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International Association of Universities (IAU) and the priority HESD - Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development

The International Association of Universities has fostered sustainable development for more than 25 years. In 1993, the Association adopted the *IAU Kyoto Declaration on Sustainable Development*, urging the higher education leaders and the HE community to engage with sustainable development. In 2014, the IAU adopted the *Iquitos Statement on HESD*, urging to connect knowledge and research systems from around the world. This latest Statement was one of the many IAU contributions to the UNESCO Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (UN-DESD, 2004 – 2015) and used by UNESCO for the Aichi Nagoya End of Decade Conference.

IAU was one of the key partners of the UNESCO Global Action Programme on education for sustainable development (GAP-ESD), and lead partner network for the steering committee of Partner Network 2 and now in the UNESCO ESD for 2030 programme. Since November 2019, IAU sits on the advisory board for the UNESCO *Futures of Education Initiative* and contributes to the *UNESCO Global Education Coalition* by monitoring and assisting higher education around the world to continue to provide quality education and research and to pursue the much needed community engagement activities during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. IAU participates in UN High Level Events, such as the HLPF (2019,2020).

With the adoption of the UN Resolution “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” in September 2015, the international community strongly confirmed the expanded scope of sustainable development to include social, economic and cultural sustainability. IAU shares the concerns and fosters, in particular, the importance of cultural diversity, the need for strong connection between research cultures from around the world and equal access to quality education and research opportunities.

Over the last two years, IAU developed a new richly diverse and intercultural project engaging Higher Education into the UN Agenda 2030 process, by fostering attention and work specifically on the SDGs: ***The IAU Global Cluster on Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development (HESD)***. The Cluster brings together Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from around the world and on equal terms, in order to jointly address the SDGs and enhance partnerships.



The IAU Global Cluster on HESD

The Cluster consists of 16 lead universities, each engaging more specifically on one of the SDGs, while connecting to the other SDGs as well. IAU leads the work on SDG 17 by fostering global HE partnerships. The lead universities, from all world regions, collaborate with 2 to 8 ‘satellite’ institutions, engage with a particular SDG and initiate concrete projects, also across all goals. Furthermore, the Cluster promotes the role and potential that HEIs globally have in order to achieve the SDGs and Agenda 2030. Universities engage with the SDGs in multiple ways, through teaching, research, leadership, and campus operations. The Cluster facilitates collaboration and a whole institution approach to the SDGs.

Within the overarching goal of “Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (UN SDG Summit 2019), the Cluster has two concrete objectives:

First, to serve as a **resource and networking hub** both for institutions already engaged in SD and moving more strongly to help address the SDGs locally and seeking innovative partnerships around the world, and for those starting to engage with the SDGs at their institutions. They turn to the Cluster for collaboration and guidance on best practices to advance on the SDGs in local, national and international contexts.

Second, the IAU Global Cluster serves as a **global voice for higher education and sustainable development**. IAU advocates for HESD at the UN, in particular at the High-Level-Political Forum, at IAU global Conferences, at Member workshops and other initiatives developed at the local and the regional level.

Current Activities

Since the IAU international Cluster workshop hosted at UNESCO in 2019, thanks in part to support received through the UNESCO Participation Programme (2018-19), the IAU Global Cluster on HESD and its Subclusters have been very active and developed **joint projects** in teaching, research, publications, events and more. The IAU **HESD communication channels**, mainly the IAU main website, the IAU Global HESD Portal, Twitter account and Blog have gained increased attention within but also beyond the Higher Education sector. IAU Cluster Member co-organize or are guest speakers in the **IAU Webinar Series**, with three webinars planned in fall 2020 on Sustainable Development.

IAU takes part in the UN **High Level Political Forum** debates. In July 2019, IAU brought 18 Cluster lead representatives to the HLPF 2019 in New York and advocated strongly and successfully for better recognition of the role of HE in the UN 2030 Agenda implementation processes. The participation in the UN Forum reinforced the visibility of the IAU Global HESD Cluster and reaffirmed the position of higher education as a key stakeholder to reach the goals set in the UN Agenda 2030. At the **IAU 2019 International Conference** in Mexico, the Cluster work was presented, and the UN and UNESCO work highlighted. At the virtual HLPF 2020, IAU co-organized five official events with its Members and partners and stressed the important role of Higher Education for the SDGs. More information **on IAU at the HLPF 2020** can be found here: <https://iau-aiu.net/HESD?onglet=3>

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IAU Global Cluster activities are continued thanks to a swift move to online debates and collaboration. The Cluster Leads joined in a **Global Cluster Leads’ Call** in late March 2020 to discuss projects, challenges and opportunities to reaffirm the importance of the SDGs and SD in its full definition, especially in the current context. The Cluster reports regularly on its activities, and cooperation projects within or between Subclusters take place. Furthermore, the IAU developed a communication strategy for the project and resources for the Cluster members to use. A **next Global Cluster Lead’s Call is planned for November 2020**. A Cluster workshop and in-person meeting facilitated by the UNESCO Participation Programme (2020-21) in spring 2020 is envisaged but will depend on developments of travel and health conditions.

IAU Global HESD Cluster Lead Institutions

List with Satellites (universities in Subclusters) can be found here: <https://www.iau-hesd.net/en/contenu/4648-iau-global-cluster-hesd.html>:

SDG	Lead University	Country
SDG 1: No Poverty	Ghana University	Ghana
SDG 2: Zero Hunger	Antonio Nariño University	Colombia
SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	UOC	Spain
SDG 4: Quality Education	York University	Canada
SDG 5: Gender Equality	University of Bologna	Italy
SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	University of Tehran	Iran
SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	Assam Don Bosco University	India
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Gothenburg University	Sweden
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	Beirut Arab University	Lebanon
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	University of Tsukuba	Japan
SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	Siam University	Thailand
SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	University of Regina/Luther College	Canada
SDG 13: Climate Action	University of the West Indies	Jamaica

SDG 14: Life Below Water	University of Bergen	Norway
SDG 15: Life on Land	University of Costa Rica	Costa Rica
SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	University of Nairobi	Kenya
SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals	International Association of Universities (IAU)	Based in France but global in scope



THE IAU'S CLUSTER ON HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

- ADVOCATE** for the key role higher education plays in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030.
- FOSTER** a holistic and transformative approach to sustainable development at higher education institutions.
- BRING TOGETHER** universities from around the world on an equal footing and create meeting points with policy-makers for them

STRUCTURE

The work on each of the 17 SDGs is coordinated by an IAU Member, collaborating with satellite institutions that have expertise on the SDG. This structure ensures the diversity of voices and a cultural exchange.

ACTIONS

- DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS** to inform decision-making at institutions and the policy level;
- ACT AS A RESOURCE** of best practices to translate and advance SDGs in local, national and international contexts;
- FOSTER PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING**, collaboration and exchange among universities and other stakeholders.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES

IAU leads the work on SDG17 by building synergies among higher education stakeholders, promoting their role in Agenda 2030 and making the science-policy interface stronger at international events (UN High-Level Political Forum, UNESCO, etc.)

THE IAU GLOBAL HESD CLUSTER LEADERS AND THEIR SATELLITES (as of May 2020)

1 NO POVERTY	University of Ghana Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, Japan McMaster University, Canada UNICAMP, Brazil	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	Beirut Arab University, Lebanon
2 ZERO HUNGER	Antonio Nariño University, Colombia	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	University of Tsukuba, Japan The University of Maribor, Slovenia The University of Carthage, Tunisia City University of Hong Kong
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	The Open University of Catalonia Karolinska Institutet, Sweden University College Dublin, Ireland Makerere University, Uganda Universidad de Caldas, Colombia Western Sydney University, Australia Cadjá Mada University, Indonesia	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	Siam University, Thailand J.F. Oberlin University, Japan Tokai University, Japan University of Surabaya (UBAYA), Indonesia Durban University of Technology (DUT), South Africa American International University, Bangladesh (AIUB)
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	York University, Canada Eauphanna University of Lüneburg, Germany Charles University, Czech Republic Rhodes University, South Africa International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia University for Peace, Costa Rica	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	Luther College, University of Regina, Canada Moi University, Kenya Vechta University, Germany Universidad del Bosque, Colombia Pontifical Catholic University of Peru Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
5 GENDER EQUALITY	University of Bologna, Italy Assam Don Bosco University, India Universitat Oberta de Catalunya Universität Vechta, Germany McMaster University, Canada Universidade Estadual Paulista, Brazil	13 CLIMATE ACTION	The University of the West Indies SUNY, USA University of Bergen, Norway TERI School of Advanced Studies, India University of the South Pacific, Fiji University of Waterloo, Canada Universidad de los Andes, Colombia University of Witwatersrand, South Africa University of Aruba, Aruba University of Bristol, United Kingdom University of Ghana
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	University of Tehran, Iran University of Granada, Spain University of Barcelona, Spain University of Queensland, Australia Universidad Antonio Nariño, Colombia Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia	14 LIFE BELOW WATER	University of Bergen, Norway The University of the South Pacific, Fiji University of Cape Town, South Africa The University of Tokyo, Japan Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Germany The University of the West Indies, Jamaica
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	Assam Don Bosco University, India Qatar University, Qatar Strathmore University, Kenya	15 LIFE ON LAND	University of Costa Rica
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	University of Gothenburg, Sweden Makerere University, Uganda Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia University of Nigeria, Nigeria University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania University of Nairobi, Kenya University of Concepción, Chile Universidad de los Andes, Colombia University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	University of Nairobi, Kenya University of Copenhagen, Denmark James Madison University, USA University of Tokyo, Japan

MORE INFORMATION: WWW.IAU-HESD.NET / CONTACT: CONTACT@IAU-HESD.NET

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