



INFLUENCING SYSTEMIC CHANGE: FEE AND THE GREENING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
GUIMARÃES, EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL, 22 JANUARY 2026





ECO-CAMPUS EVOLUTION

A NEW PROGRAMME FOR FEE



Who we are...

- Established in 1981, the **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)** is one of the world's largest environmental education organisations
- Over 100 member organisations in 81 countries.
- Our educational programmes, **Eco-Schools**, **Learning about Ecosystems and Forests (LEAF)**, **Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE)** and the recently formalized **Eco-Campus**, empower young people to create an environmentally conscious world through a solutions-based approach.
- Our **Green Key** and **Blue Flag** programmes are globally recognised for promoting sustainable business practices and the protection of natural resources.





What is Eco-Schools?

Over 30 years, the Eco-Schools programme has grown into one of the largest educational networks championing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Climate Change Education across the globe.

Delivering GreenComp domains of:

- Values & ethics;
- Embracing complexity;
- Envisioning sustainable futures;
- Acting for sustainability



What is an
Eco-School?



Eco-Schools



Take our free short course to learn more:

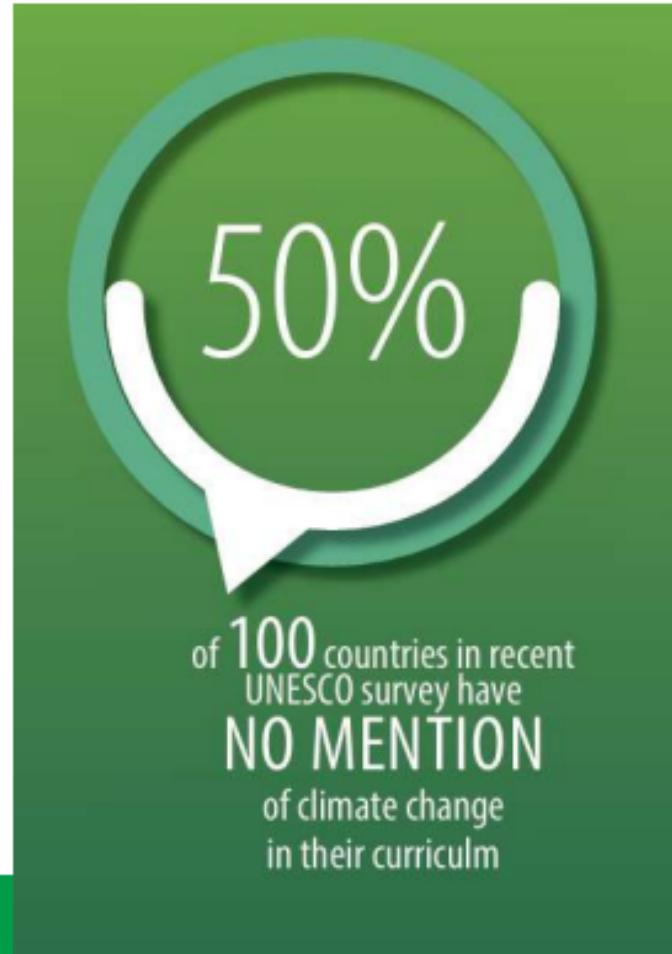


WWW.ECOSCHOOLS.GLOBAL



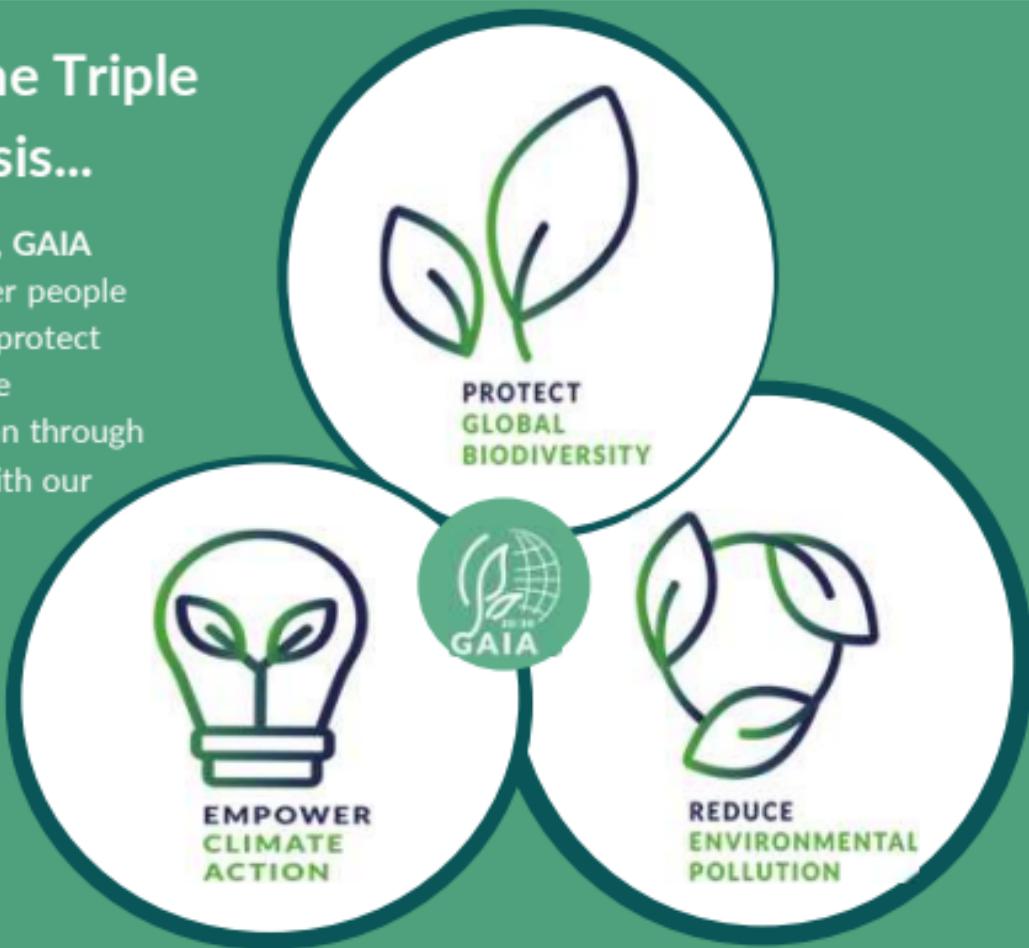
The need for Global Mobilisation:

- If it is not in the curriculum, it is not examined.
- If it is not examined, is it important?
- Congruence matters – what we say must equate with what we do!



Addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis...

FEE's 10-year strategy, GAIA 20:30, aims to empower people to take climate action, protect biodiversity, and reduce environmental pollution through ESD in collaboration with our members and partners worldwide.



The Roadmap to Greening Education (1)

Built on a **Whole Institution Approach**, GEP drives transformation across four pillars:

FEE is proud to support UNESCO as co-coordinator of Pillar One on Greening Schools and coordinator of the Higher Education working group. Both YRE and Global Action Days are recommended best practice for Pillar Four.



Greening schools

From early childhood through adult education, work to ensure that all schools achieve green school accreditation, including teacher training and higher education

Greening curriculum

Embrace lifelong learning approach that integrates climate education into school curricula, technical and vocational education, workplace skills development, teaching materials, pedagogy, and assessment



Four action areas of transformative education



Greening teacher training and education systems' capacities

Strengthen education systems to be climate-smart with adequate measures, and ensure teachers and policymakers are trained in school accreditation, including teacher training and higher education.

Greening communities

Strengthen community resilience by integrating climate education into lifelong learning, with a focus on empowering and mobilizing young individuals, community centers, and learning cities to take action on climate change.



The Roadmap to Greening Education (2)

Built on a Whole Institution Approach, GEP drives transformation across four pillars:



Target



Greening Schools

All countries will have adopted a green school accreditation scheme with at least 50% schools, colleges, and universities with green accreditation and operating sustainably by 2030.



Greening Curriculum

The number of countries which include climate education in school curricula at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels will have at least doubled from the current 45% by 2030



Greening teacher training

All school leaders and at least one teacher per school will have been trained on how to integrate climate education into teaching and learning throughout the school by 2030.



Greening Communities

All countries will be able to report at least three different ways learning opportunities are made available for adults outside the formal education system to develop the skills, attitudes, and actions that will foster community resilience to tackle climate change by 2030.

The earth's average global temperature

has risen by 1.4°C, with most of the warming occurring in the past 35 years.

While 95% of surveyed primary and secondary teachers

felt that teaching climate change is important, less than 30% expressed a readiness to teach it.

Around half of the 100 countries reviewed

had no mention of climate change in their national curriculum, UNESCO findings reveal.

70% of young people cannot explain climate change

or can only explain its broad principles, or do not know anything about it.

The Target:



At least
50%
of schools in every country greened
by 2030



Education Challenge 6.1
Integrate ecosystem restoration education into global education by 2030

In Europe:

- **94% of EU citizens** say that protecting the environment matters personally to them.
- **Six in 10 young people** globally are “very” or “extremely” worried about climate change.
- Many young people consider that **education and training is failing to prepare them** to tackle climate change, protect the environment and live and act more sustainably.
- **3 in 4** respondents to the EU Commission’s public survey ranked education and training as the most important sector to help people understand and take action on climate change and the environmental crises.



over 70%

of young people feel hopeless in the face of the climate crisis

Climate Anxiety amongst young people

What is Climate anxiety?

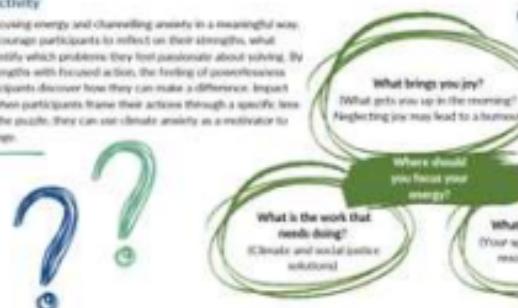
Climate anxiety is a response to the climate crisis, encompassing feelings of overwhelm, anger and powerlessness when facing issues such as biodiversity loss and climate tipping points. Although it can feel paralysing, climate anxiety often

Climate anxiety and the Eco-Schools Seven-Steps framework

Anxiety → Agency

Lead a reflection activity

This activity is about focusing energy and channelling anxiety in a meaningful way. This process should encourage participants to reflect on their strengths, what brings them joy and identify which problems they feel passionate about solving. By connecting personal strengths with focused actions, the feeling of powerlessness can be reduced as participants discover how they can make a difference. Impact grows through focus: when participants frame their actions through a specific lens and find their piece of the puzzle, they can use climate anxiety as a motivator to initiate meaningful change.



As well as the Triple Education Crisis...



'Education confronts a dramatic triple crisis: a crisis of equity and inclusion, as millions are out of school; a crisis of quality, as many of those who are in school are not even learning the basics; and a crisis of relevance, as many educational systems are not equipping the new generations with the values, knowledge, and skills they need to thrive in today's complex world'.

UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, Transforming Education Summit, Sept 2022

Behaviour Change Crisis



Figure 1. Rare's Levers of Behavior Change Framework (Rare, 2020)

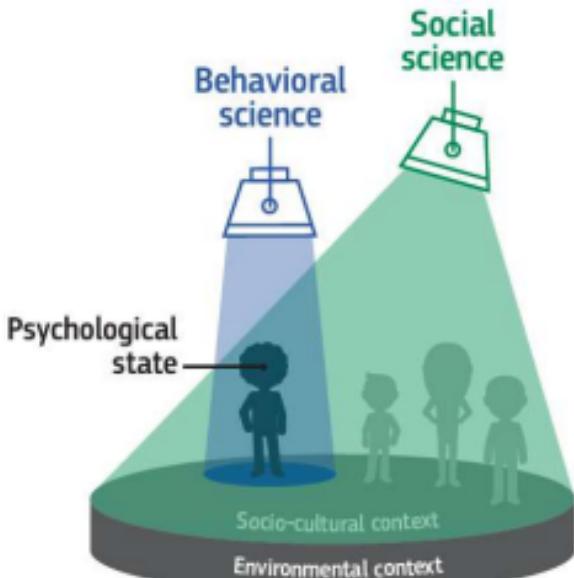


Figure 2. The interaction of behavioral and social science in understanding human behavior. Behavioral science focuses on understanding an actor's psychological state, whereas social science focuses on understanding the socio-cultural context for that actor. Both are necessary for understanding an actor's behavior within a given environmental context. Changes to the socio-cultural context, environmental context, or actor's behavior create feedback loops with one another.

Figures from Rare-GEF_Science-of-changing-behavior-introduction.pdf

Considering the Implications

Perspective	Consumer	Citizen
Core question	What do I want?	What do we need?
Main relationship	Market / system of exchange	Community / system of belonging
Expression of agency	Choice	Responsibility
Measure of success	Satisfaction, efficiency	Justice, participation
Time horizon	Immediate	Generational

A continuum of participation



Each step widens the circle of awareness





Working to achieve global agendas for ESD and Quality Education by 2030



SDG 4.7 Quality Education:
Ensuring all learners gain
knowledge and skills to promote
sustainable development.



SGD 13.3 Climate Action:
Enhancing education, awareness
and capacity on climate change
mitigation and adaptation.

FEE ECO- SCHOOLS' GLOBAL ESD IMPACT



The **whole-school approach**
highlights that embedding
ESD holistically across the
curriculum fosters
systemic change

>52.5K
Eco-Schools
In 101 countries follow a
Project-Based
Seven-Step
Framework,
driving Greening
Education and creating
lasting change in their
schools and whole
communities!



FEE's GREENING EDUCATION IMPACT IN 2025



Over 52,500 schools globally working on the GEP aligned Eco-Schools Seven Steps in 79 countries with schools in a further 22 countries being directly supported by FEE HQ.



Over 50% of schools have already adopted the Eco-Schools programme in 7 countries (Malta, Mauritius, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Ireland)!

50%



Global Action Days is also featured as a best practice for Greening Communities with 664,000 participants from 4,390 settings across 145 countries taking part.



Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) featured as a best practice for Greening Communities with 300,000 young people taking local action in 43 countries.

GLOBAL PROGRESS FOR GEP IN 2026



97 countries and
over 1,900
organisations
are now part of the
Greening Education
Partnership



96,000 schools in
93 countries are
green schools
according to the
Green school quality
standard



The Green school
quality standard
aims to transform
50% schools
into green schools in
all countries by 2030

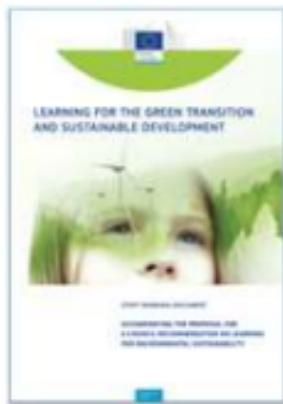
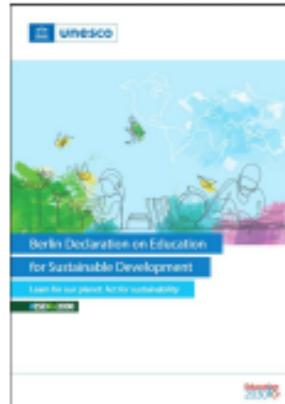


Education
currently receives
less than 2% of
total climate
finance
a gap that must be
closed if we are to
scale education's
contribution to climate
resilience



Partnering global agendas for ESD and Quality Education by 2030

FEE's 10-year strategy, **GAIA 20:30**, aims to empower people to take climate action, protect biodiversity, and reduce environmental pollution through ESD in collaboration with our members and partners worldwide.





Established in 1996 the Eco-Schools programme in Portugal has **2,254 out of 10,000** schools registered on the Eco-Schools programme – almost 25% of the GEP Pillar One target!



66 Higher Education Institutions are working to integrate ESD in a whole institution approach via Eco-Campus



[YRE Global Competition](#) winners: 2nd Place in the One Take Photo Category with 'Controlling the Ice Plant at Fursdouro Beach'; 3rd Place in the Photo Story Category with ' Scouts Plant Trees for a Sustainable Future'



Global Action Days 2025: **19,815** participants from Portuguese kindergartens, primary and secondary schools and universities took part in 5 actions linked to Ecosystem Restoration

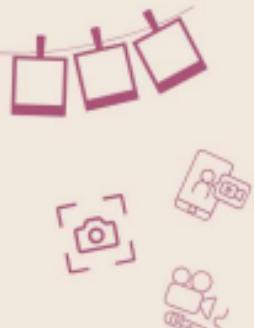
REGISTER NOW FOR
GLOBAL ACTION DAYS 2026



Help make a difference!

GLOBAL
ACTION
DAYS





2025-2026

YRE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

Food security & climate change.



Reach your national GEP targets with FEE

Aligned scheme



Eco-Schools
with 30 years
experience in
fostering a whole-
school approach
with internationally
recognised Green
Flag standard of
Excellence in ESD

Handbooks and resources



Global Community of Practice



Best practices for Greening Communities



Young Reporters
for the environment
25 YEARS
1994 - 2019

**GLOBAL
ACTION
DAYS**

