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Action-oriented pedagogies: Promoting ESD through experiential learning

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#ESDfor2030



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SOCIAL

Gender Equity
Human Rights
Cultural Diversity
Non-Violence
Non-Discrimination
Intercultural Understanding
Respect for Local Communities

Global Citizenship
Media and Information Literacy
Peace
Equity
Democracy

ESD

Inclusion
Poverty

Responsible consumption

Post-carbon economies

Sustainable economies

Renewable energy

ECONOMIC

Climate Change

Pollution

Climate Justice
Ocean conservation

Respect for nature

Forest conservation

Biodiversity

Greening

ENVIRONMENTAL



Path from Knowledge to Action

Traditional education often stops at awareness.
ESD and outdoor learning help learners go further.



*"The sustainability crisis is not fundamentally an information problem.
It is a capability, values and action problem."*



Empowering people
to change the way
they think and act
towards a
sustainable future.

What is Education for Sustainable Development?

- reorients education to empower learners of all ages to act for **environmental integrity, economic viability** and a more **equitable society**.
 - gives learners the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to address interconnected global challenges
-
- ✓ Is a lifelong learning process
 - ✓ Is an integral part of quality education
 - ✓ Enhances the cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioral dimensions of learning
 - ✓ Encompasses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment itself.
 - ✓ Should lead to transformation of society towards a more just and sustainable one as well as education to become more relevant

"Learning to act for people and planet."





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SCAN ME



ESD for 2030 - From Individual Lessons to System Transformation

Five Priority Action Areas



Advancing policy



Transforming learning environments



Building capacity of educators



Empowering and mobilizing youth



Accelerating local level action



What to learn? Learning domains, capacities and competencies

A holistic approach to ESD activates the **cognitive**, **socio-emotional** and **behavioural learning domains** (“head, heart, and hands”)



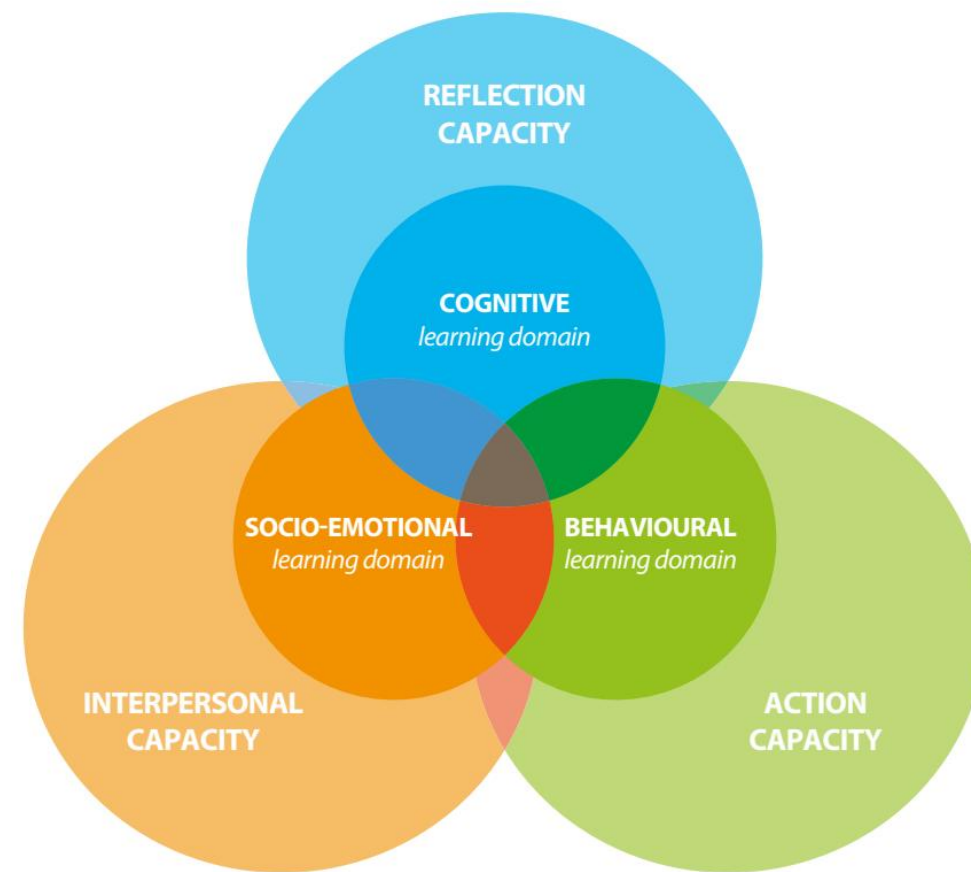
Cognitive learning: addresses the learner’s intellectual abilities, i.e. thinking and reasoning (*Knowledge & thinking skills*)



Socio-emotional learning: relates to their self-awareness and emotional regulation, as well as their ability to communicate and interact with other (*Social skills*)



Behavioural learning: is about the learner’s ability to act in pre-thought and pre-determined ways that serve the purpose of those behaviours and actions, as well as taking corrective measures (*Action competencies*)



Key competencies for sustainability

Collaboration

- Working across disciplines
- Working across cultures

Systems Thinking

- Seeing connections
- Understanding interdependence
- Managing complexity

Self-awareness

- Understanding one's role and responsibility

Normative

- Exploring ethics
- Examining values
- Navigating trade-offs

Critical Thinking

- Questioning assumptions, evaluating evidence

Anticipatory/futures thinking

- Anticipating change
- Imagining alternatives
- Preparing for uncertainty

Strategic

- Designing solutions
- Taking informed action

Integrated problem-solving

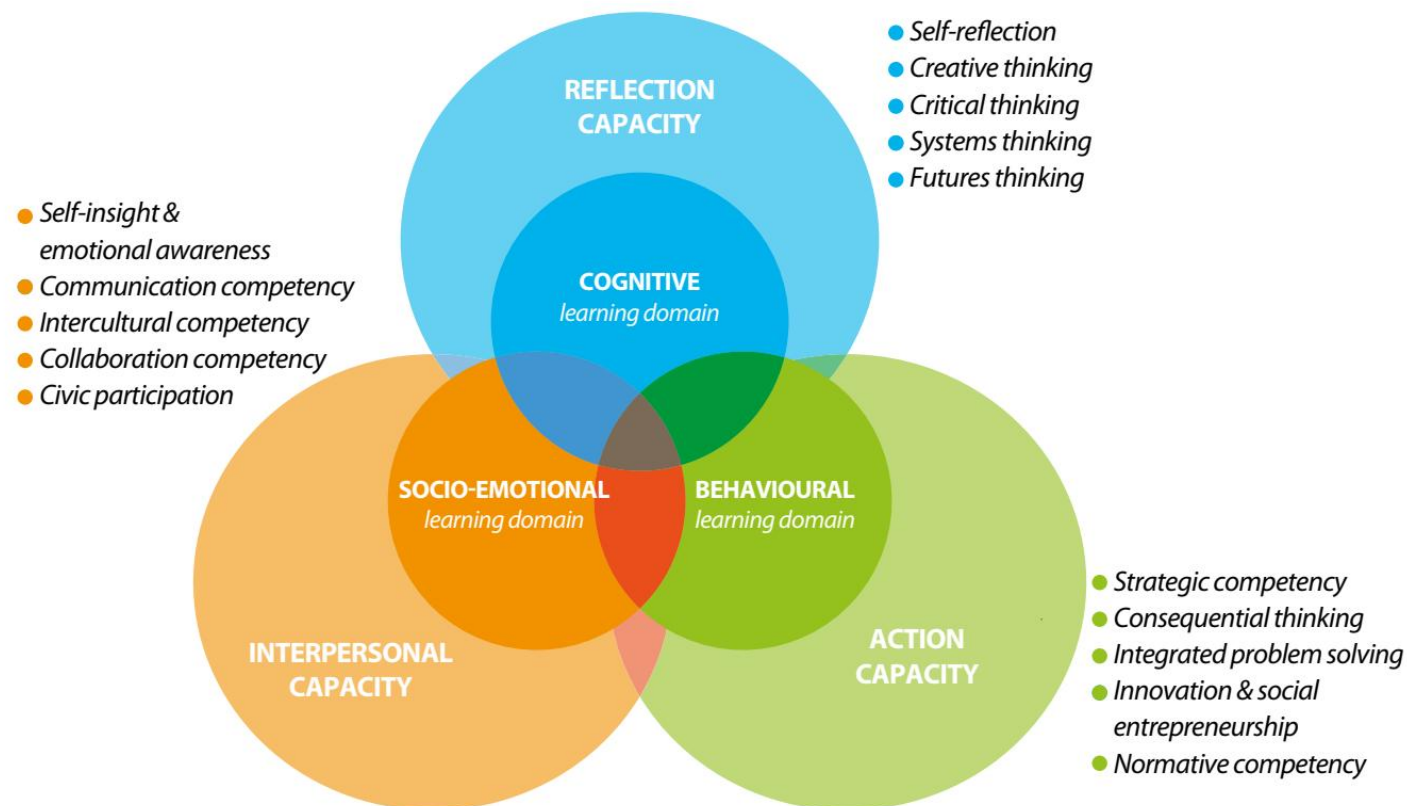
- apply different knowledge, perspectives, values
- address complex real-world challenges

Key sustainability competencies

Sustainability competencies sit at the intersection of cognitive, social, emotional, ethical and action-oriented capabilities

Address cognitive, social-emotional learning and taking action

Allow for contextualized, emphasizing the relevance of local knowledge

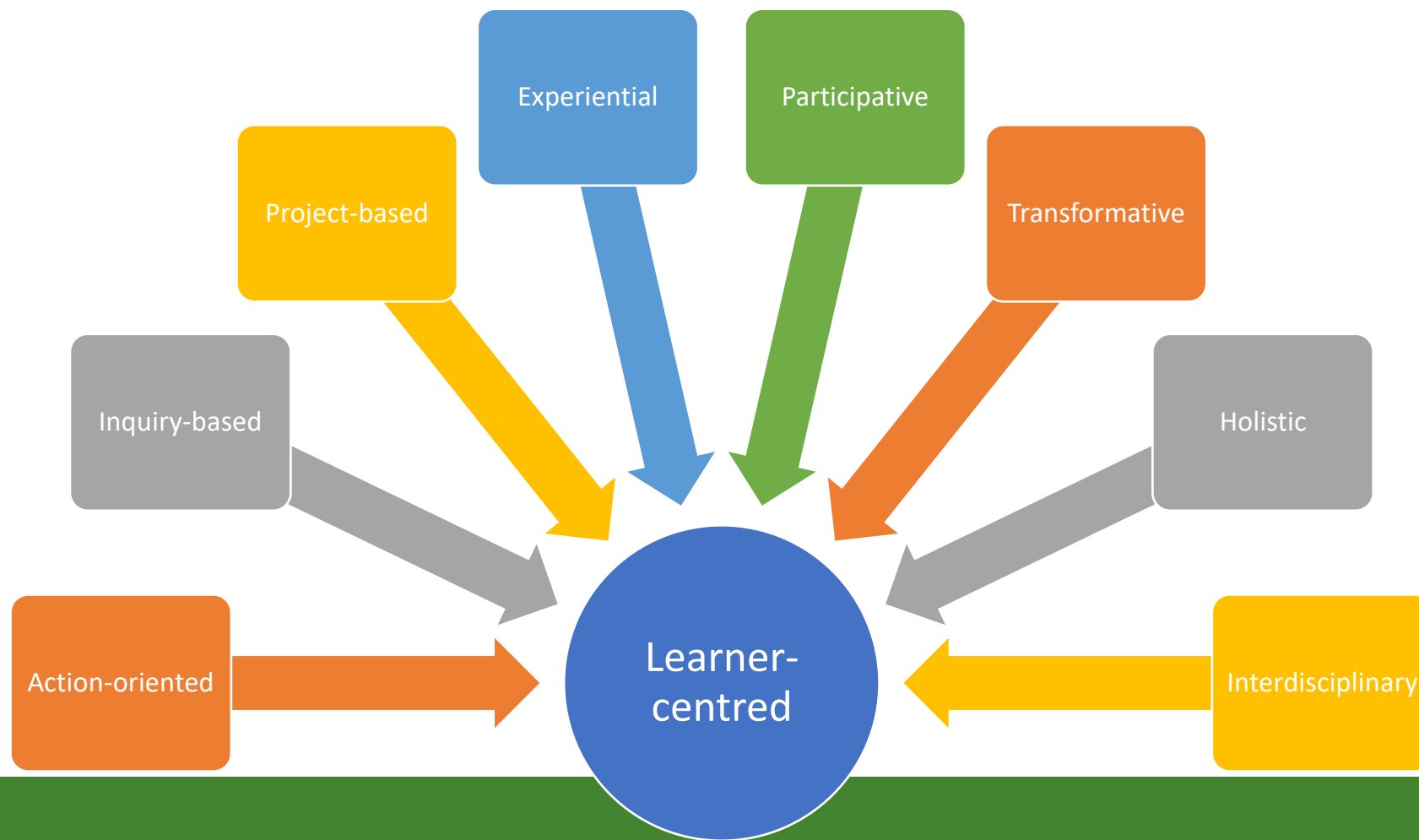


‘Competency frameworks should be viewed less as competing models and more as different lenses on human capability’.

How? Key Pedagogical Approaches in ESD

How can learning processes in ESD be designed to empower and motivate learners?

Through ...



Place-based Learning

"Learners are more likely to care for places they know than places they only read about."



Place-based Learning

... emphasises the **connection** between a **learning process** and the **physical place** in which teachers and students are located

Goals: Cultivate greater connection to local contexts, cultures, and environments

Four-dimensional framework of place-based education (PBE):

Learning <i>in</i> the place teaching and learning are transferred from the classroom to an open space	Learn <i>of</i> the place Studying the environment and the processes that exist in it
Learning <i>from</i> the place unique educational role/capacity of an environment and its components	Learning <i>for</i> the place driving change in the place based on the other three dimensions



Place-based learning

- **Do:** observation and research
- **Learn:** restoration and capacity building activities
- **Socialize:** Intergenerational educational activities
- **Connect:** co-learning, partnership and exchange activities
- **Contribute:** inclusive educational activities
- **Create:** cultural and artistic activities



Place-Based Learning

Place-based and outdoor learning cultivate:

- sense of place
- sense of identity
- sense of community
- sense of responsibility



Sustainability begins with belonging

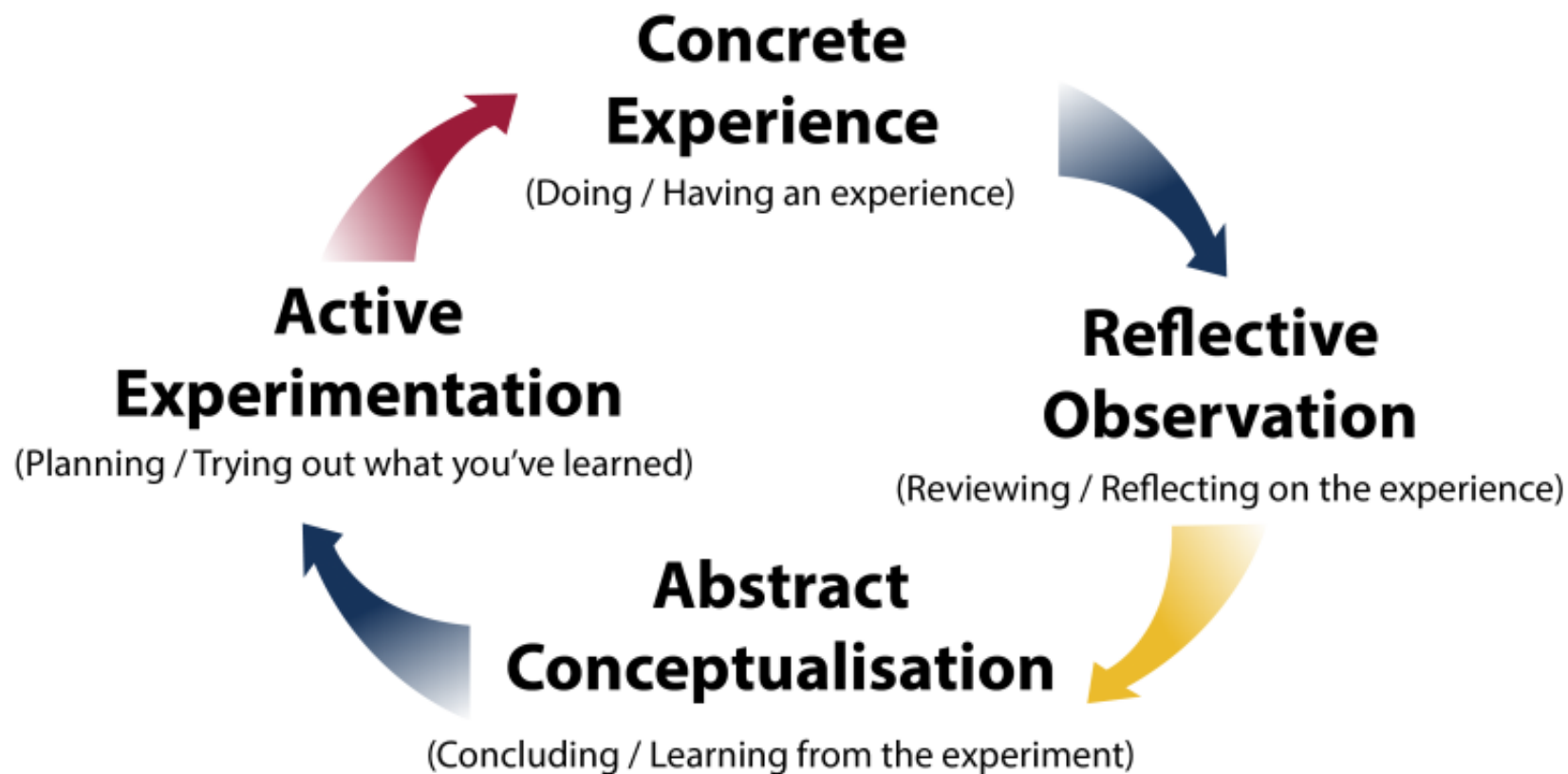


Experiential learning

"People often become environmental stewards not because they learned about nature, but because they experienced it."



Experiential Learning



“There are two goals in the experiential learning process. One is to learn the specifics of a particular subject, and the other is to learn about one’s own learning process.”

David A. Kolb

Outdoor education

Outdoor Education brings experiential and place-based learning together by ...

- Making use of the surrounding environments and communities to encourage real-world learning experiences
- Emphasising active, transformative, participatory teaching and learning outside of the traditional classroom
- Fostering a relationship and a greater connection to places, people and nature through direct experiences

The outdoors becomes a space where learners can explore:

- ecological relationships
- community relationships
- cultural heritage
- Indigenous and traditional knowledge
- shared experiences
- civic responsibility



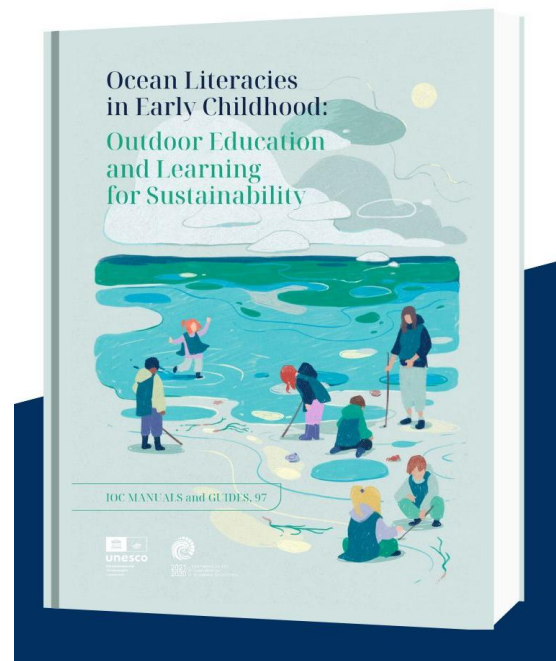
Key example

Kindergarten of the Lagoon Project

... connects children ages 3 to 6 with the Venetian Lagoon ecosystem in Italy – UNESCO World Heritage site

Main Objectives

- foster **environmental awareness** and **emotional connection** to **marine and aquatic environments**
- share ecological knowledge based on the **Ocean Literacy (OL) principles**, including the importance of biodiversity, the characteristics and uniqueness of the wetland habitat and the ecosystem services provided by the lagoon and the ocean
- Promoting experiential learning through **hands-on experiences** (experimentation, observation, reflection ...)



Key example

Amazing Places Project

Example - Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region (MABR), BC

... connects people with nature in Canada's UNESCO biosphere reserves and educates residents and visitors about the ecological significance of well-loved, outdoor spaces

- **Goal:** encourage outdoor play, sustainable living, and nature connectedness through the use of interpretive signage, online engagement, and outdoor activities such as Geocaching

Map of 10 Amazing Places in MABR



Importance and relevance of 'action-oriented pedagogy'

Connection with nature and society is **fostered through direct experience with it**



Greater connection to nature, in turn, positively relates to **more environmentally caring, pro-social and conservation behaviours**

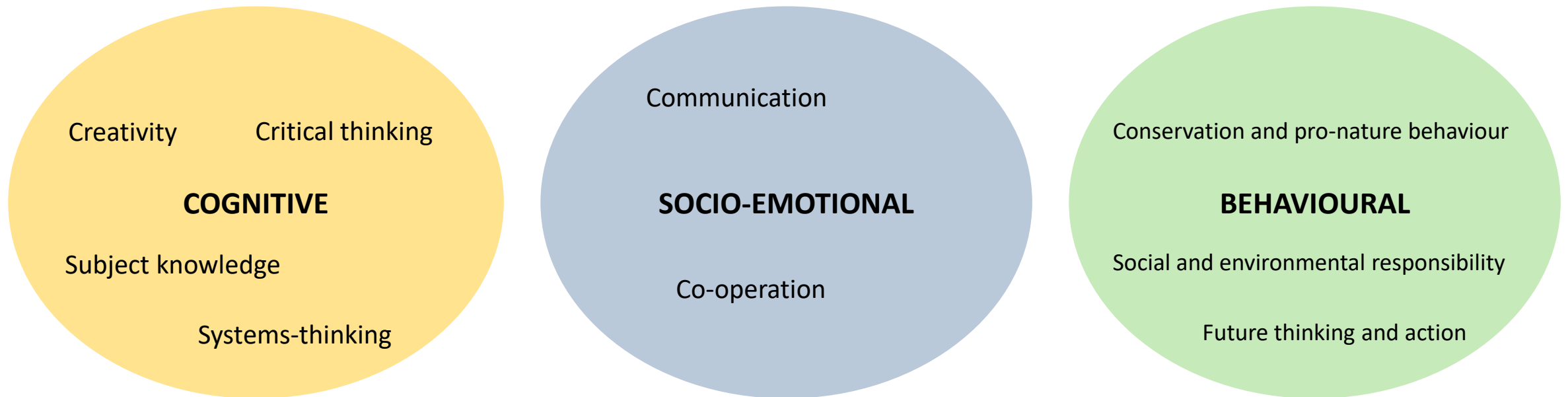
And therefore act for **environmental integrity, economic viability** and a more **equitable society**





Importance and relevance of 'action oriented pedagogy'

Positive learning outcomes for students





UNESCO – what we do

Laboratory of Ideas: Acts as a forum for countries and thinkers to share experiences and shape innovative solutions to global challenges.

Global Standards: Creates international conventions and recommendations to protect heritage and guide policy.

Knowledge Sharing: Facilitates the exchange of best practices and successful approaches among member states.

Capacity Building: Provides technical assistance, training, and workshops to help countries implement practical programs.

Cooperation Catalyst: Maintains momentum across international initiatives to ensure sustainable results.





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Generating innovation and taking it to scale through networks

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1000+ active ESD-NET-
members: a community of
practice

112 countries engaged in multi-
stakeholder country initiatives

Implementing ESD
for 2030 at
country level

Tracking
issues and
trends

Harnessing
partnership and
collaboration

Communication
for action

Mobilizing
resources

Monitoring
progress



**Greening
Education
Partnership**
Getting every learner climate-ready

99 Member States
1700+ Stakeholder Organizations

Action areas of transformative education



Greening schools



Greening curriculum



Greening communities

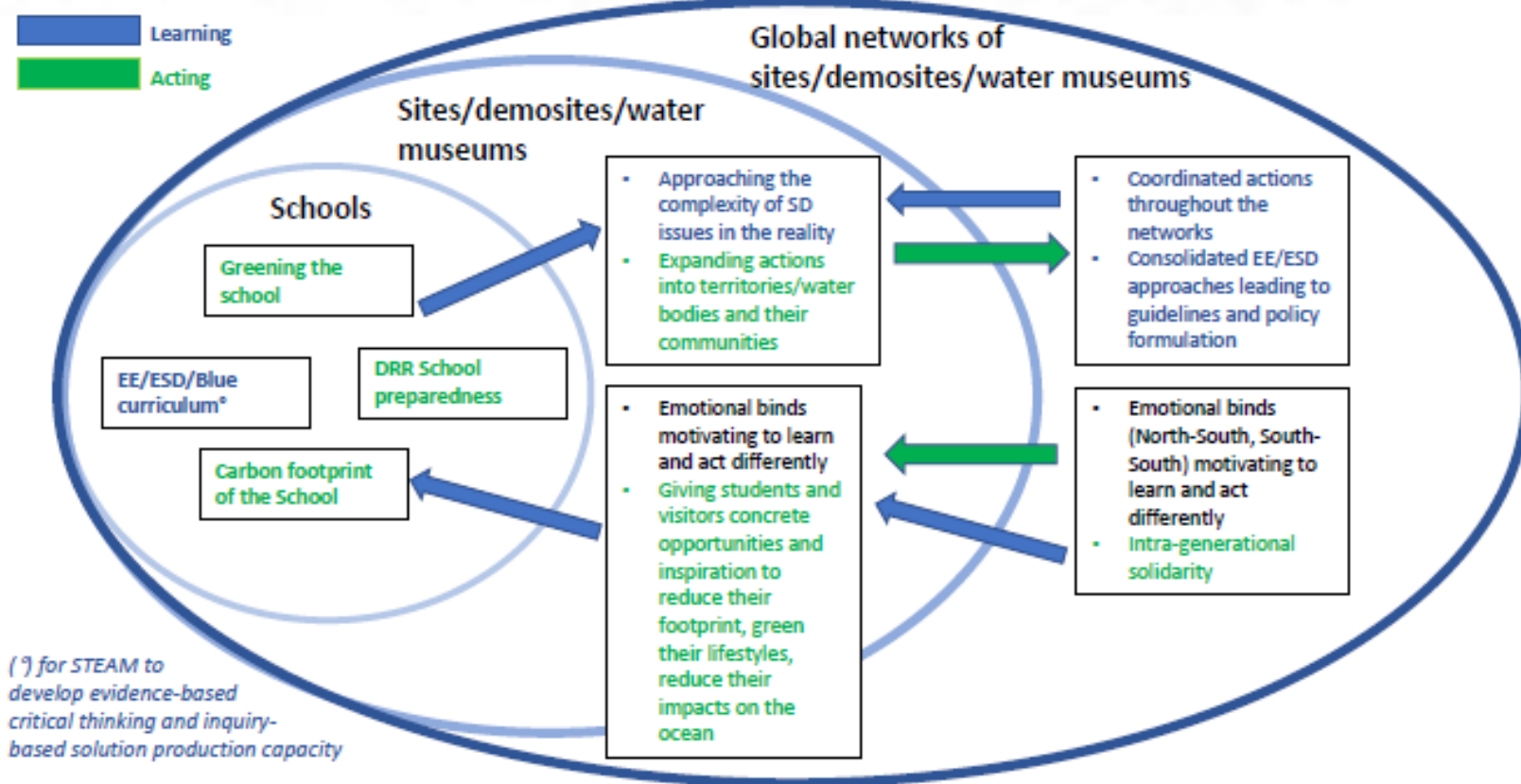


Greening teacher training and education
systems' capacities

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UNESCO sites as learning hubs

Environmental Learning and Action: from local to global, and vice-versa...





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Transforming futures through action research project: guidance tools





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Resources and tools



Green school quality standard

Greening every learning environment



Greening curriculum guidance

Teaching and learning for climate action



Educators at the heart of greening education

A climate resilience toolkit for policymakers



Greening communities guidance

Lifelong learning for climate
and sustainability action



Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development

- Reinforced concepts not present in the 1974 Recommendation:
 - ethical and responsible use of technologies
 - shared responsibility for sustainable development within planetary boundaries
 - gender equality
 - an ethic of care and solidarity
 - safety, health and well-being
 - co-creation of knowledge with learners and education personnel
 - condemnation of hate speech and incitement to violence and discrimination
 - respect for diversity





Conclusion – knowledge to action

ESD asks: How can we create a more sustainable future?

Place-based learning answers: Start by understanding and caring for the places where people live.

Experiential learning answers: Learn through doing, reflection, and action.

Outdoor learning answers: Build direct relationships with the natural world.

Social and cultural connection ensures: The learning is rooted in human meaning, identity, community, and belonging.



ESD and outdoor education

ESD Needs

Real-world contexts

Systems thinking

Collaboration

Agency

Values development

Reflection

Outdoor Education Provides

Direct experience

Observation of interconnected ecosystems

Shared challenges

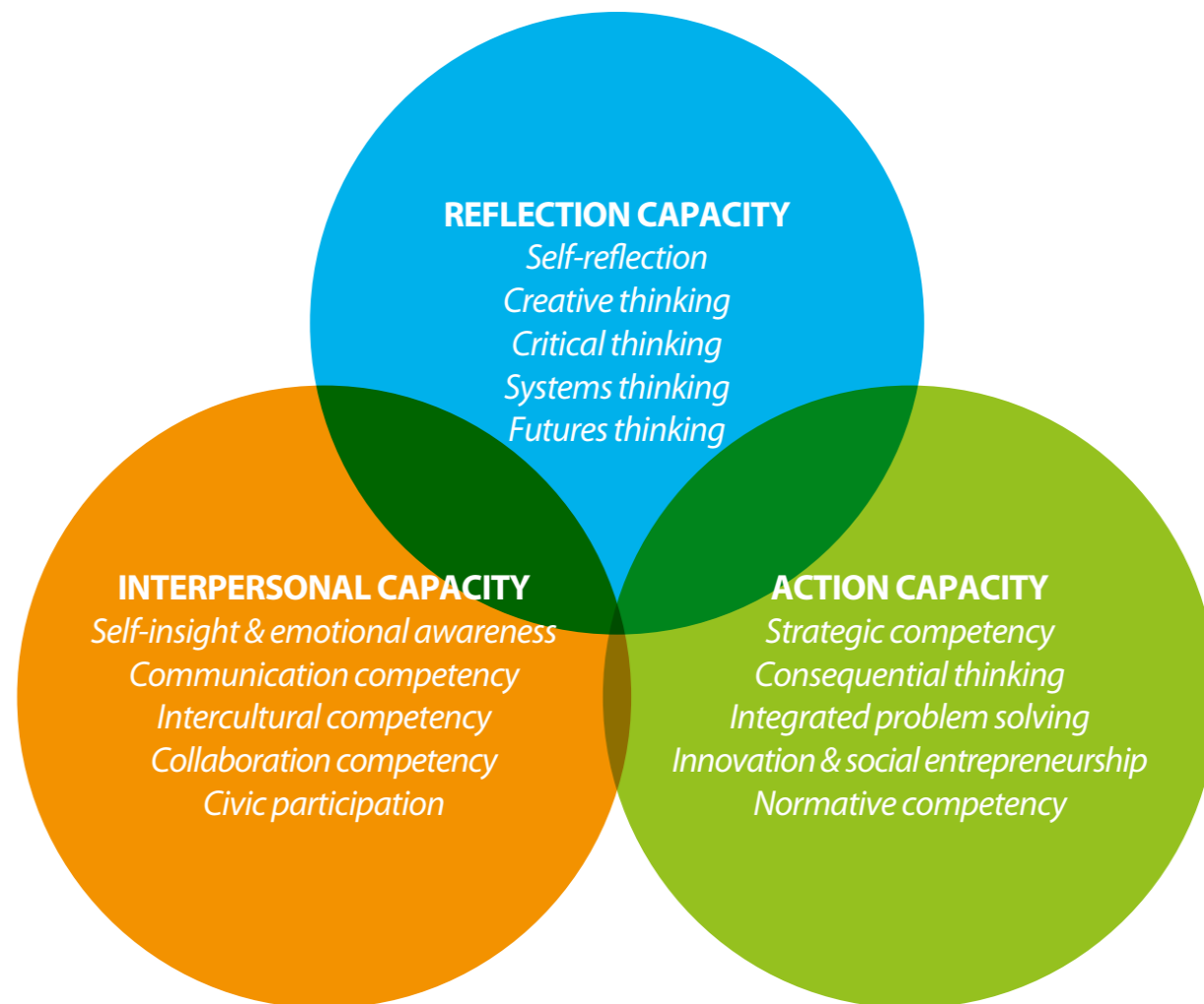
Meaningful action

Encounters with place and community

Time and space for meaning-making

Outdoor learning and sustainability

Everything ESD seeks to develop can be experienced directly through outdoor learning.





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Thank you

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