the MSESD and an indicator for the Action Plan are included (see indicators).

3. The **UNESCO Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD** that followed the UN Decade on ESD (post 2015 period), and in particular it's Five Priority Action Areas, namely:
i. Advancing ESD policy by mainstreaming ESD into both education and sustainable development policies.
ii. Transforming learning and training environments by integrating sustainability principles into education and training settings.
iii. Building capacities of educators and trainers to more effectively deliver ESD.
iv. Empowering and mobilizing youth by multiplying ESD actions among and led by youth.
v. Accelerating sustainable solutions at local and community level, scaling up ESD projects and multi-stakeholder ESD networks.

4. The **Education 2030 Framework for Action** and the Incheon Declaration which set out a new vision of Education towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.

5. The **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** adopted by all the UN Member States, in most of which Education is mentioned as necessary for achieving their targets while SDG4 on Education emphasises the need to ensure that all girls and boys have quality primary and secondary education and all men and women have access to affordable technical, vocational and tertiary education as foundation of improving people's lives and sustainable development. Target 4.7 in particular provides that, "by 2030, all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".

6. The **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change** (1992), in its Article 6, specifies that "the parties shall promote at the National and as appropriate sub-regional and regional levels. the development and implementation of educational and public awareness programmes on climate change and its effects; … Training of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Personnel; …Development and exchange of educational and public awareness

material on climate change and its effects; and the development and implementation of education and training programmes, including the strengthening of national institutions and the exchange or secondment of personnel to train experts in this field, in particular for developing countries".

Furthermore, the **UN Conference on Climate Change COP 21** (Paris, December 2015) hosted representatives of 195 governments who agreed in holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and in pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels in order to significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change. In the Paris negotiations the critical role of education in climate change was given special attention: ESD and climate change education were included in the Paris Agreement, approved by the countries, while an entire thematic day of the Conference was dedicated to Education recognizing its top priority in the Climate Change Agenda.

In addition, at the High Level meeting organized during the COP22 in Marrakesh on the 14th of November 2016, the UNESCO/UNFCCC Guidelines were launched and the role of education in preparing societies for global change and a greener future was a clear message.

7. The **UN Convention to Combat Desertification** (UNCCD, 1994) in its article 8 provides that "the overall strategy of national action programmes (to combat desertification), shall aim at strengthening the capacity of local authorities and ensuring the active involvement of local populations, communities and groups, with emphasis on education and training, mobilization of non-governmental organizations with proven expertise and strengthening of decentralized governmental structures. They shall, as appropriate, include training with regard to, and strengthening, public awareness and environmental education campaigns and disseminating knowledge of techniques relating to the sustainable management of natural resources". Also under article 11 it defines that priority areas for subregional action programmes shall, as appropriate, focus on capacity building, education and public awareness activities that are better carried out or supported at the subregional level.

8. The **UN Convention on Biological Diversity** (UNCBD), in its Article 13 provides that "the Contracting Parties shall:
a) promote and encourage understanding of the importance of, and the measures required for, the conservation of biological diversity, as well as its propagation through media, and the inclusion of these topics in educational programmes, and
b) cooperate, as appropriate, with other States and international organisations in developing educational and public awareness programmes with respect to conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity".

9. The Framework for the future implementation of the **UNECE Strategy for ESD** which provides for a series of countries of the north and east coasts of the Mediterranean (adopted at the 8th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Batumi, Georgia, 8-10 June 2016) which calls for:
  1. Encouraging whole-institution approaches by establishing ESD school plans or embedding ESD in existing school plans.
  2. Promoting the extension of ESD in Teacher Education and in the Training of all educators.
  3. Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in support of sustainable development and green economy.
  4. Strengthening integration of ESD in both international and national education and sustainable development policies and other relevant policies.
  5. Linking ESD in formal, informal and non-formal education.

6. Acknowledging the important role of networks, including those of civil society, academia and science, non-governmental organizations, business and enterprises, in implementing ESD.

A series of indicators have been introduced by UNECE some of which have been included (see V.D)

10. The relevant League of the Arab States efforts/initiatives namely: **the Plan for the development of Education in Arab Countries** adopted in the Damascus Summit (2008) aiming at developing the quality of education, curricula, improving teachers' capacities, teaching methods, at all levels of education, vocational education and life-long learning; The **Arab Decade on adult learning and Literacy 2015-2024** (Sharm El Sheikh Summit 2015); the **Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organisation (ALESCO) Strategic Plan for the period 2017-2022**.

11. The **Paris Declaration** on "Promoting Citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through Education" adopted at the informal meeting of European Union Education Ministers (17 March 2015).

In this respect, the present Action Plan meaningfully combines and reflects the provisions and commitments included in the aforementioned Conventions, Strategies and Declarations and, therefore, its implementation fulfils simultaneously all the ESD related priorities and commitments of the countries to the UN and other international organizations and fora.

Furthermore, the Action Plan was informed by a Survey on Mediterranean Youth Responses towards sustainable development and the current crisis that was run by the University of Athens /UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean and MIO-ECSDE throughout 2015.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMMES

The Action Plan directly derives from and reflects the "Framework of Implementation" of the MSESD (articles 42-70) and as a consequence, it elaborates and interprets the Framework's components in a more detailed and concrete way suggesting an indicative roadmap, in order to assist towards:
A. Enhancing the enabling conditions for the proper implementation of the MSESD.
B. Proposing a set of identified common regional programmes/projects of institutional/non-thematic nature.
C. Highlighting priority thematic issues for region-wide programmes
D. Proposing indicators of progress and monitoring.

A. Enhancing the enabling conditions for the proper implementation of the MSESD

The Priority Areas of institutional and operational interventions as identified by the MSESD (the numbers in brackets correspond to the relevant articles of the Strategy) are presented below, together with key Recommended Activities for the Action Plan and an indicative roadmap (the dates in the parentheses are only indicative).

Priority Area 1 [Article 42]: To include SD perspectives throughout formal, non-formal and informal education strong political support will be necessary at all levels and sectors of governance.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2017):
i. Translate the MSESD into the national language.
ii. Distribute it to the relevant authorities and bodies including civil society organisations.
iii. Designate a focal point for regular contact and coordination.

Priority Area 2 [Articles 48 & 49]: National implementation plans should serve as a core element of implementation.

Recommended Activities:
i. Set up a National ESD platform/Committee /Body involving all stakeholders from the relevant Ministries (Education, Environment, etc.), Academia, Educators' representatives, CSOs, etc. (till the end of 2017) to:
ii. Draft/review/revise/amend, if needed, the National Plan on ESD. (till the end of 2018)
iii. Launch the implementation of the National Plan (till the end of 2018).
iv. Collect the necessary data, share information and stimulate partnerships on ESD among different actors. (starting from the end of 2018)

Priority Area 3 [Article 50]: Curricula and extra curricula activities should include and support ESD.

Recommended Activities:
i. Adopt appropriate "frameworks" (including legal, institutional, learning outcome, competences) for ESD at all levels of education, in all disciplines and subjects. (till the end of 2019)
ii. Integrate SD principles into the study programmes and introduce whenever necessary special courses at all levels of Higher Education. (till the end of 2020)
iii. Promote "Whole Institution Approach" (WIA)[*], improve the provision and management of education facilities towards SD. (till the end of 2020)
iv. Promote assessments of the impact of ESD programmes on learners' behaviours, employing appropriate methodologies

Priority Area 4 [Articles 52-53]: Professional development on SD and lifelong learning on SD to be promoted and enhanced.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2019):
i. Offer SD-related learning opportunities in education for professionals of all disciplines in relation to the efforts for achieving the SDGs and enhance their employability.
ii. Support community-based SD awareness raising activities, involving local regional (sub national) authorities, media, CSOs/NGOs, as well as formal educational institutions.

Priority Area 5 [Articles 54-55]: Professionals within the education sector to build capacities on ESD.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2019):
i. Provide pre-service ESD competence development opportunities for young educators and for staff involved in the education sector.

---

[*] *The whole-institution approach involves more than integrating sustainability in the curricula. It is a cohesive, collective and collaborative approach, implying that the whole educational institution including: curriculum and teaching/learning, campus management and "institution" culture (administration-leadership-teachers-students) recognizes diversity and promotes shared commitment to quality teaching and improving student achievements, as well as that the educational institution interacts with the local society. (UNESCO 2014).*

ii. Include ESD related issues in in-service training and re-training programmes for educators at all levels of education and for other stakeholders in the educational field (Directors, Inspectors, Counselors, etc.).

iii. Familiarize educators with the pedagogical approaches of ESD in the formal and non-formal context and all the interested parties of the school process with the theory and praxis of the "Whole Institution Approach". In this context educators should be provided with the interdependence and freedom to undertake initiatives and adopt interactive methodologies in their educational practices.

iv. Develop criteria for validating and recognition of professional competence in ESD.

The Educators Competences in ESD developed by the UNECE Expert Group (2011) should be considered.

Priority Area 6 [Articles 56-57]: Accessible materials for ESD at all levels need to be developed.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2019):

i. Ensure that adequate ESD materials and other resources for educators, youth workers, learners, young people and researchers for all levels of education and training are available and open for public use.

ii. Make use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for both learning and youth work purposes and for sharing information.

iii. Develop strategies for appropriate dissemination of ESD materials.

Priority Area 7 [Articles 58-60]: Interdisciplinary research on ESD should offer a continuing basis in further developing of ESD.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2019):

i. Promote research on the content of ESD, teaching and learning methods; youth work methods; the economic impacts/benefits of and incentives for ESD; indicators and evaluation instruments for ESD, involving in this activity non-education stakeholders i.e. enterprises, local authorities, youth and civil society associations, etc.

ii. Share the results of research with relevant actors locally, regionally and globally, incorporate the results into different parts of the education system and share examples of good practices.

Priority Area 8 [Articles 61-62]: Support cooperation on ESD at the regional level to review and facilitate the implementation of the Strategy.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2019):

Follow closely and synergise with international and regional processes (e.g. UNESCO/GAP, UfM, MSSD, SDGs), that could enhance the implementation of the MSESD and, in particular, through:
 i. the co-operation of the countries at regional level.
 ii. the active involvement of the Mediterranean region in contributing to the ESD agenda at global level.

Priority Area 9 [Article 64]: Regional and subregional forums that bring together members of the education community, such as civil servants, educators and researchers, and other relevant actors including youth and civil society actors to share their experience and good practices on SD- and ESD-related issues should receive high priority.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2021):

i. Reinforce international cooperation in the framework of the implementation of the MSESD and the National Plans.

ii. Utilise systematically ESD in supporting common activities of countries for the achievements of the SDGs at regional and subregional level.

iii. Elaborate and implement an appropriate high level information/training programme on SD challenges and opportunities in the Mediterranean targeting decision makers, parliamentarians, national and local authorities, administrators, leadership in the private sector, the media, etc.

Priority Area 10 [Article 65]: (till the end of 2021)
The complex nature of ESD requires that, in addition to the education community, other relevant international actors be involved for enhancing SD related knowledge and skills of professionals and decision makers.

Recommended Activities (till the end of 2021):
Actively involve international/regional organisations, Chambers of crucial sectors, e.g. Tourism, Agriculture, Water, and organisations representing Parliamentarians, Municipal Councils, youth organisations, etc., to work in partnership with the countries and other stakeholders contributing to, benefiting from and promoting the implementation of the MSESD.

Priority Area 11 [Article 66]: Experiences and needs vary in different parts of the Mediterranean region. Subregional cooperation needs to be strengthened.

Recommended Activities:
Subregional programmes such as those related to: 5+5 for the Western Mediterranean subregion on Water, the Ionian-Adriatic initiative, etc., need to develop or synergise with educational components. Also the already labelled under the UfM "Blue-Green Med Project" with partnership of several regional CSOs under the UfM needs to be supported and implemented (till the end of 2019). Exchange and share the good practices in ESD produced by the aforementioned processes.

Priority Area 12 [Articles 67-68]: Continuous assessment of the ESD needs in different subregions is required. Some of their problems are lack of adequate teaching and awareness materials, the inefficient use of the capacity of higher education and research institutions, the shortage of skilled educators and insufficient awareness raising as well as a lack of interdepartmental and multi-stakeholder cooperation on ESD.

Recommended Activities:
i. Reinforce the production of ESD materials in cooperation with UNESCO, and other regional competent bodies and organisations. (till the end of 2019)
ii. Strengthen existing regional and subregional alliances and networks working on ESD and encourage twinning programmes, bilateral cooperation and partnerships; peer-to-peer capacity building. (till the end of 2019)
iii. Use, as appropriate, other relevant agreements to raise awareness of SD; facilitate the sharing of good practices and experiences on innovation and information of national experiences and projects in development cooperation on ESD-related issues, e.g. by using ICT tools the Internet and social media; include ESD in relevant bilateral and multilateral programmes; encourage the participation of NGOs and other major groups in international cooperation on ESD; encourage and coordinate international events for SD-awareness raising; and encourage the sharing of experience. (till the end of 2020)

B. Proposed Regional Programmes

The Action Plan includes the following set of identified common regional 'institutional' (non-thematic) programmes, some either existing and some new/proposed, that could help the countries not only to raise awareness on environment and SD, on key for the region topics,

but also as tools to create the necessary 'enabling' environment in order to achieve various SDGs. The proposed programmes should be open to all countries and stakeholders of the region and could be developed and implemented by making systematic use of the existing opportunities and programmes provided by UNESCO, the EU, UNEP, etc. and of the existing networking schemes among Schools, Universities, Educational Centres, CSOs/NGOs, etc.

1. Programme for the promotion of the Whole Institution Approach in at least 50% of the schools of each country based on three-year ESD school plans involving all classes and available means (e.g. including application of Non Conventional Water Resources, increasing the energy efficiency of schools through various means, waste management, school gardens, alternative transportation, health nutrition, promotion of dialogue, consensus and respect of different opinions, promoting action and change at school and in the community, active relationship with the school neighborhood and local society, participatory school governance, students' participation in decision formulation, parents' involvement in projects, projects/activities on SDGs making links of local relevance, projects with farmers, professionals, SCP initiatives, etc.)

2. School Twinnings Programme for primary and secondary education levels between different countries of the region.

3. Programme to mobilise youth activities including activities of youth associations and programmes supported by national and local authorities.

4. Programme for supporting joint projects among Schools, Local Authorities, Private Sector and NGOs (CSOs) of the Mediterranean region (North – South, South-South) on ESD.

5. Programme for enhancing the linkage between outdoor education, ESD and specially designated areas (e.g. Biosphere Reserves, Protected Areas) with an emphasis on training activities and regional/sub-regional summer schools/universities, etc.

6. "Peer-to-peer" Capacity Building Programme for school teachers and/or staff of Ministries of Education, etc. within e.g. an extended SWIM-Horizon2020 Support Mechanism.

7. Programme on ESD inclusion in Higher Education, particularly at the post-graduate level.

8. Programmes supporting Exchanges on ESD among Educational Institutions of the Mediterranean region (like the Erasmus+ for the EU).

9. Programme on common e-learning courses on SD/ESD among Mediterranean Universities.

10. Programme aiming at the promotion and adoption of ESD Charters by Higher Education Institutions based on the Whole Institution Approach (e.g. curricula reform including or reinforcing basic courses on SD in the Mediterranean).

11. Post-graduate programmes among Mediterranean Universities for joint Master Degrees on ESD/SD issues.

12. Programme on Research on ESD involving Higher Education and Research Institutes and Centres from the entire Euro-Mediterranean region.

13. Programme for the enhancement of cooperation on ESD by strengthening and expanding the regional Networks working on ESD.

14. Supporting Programmes for Regional cooperation on the adult education sector and life-long learning.

15. Creation of an Association of Mediterranean Training Centres with competences on ESD.

16. Programme covering different aspects of ESD in view of the extreme importance of the refugee and migration crisis evolving in the Mediterranean addressing (a) refugees and migrants with emphasis on children, (b) the host communities, (c) vocational trainings.

17. Capacity Building Programme for Media/Journalists dealing with awareness raising on ESD issues.

C. Priority thematic issues for ESD in the Mediterranean region

The priority thematic issues regarding ESD which regional programmes and activities shall target, either independently or as cross-cutting issues, are listed below together with some relevant key international and regional potential partners.

1. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation building on the guidelines issued by UNESCO and UNFCCC | UN Alliance on Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness Secretariat of UNFCCC; GWP-Med ; UfM

2. Alternative Energy Sources; Energy footprint | UN-Energy ; UfM

3. Biodiversity; Sustainable management of Protected Areas; Ecosystem services | UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme; International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD); WWF; BirdLife International

4. Land erosion and desertification | UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

5. Cultural Diversity, Heritage and the values it carries, with due attention to the importance of native languages and indigenous traditions| UNESCO; The Euro-Mediterranean Anna Lindh Foundation for the dialogue between cultures; MIO-ECSDE

6. Empowerment of Women and Youth | The Euro-Mediterranean Anna Lindh Foundation for the dialogue between cultures; UN Population Fund; UN Women; UfM

7. Integrated Water Resources Management; Non Conventional Water Resources (NCWRs) | Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med); UfM

8. Marine Resources; Blue/Green Economy; Fisheries; Marine litter; Integrated Coastal Zone Management | UNEP-MAP; The follow-up to the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership)

9. Migration and Refugees Crisis - direct and indirect impacts including rights of displaced populations | The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR); ALF

10. Peace / Conflict resolution and promotion of spirit of tolerance, co-existence, away from religious and cultural fundamentalism | UNESCO; the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR); ALF

11. Public Participation in planning and decision making on Sustainable Development issues | Aarhus Convention; MIO-ECSDE; RAED

12. Sustainable cities; Urban environment | Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI); MedCities; GWP-Med ; UfM;ALF

13. Sustainable Consumption and Production patterns, | UNEP 10 Year Framework Programme/Global Action on SCR; UNEP-MAP SCP-RAC

14. Waste Management; Life Cycle of Products; Recycling | UNEP-MAP SCP-RAC; SWEEP Net

15. Sustainable Tourism | Sustainable Tourism Programme of the UNEP 10 Year Framework Programme on SCR

16. Private Sector and Public Private Synergies for SD (e.g. Corporate Social Responsibility-CSR) | OECD; GWP; UfM

D. Proposed Indicators of progress, monitoring and reporting

Consistent with Article 70 of the MSESD, Ministers, at relevant regional Conferences (UfM, MCSD, UNESCO, etc.) on Education, Environment, Sustainable Development, etc., may wish to include sessions, discuss and report progress on the implementation of the MSESD.

The following initial set of indicators to monitor the MSESD's progress and to serve also reporting purposes are proposed. They will be further enriched and elaborated in line with developments at Mediterranean and Global level.

INDICATOR 1. Number of countries that have launched national strategies on ESD.
Deriving from the "Mediterranean Sustainability Dashboard" (under development) that will be used for monitoring the progress of implementation of the MSSD (2016-2015)

INDICATOR 2. Extent to which (i) Global Citizenship Education and (ii) Education for Sustainable Development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed in
(a) national education policies
(b) curricula
(c) teacher education
(d) student assessment

This can be derived from the global indicators (under development) for SDG 4.7. Guidelines for the assessment of the components of the indicator could eventually be deduced from the UNECE Indicators on ESD already used by some of the Mediterranean countries (http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/01_Typo3site/LearningFromEachOther.pdf)

INDICATOR 3. Percentage of students by age group (or level of education) showing adequate understanding of issues relating to global citizenship and sustainability. This can be derived from the thematic indicators (under development) for SDG 4.7

INDICATOR 4. Extent to which regional/international cooperation on ESD is strengthened within the Mediterranean region, and more specifically:
(a) The public authorities that cooperate in or support international networks on ESD (Yes/No and list of networks)
(b) The educational institutions/organisations (formal and non-formal) in the countries that participate in international networks related to ESD (Yes/No and list of networks)
(c) Existence of State, bilateral and/or multilateral cooperation mechanisms/agreements that include an explicit ESD component (Yes/No and list of mechanisms/agreements)
(d) Steps taken by the Government to promote ESD in international forums outside the region (Y/N and list of initiatives)
Deriving from the UNECE Indicators on ESD

VI. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES and FINANCING

1. Consistent with Articles 71 to 77 of the MSESD, it is reaffirmed that the implementation of the Action Plan is primarily the responsibility of the Governments and the Authorities designated for the implementation of Educational Policies of each country. Because of the multi- and inter-disciplinary nature of ESD, other Ministries, Agencies, organisations and stakeholders should be encouraged to support ESD initiatives and collaborate in the design, support and implementation of ESD programmes beyond the schooling system, recognising ESD interventions as important components of management and professional development of various sectors including health, industry, tourism, agriculture, financing, trade, construction and media. To facilitate coordinated approaches, countries are encouraged to appoint an Officer/Focal Point responsible for ESD in every Ministry of Education.

2. For the MSESD and its Action Plan to substantially contribute to the sustainable future of the Mediterranean, ensuring adequate funding for ESD is an important precondition. Although, as stated in Article 75 of the MSESD, the cost of its implementation should, in principle, be borne by each country in coordination with other investments for Education,

ESD should be supported also from additional budgets and funds dedicated to the achievement of the SDGs, beyond SDG 4 and contributions by donors. Similarly countries facing serious refugee flows should be assisted in dealing with ESD for refugees and host communities.

3. The proposed regional activities and programmes (V.B and V.C) require adequate funding. International Organisations and Agencies, the EU, Foundations and private donors should include the Priority Areas and themes in their budget programming and their calls for proposals. At the same time, systematic efforts should be made to include ESD components in relevant bilateral and multilateral development/aid programmes, including with the EU, considering investment in ESD as a genuine development activity. The establishment of a specialised ESD Fund may be considered.

4. A Mediterranean Committee for ESD is to be established for following up and promoting the implementation of the MSESD and its Action Plan. The Committee will collaborate closely with the Global Action Programme (GAP) for ESD of UNESCO, the European Union, the League of the Arab States, the Secretariat of the Union of the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) (facilitated by UNEP/MAP) for pursuing its tasks. Ministries of Education and other Ministries responsible for Environment and Sustainable Development of all countries of the region or their appointed representatives will be eligible to participate. Relevant international / regional (Mediterranean) organisations/stakeholders will also participate in its works. The Committee could set up focus groups to work on specific issues such as one on ESD indicators. The MEdIES Secretariat and the UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean by the University of Athens will be requested to continue their facilitating secretariat and scientifically advisory role under the guidance of the Committee.