EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION IN NORTHEAST ASIA

Strategies to promote and advance sustainable consumption

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
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Strategies to promote and advance sustainable consumption

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*Education for Sustainable Consumption in Northeast Asia: Strategies to promote and advance sustainable consumption*


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Why Education for Sustainable Consumption?

The promotion of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) through policy can occur in many different ways. Regulations and economic incentives are effective instruments for increasing clean production practices and providing value to specific types of consumption. Advancing government green procurement strategies not only has a direct impact to ensure that purchases by the public sector meet environmental standards, but it also results in the secondary impact of strengthening the overall “green” market in both quality and quantity of sustainable consumption options available to the consumer. However, many current policies on SCP lack clear identification of mechanisms and strategies to promote responsible consumer behaviour. Education for Sustainable Consumption (ESC) is a specific activity that focuses on directly influencing consumer behaviour by encouraging consumers’ proactive participation in sustainable consumption. ESC policy faces an impediment though due to the lack of understanding of how policy can directly influence consumer choice and lead to conscientious changes in behaviour.

For the implementation of effective ESC in policy and practice, it is necessary for research on ESC to clearly investigate and identify what are the primary components for influencing consumer behaviour and provoking a transition in consumption practices. There are also several arenas where ESC can be implemented, i.e. formal in-school curriculum, market-based and consumer oriented, community-based and civic oriented, and each of these areas are worth further investigation as avenues to promote sustainable consumption. While Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in general is often promoted in formal education, ESC has a unique quality of being directly relevant to the average person’s daily life and thus lends itself to being an important way to promote sustainability through informal educational arenas. In this light, ESC can be viewed as having a two-fold objective: first, to advance participation in sustainable consumption; and second, to provide a tangible entry into the wider ‘philosophy’ of sustainable development.

Objective of the Policy Report

The policy report investigates means to improve the conceptualisation and implementation of ESC. The main objective of this work is to establish a clear framework of how governments can advance sustainable consumption by influencing consumer behaviour, as is reflected in the primary research question for this report: How can governments best influence individual consumers to proactively participate in sustainable consumption and environmentally responsible behaviour?

Governments are viewed as primary agents to strongly influence consumer choice through education for sustainable consumption by:

- Providing an understanding of the environmental imperative;
- Empowering individuals to be actors in protecting the environment;
- Explaining the importance of sustainable consumption within this imperative;
- Developing a supportive social infrastructure for sustainable consumption practices.
Based on consultations with ESD and SCP specialists, three priorities for advancing governmental support of ESC were identified. The **first priority** is the identification of clear mechanisms that can be implemented from the level of national policy to influence consumer behaviour. The **second priority** is to provide appropriate capacity building for policy-decision makers so they have the skills and understanding to implement effective ESC policy. The **third priority** is to increase political dialogues on ESC to secure cooperation and good practice, especially across the Northeast Asia region.

**Structure of the Policy Report**

The Policy Report is divided into three main sections. Section One begins with an introduction of the current mandate for ESC in Northeast Asia, an explanation of the relevant concepts, and a description of the methodological framework applied in the report. The second half of this section includes both a review of relevant policies at international, national and local levels and a theoretical review of relevant concepts and theories regarding consumer choice and behaviour change. From these reviews, an assessment framework is developed to investigate the main components of effective ESC initiatives.

Section Two consists of seven chapters provided by contributing authors that outline the current international and national (in China, Japan and Republic of Korea) contexts on ESC. The first chapter of this section provides a wide investigation of the important concepts, strategies and activities on ESC that have been developed internationally. The next three chapters each address the relevant policy frameworks that exist nationally in the three separate countries. The final three chapters describe the current good practice that is happening in each country on ESC and the promotion of sustainable consumption.

In Section Three, a series of case studies from each country on practical ESC initiatives are presented and the assessment framework developed at the end of the first section is applied to investigate them. From the case study analysis, several important findings are highlighted, and a series of policy implications are explained. In the final chapter, a general strategy for planning ESC policy and initiatives is outlined.

**Good Practice Case 1 – China: Reduction from Beginning**

Coupled with the recent economic growth, Chinese traditional habit (to order excessive foods when they show hospitality and generosity to visitors and friends) has consequently resulted in a major food waste issue across the country. To tackle this cultural food habit, Shanghai Bureau of Waste Management and Shanghai Restaurants Association started a public campaign not to order excessive foods and a 15% discount of the total restaurant bill when the customer has unfinished food packaged to take away. Restaurants also have benefits when they join this campaign through reduction of food waste disposal costs from the local government. Although this campaign has been implemented for a short period of time, 10% of Shanghai Restaurants Association members have already joined and the numbers are continuously increasing due to both parties’ benefits, i.e. customers and restaurants.
Policy Contexts of ESC in Northeast Asia

Japan, China and the Republic of Korea (ROK) are all making considerable efforts to advance Sustainable Consumption and to educate consumers about the imperative for sustainable consumption and development. These efforts are relatively new in each of the three countries, and there has as of yet been little analysis of the affects these policies and actions have had. Work on green procurement is the most advanced activity by all three governments towards sustainable consumption, and has clearly resulted in the growth of the green market in each of these countries. Efforts on ESC are currently increasing in each country, and more campaigns are targeting consumers directly.

World-wide, the consumer class is growing at a rapid rate, and the Asia-Pacific region has experienced the most rapid growth leading to this region’s consumer class becoming the largest in the world. The consumer class in this region totals over 500 million people and accounts for 29% of the world total. The region produces 22.8% of global GDP and contributes 21.4% of global private consumption. The Asia-Pacific consumer class accounts for just over a quarter (27%) of the region’s entire population. Though the region is now home to the largest consumer class in the world, the majority of the people in this region still have little opportunity to participate in this newly realised class.

The three countries selected for case studies are the three highest consuming nations in Asia-Pacific. Japan is the second highest world contributor to GDP (in nominal terms), China is third, and the ROK is fifteenth (as of 2008). Together, these three countries contribute 16.9% of global GDP.²

Table 1 – Comparison of Development Context in Three Case Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Group</th>
<th>GDP (Nominal)¹ Amount (in Trillions of USD)</th>
<th>Country Rank</th>
<th>GDP (PPP) per capita¹ Amount in USD</th>
<th>Country Rank</th>
<th>Human Development Index² Score / Country Rank</th>
<th>Environmental Performance Index³ Score / Country Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>High Income</td>
<td>$4.91</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>$34,116</td>
<td>24th</td>
<td>0.956 / 8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. of Korea</td>
<td>High Income Since 2003</td>
<td>$0.93</td>
<td>15th</td>
<td>$27,692</td>
<td>33rd</td>
<td>0.928 / 25th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Lower Middle Income Since 2001</td>
<td>$4.33</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>$5,970</td>
<td>100th</td>
<td>0.762 / 94th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ World Bank classifications for country Income Group and measurements of GNI per capita (based on World Bank Atlas method); (WB, Internet: 2009).
⁴ IMF, ibid. (see note 2 above).
⁵ IMF, ibid. (see note 2 above).
⁶ Potential Score is out of 1.0, Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2008: 25-8).
⁷ Potential Score is out of 100, developed by Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy (YCELP, 2008: 10).
**China**

In comparison with Japan and ROK, environmental policy in China especially linked with ESC has a short history starting in the 1990s. Nevertheless, China has shown strong promotions of ESC in spite of its short history led by the central government in relation to a series of sustainable consumption-related laws and policies. In addition, all promoted regulations have been restrictedly applied across the country targeting all private, social and governmental sectors.

ESC has been implemented as part of Environmental Education (EE) and the “green school” initiative supported by “The National Action Guideline of Environmental Communication and Education” established in 1996. However, ESC is still a very new EE theme in China and has been led mainly by the central government. Within formal education, ESC covers all existing environmental issues linked with resource management including energy saving, reducing wastes, renewable energy and environmental-friendly campus management. Regarding informal education, the government’s strong promotion of the Green Procurement has influenced all social sectors including market and industry sectors.

A rationale behind the government’s efforts to promote and increase government procurement of eco-labelled products is to accelerate the development of a “green’ consumption market and provide diverse choices to consumers by encouraging companies to produce more high-quality, environmentally-friendly items. Despite its short history with the official Law on Government Procurement enacted in 2003, Green Government Procurement in China has achieved distinguishable achievements as shown by the rapid increase in companies producing eco-products (e.g. 81 companies in 2007 and 444 companies in 2008). However, Green Procurement in China is still in the beginning era and seems to be more focused on product standards than consumers’ needs. It is therefore necessary to develop sustainable consumption policy which better reflects individual factors and contexts when we consider the long term impact of ESC, along with those national regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, a clear vision of ESC for practical implementation through national policy is still absent in spite of many numbers of regulations promoting public education projects for sustainable consumption.

**Japan**

Japan has the longest Environmental Education (EE) history amongst the three countries since the 1960s. For instance, Consumer Affairs Divisions were set up both in the Ministry of International Trade & Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries in 1964. One year later, the Quality-Of-Life Bureau was established within the Economic Planning Agency. Regarding a national framework, the Consumer Protection Fundamental Act was established in 1968.

Despite these early preparations, ESC actually did not receive major attention from the central government until the mid-1990s. For instance, the concept of consumer education was introduced into school curriculum as part of the home economics discipline for the first time in 1992. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MEXT) then
published a consumer education textbook for high school level for the first time and also started a “Teacher Training Course of Environmental Consumer Education” in 2006.

Regarding political support settings, sustainable consumption has been promoted since the late 1990s as shown in Green Purchasing Law in 2000 and Consumer Basic Act in 2004. Although it was not an exact ESC project, it is noteworthy that the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) started a “sustainable consumption” project in 2003. METI also started the Carbon Footprint Labelling Scheme in 2008. Recently, the Cabinet Office of Japan launched the Consumer Affairs Agency to raise consumers’ awareness towards sustainable lifestyles and transition to a low-carbon society.

It is noticeable that actual ESC mandates for specific practice seem to be weak when we consider the series of national laws, polices and acts in relation to sustainable consumption and consumer issues. In fact, in comparison with ESC in China and ROK which have been led by the central governments with strong regulated promotion, ESC projects in Japan have been mainly led by NGOs and local agencies. Even the ESC projects led by the Japanese central government, such as “Eco-Action Points” and “Team Minus 6%”, are based on voluntary memberships with industries and individual households to encourage diverse actors’ participation rather than forcing them to follow strict regulations.

Meanwhile, Japan is a leader in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) not only for Northeast Asia but also world-wide as shown by the strong contribution to United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) which Japan co-sponsored the proposal for and provides substantial funding for. Based on the Inter-Ministerial Meeting on DESD, an action plan was drafted in 2006 to implement a diverse ESD agenda to encourage participation by all social sectors to build a sustainable society together such as “Diverse Places of Education and Implementing Actors”, “Learning from Participation and Experience”, and “Nurturing Abilities for Social Participation”. Despite these positive efforts on ESD, it is significant that ESC has not been given direct attention in the action plan especially when we consider that ESC has been broadly acknowledged as an important topic of EE not only in Japan but also world-wide and one of the specific themes of ESD by UNESCO as a leading agency for DESD.

**Republic of Korea**

EE in ROK has a school-based history since the 1980s. For instance, the concept of EE was reflected in the Fourth National Curriculum for the first time in 1981. Then the concept of EE was reinforced in the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh National Curriculums in 1987, 1992 and 1997 respectively. In particular, the independent subject of Environmental Science was required since the Sixth National Curriculum in 1992 which is unique world-wide. Despite this distinguishable EE development in comparison with China and Japan, ESC which is acknowledged as a part of EE in ROK still remains marginal as the majority of ESC practices are simply considered under “domestic waste separation” or “recycling” within the school curriculum. There are few ESC practices which are linked to efficient resource management or reflection on the global issue of reducing CO₂ emissions.
Regarding the ESC history in ROK, social education led by NGOs has taken a more important role in its development and practices than formal education. Social ESC developed in the form of consumer awareness raising campaigns since the 1990s in rapid numbers corresponding with the launch of numerous new environmental NGOs. Nevertheless, ESC activities conducted by NGOs stagnated as they did not fully meet citizens’ demands for quality. Within this background, the Environmental Education Promotion Law was finally established in 2009 in order to improve the quality of EE programmes and also promote people’s empowerment through social education.

Regarding the government’s efforts on national policy for sustainable consumption in ROK, as in China, it has mainly been centred on promoting eco-labelled products since the 1990s. For instance, the Environmental Technology Development and Support Law was established in 1994, and this was a precursory mandate for the provision of the specific law Eco-Product Purchasing Promotion Law established in 2004 and revised in 2009. By encouraging eco-product industry through incentives and education to provide diverse choices with low-prices to consumers, the Korean government has achieved to raise consumers’ awareness towards eco-products and its importance for “sustainability”.

Meanwhile, a recent national movement on Green Growth indicates Korean government’s strong willingness to build a low-carbon society. To address climate change issues by reducing CO₂ emissions and achieve sustainable economic growth, the Korean government launched the Presidential Committee for Green Growth and established the National Strategy for Green Growth and the Action Plan 2009-2013 in 2009. Under this governmental mandate, Education for Green Growth including ESC issues was set up in the same year to promote sustainable lifestyles and has conducted many local community-based projects across the country in this short time period. Nevertheless, ESC within Education for Green Growth is still at the beginning of its development in Korea when we consider both the government’s and the public’s limited understandings of ESC narrowly centred on “eco-labelling”, “recycling” and “domestic waste separation”.

**Good Practice Case 2 – Japan: Team Minus 6%**

The Japanese government established a national project entitled “Team Minus 6%” in 2005 which is aiming at 6% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate against global warming. The Team Minus 6% is a national project which strongly reflects the Japanese government’s vision for achieving low-carbon society entitled “The Innovation for Green Economy and Society” within the same context of the other national project “Eco-Action Point”. The Team Minus 6% runs a membership joined by individual team consists of 1,000 persons and business teams based on its organisational member scale. As a result, a total of 3,438,776 individuals and 34,892 business/civil groups have joined Team Minus 6% since its establishment in 2005 up to 2008. By orienting people with a clear vision of achieving a low-carbon society and encouraging them to take simple actions, the Team Minus 6% initiative has shown a great success in spite of its short running history in Japan.
Changing Perceptions of the Consumer and Consumer Education

Across the three countries, it is possible to identify a similar change in the conception of the consumer occurring over the past fifty years. The evolution of the conception of the consumer correlates directly with the increasing identification of impacts resulting from consumption practices, and thus the role of the consumer has evolved with the addition of heightened levels of responsibility. In the newest conception of sustainable consumer-citizenship, the increased responsibility becomes inherently tied with a sense of active participation in societal efforts to move in a low-carbon development path. For example, the Japanese report on the “Ideal Consumer Policy for the 21st Century” states that consumers should no longer be recognised solely as “those who are protected” and should be viewed rather as “independent entities”. From this understanding, consumer education must aim to establish consumers who are informed and can independently make decisions using their own judgment.

Assessment Framework of ESC Components

Following a review of several theories on human behaviour and behavioural change in the policy report, it is explained that ESC must address both how to affect the individual consumer at the level of his or her decision-making on consumption and also how to develop a supportive social infrastructure that not only fosters sustainable consumption but eventually makes this the norm. A framework of assessment for ESC initiatives is put forth based on three categories and five primary components:

**Personal and Individual Practice:**
- Promote Responsible Behaviour;
- Develop Environmental Citizenship;

**Social and Political Systems:**
- Influence Patterns of Consumption;
- Develop Supportive Infrastructure for SCP;

**Strategic Procedure for Integrative Development:**
- Catalyzing Practice of Sustainable Consumption.

The ability to assess these primary components is functionalised by adding subcomponents to each mechanism. These subcomponents serve as aggregate criteria from which the efforts of an ESC initiative regarding each component can be evaluated *(see Annex 1 for full details of the assessment framework)*. The assessment framework is applied to a series of case studies from Japan, China and Republic of Korea in order to investigate the ways in which different policies and activities influence consumer behaviour towards sustainable consumption.
Primary Components of ESC in Good Practice Cases in China, Japan and Republic of Korea

There are two key features of the ESC components in the selected good practice cases in China, Japan and Republic of Korea (ROK): 1) As the identified commonality - the five primary components of ESC were commonly identified across the three countries, although 2) As the identified diversity - there was a range of application amongst the aggregate criteria of the components introduced in Annex 1. These two key features indicate the significance of not only utilising the primary ESC components but also reflecting indigenous social and cultural factors to affect consumer’s values and motivations in implementing efficient strategies as part of a national framework for sustainable consumption as briefly summarised in the diversities across the three countries below.

The Chinese cases strongly tackle individual and social values through the application of “simple actions” which ultimately builds to “exemplification” of similar practices in other places across the country. Good Practice Case 1 demonstrates the significance of “simple actions” in ESC for tackling cultural habits to promote citizens’ participation in sustainable consumption in daily practice. However, an inspiring view of achieving a sustainable society by providing “future vision” through ESC activities is not clear across the Chinese cases. This fact appears linked with a weakness in “maintenance” of ESC achievements which needs to be critically considered to promote people’s responsible behaviours within a national framework over a long-term period.

All analysed Japanese ESC practice cases have adopted strong tools to address individual ‘psychological motivations”. It is notable that “informational instruments” are actively applied in each practice case to provide diverse choices to consumers in order to encourage them to participate in sustainable consumption for a long term impact. It is also notable that “future vision” and “maintenance” are strengthened which is not found in any of the analysed Chinese cases. Nevertheless, social and cultural factors are not strongly addressed in Japanese cases as much as identified in Chinese and Korean cases which are closely linked with achieving overall strategic integration of development initiatives and the final ESC component of “catalyzing practice of sustainable consumption”.

From the analysis of ESC practices, it is noticeable that Korean cases strongly utilise diverse “psychological motives” from individual desires for enjoyment of indigenous culture to a broad sense of local community as shown in Good Practice Case 3 below. Diverse “informational instruments” to provide eco-labelling information and consumer advice are also applied in all analysed cases likewise identified in the Japanese cases. However, providing clear “future vision” and ‘catalysing” socio-cultural transitions for sustainability are still not reflected enough to “maintain” these results for a long-term period.

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8 A total of eleven ESC practice cases were collected from China, Japan and Republic of Korea (ROK) and analysed based on the assessment framework of ESC mechanisms.
Good Practice Case 3 – Republic of Korea: Green Shop Movement

This movement was initiated by community members to encourage citizens’ participation in exchanging household items for the purpose of practicing sustainable consumption in their daily life. By adopting a sense of local community and diverse cultural events, this movement received a great sensation not only from the community members but also the local government as it showed how an ordinary citizen can incorporate new beliefs regarding consumption into practical behaviour. With the support of governmental agencies and citizen organisations, the Green Shop network has expanded since 1992 to include 55 Green Shops running in different provinces across the country (in 2009).

Main Findings from Case Assessment

Primary Significance for General Policy Structure

The findings with primary significance across the eleven cases relate to the distinction of the five primary components for promoting sustainable consumption. Conclusive findings on the relevance and importance of these five components can be drawn from across the case studies which provide specific implications for the general structure of ESC policies.

1) The Five Components of ESC – entitled “develop environmental citizenship”, “promote responsible behaviour”, “influence patterns of consumption” “develop infrastructure for SCP”, and “catalyzing practice of sustainable consumption” are significant structural mechanisms in formulating effective ESC policy.

2) Motivational Factors of Personal and Individual Practice – are often underrepresented in the planning process of policy frameworks at the national level, but these factors are essential to encourage individuals’ voluntary participation and empowerment as personal changes in consumption practices appear rooted in meaningful and practical experience.

3) Supportive Social and Political Systems – provide the practical facilitation for sustainable consumption becoming the preferable and normal option of practice. However, to develop a supportive infrastructure for SCP, it is necessary to consider directly the preconditioning factors that drive current consumption practices. The analysis of efficient governmental tools and instruments for promoting sustainable consumption indicates a complexity of social and political systems which this research could not fully explore due to its limited data and scope.

4) Well-balanced Contents of ESC Policy – across the three targets of the identified ESC mechanisms “Personal and Individual Practice”, “Social and Political Systems” and “Strategic Procedure” can result in a synergy effect for effective implementation of ESC policy. This appears especially true in developing a supportive infrastructure for sustainable consumption as a vital tool for enabling people to maintain their proactive participation in daily life.
5) **Social and Cultural Contents of ESC Policy** – which reflect indigenous contexts regarding consumption patterns are significant when we consider how ESC can have specific national and local applications, especially for effecting change over a short period of time. ESC policies linking socio-cultural and psychological motivations with traditional habits provide the stimulus for socio-cultural shifts towards a normalised vision of sustainable consumption.

**Secondary Significance for Specific Policy Contents**

There are also several findings from the case studies regarding specific aggregate criteria in the assessment framework. These findings demonstrate a secondary significance because they are not represented across all cases, but are highlighted here as good practice areas of effective policies.

1) **Economic Incentives** – The provision of financial savings/benefits for sustainable consumption is demonstrated as an easy way to engage consumers and promote action. It is possible to divide economic incentives into two categories based on amount of savings (small or large) and on regularity of consumption (frequent or seldom). Small savings in relation to frequent consumption actions appear to have more long term impact than do large savings on irregular consumption actions.

2) **Regulation Coupled with Information Provision** – When regulations are used to stop specific negative consumption behaviours, the provision of relevant information is an important part of the effectiveness of this policy measure to help people understand the purpose of the regulations and encourage continued practice.

3) **Correlation between “Maintenance” and “Future Vision”** – Four of the five cases that achieved the “maintenance” criteria also indicated “future vision”. In this research, “future vision” encourages individuals that they can affect change towards an achievable positive future and sustainable society. The potential causal linkage between the promotion of “future vision” and consumer progress towards long-term maintenance of sustainable consumption deserves further investigation.

4) **Visualising “Responsibility” Rationales for Participation in Sustainable Consumption** – To facilitate more individuals’ direct engagement, providing information about the clear consequences between their consumption choices and the wider environmental and social impacts of these practices appears to be vital. In particular, integrating a sense of responsibility with a sense of community seems to strengthen ESC projects’ long term success.

5) **Missing Linkage between “Simple Actions” and “Future Vision”** – Though both criteria are important factors in developing environmental citizenship, there appears to be difficulty in aligning these two values. When simple actions are promoted, it appears difficult to achieve future vision, and vice versa. However, an ESC strategy of “simple action” appears to be very effective as the clear guidance facilitates people to practice with better understanding. Future research is therefore needed to address how best to reconcile this deficiency in current policy.
Conclusions

Policy Implications are highlighted regarding the general structure and specific content of effective ESC policies. The assessment of the selected cases provides a strong understanding of how the identified primary components of ESC apply in practice. The components can be used to identify the important factors of effective ESC campaigns. It would also be possible to develop evaluation criteria from the assessment framework. Moving forward with recommendations for policy makers, these components provide a tool for conceptualising good policy structure and can facilitate planning of effective consumer ESC campaigns.

A strong consumer education strategy for sustainable consumption will need to be holistic in nature and should utilise opportunities outside the scope of normal education activities. ESC initiatives would benefit from following a more systematic process and incorporating an understanding of current contexts to pinpoint where successful interventions may occur. The conclusions from the research of ESC practice cases also highlights the need to advance “Educational Instruments” in general to incorporate value learning and the promotion of behavioural change. Furthermore, it is recognised that dealing with social, cultural and psychological drivers of consumption are important areas to focus on in ESC initiatives in order to engage directly with consumers and to establish a sense of individual responsibility for sustainable consumption. At the same time, “Regulatory” and “Economic Instruments” can have an important place in creating enabling conditions for sustainable consumption and encouraging initial contemplation of these options.

Recommendations

For Formal Education: Both ESC and more generally ESD could be improved in schools and universities through the development of better interdisciplinary coverage of these topics. Rather than being treated as standalone topics, ESC and ESD can provide a holistic theme to be addressed by multiple disciplines in consistency. However, one current obstacle is the lack of teacher training on these subjects and in regards to this type of innovative teaching-learning style.

For Informal Education and Consumer Awareness Raising: Improvement of consumer-based ESC requires more recognition of critical factors for influencing consumer behaviour including preconditioning social and cultural factors. A clearer understanding of the relationship between consumer and both social and environmental impacts of consumption and the promotion a realistic vision of the future we are striving to achieve helps to stimulate an individual sense of responsibility. Finally, this process would benefit m from the use of diverse policy instruments and multiple media/public communication strategies.

For a Facilitating Social Infrastructure: It is highly beneficial to factor the promotion of sustainable consumption and consumer awareness raising into the establishment of all SCP policies, especially those aiming at changing the social infrastructure. Conceptually, this should consider directly how to promote responsible behaviour at the individual level and also how to facilitate and give incentives for its practice at a social level.
## Annex 1 – Assessment Framework of ESC Components

### Promote Responsible Behaviour

*n.b.¹*

**Stages of Change in a decision-maker’s consumption practices**

- **Precontemplation** – the decision-maker is unaware of subject and information (*education and awareness raising is necessary to initialise contemplation*);
- **Contemplation** – the decision-maker begins to consider the subject, but does not link to action (*clear linkages must be drawn between the issue at hand and the individual’s daily practices*);
- **Decision/Determination** – conscious choice is made to take action and incorporate into daily practices (*practical examples to support action must be demonstrated*);
- **Action** – the decision-maker tests/experiences ways to incorporate new beliefs into practical behaviour (*new behaviour and action must be supported and rewarded*);
- **Maintenance** – the decision-maker continues with regular practice of this new behaviour and incorporates into practices of a wider community (*links should be drawn between new behaviour and wider socio-cultural changes*).

### Develop Environmental Citizenship

*n.b.²*

**Effective Value Promotion for consumers’ proactive participation in sustainable consumption**

- **Pro-environmental values** – a personal belief that protecting the environment is important;
- **Individual Empowerment** – that each person can be a powerful agent of change;
- **Responsibility** – a sense of environmental citizenship and duty;
- **Simple actions** – recognition that little steps can lead to big impacts;
- **Future Vision** – an inspired view of achieving a sustainable society.

### Influence Patterns of Consumption

*n.b.³*

**Efficient Tools and instruments governments can utilise to encourage SCP**

- **Regulatory instruments** – used mainly to enforce minimum standards;
- **Economic instruments** – Negative taxing, positive subsidies and green procurement strategies;
- **Educational instruments** – Research/development, production training, public education, participatory learning methodologies, critical analysis techniques;
- **Cooperative instruments** – Improved production by technology transfer and voluntary agreements;
- **Informational instruments** – Consumer information: eco-labeling, auditing and reporting, environmental quality targets, consumer advice.

### Develop Supportive Infrastructure for SCP

*n.b.⁴*

**Preconditioning Factors of Consumption to consider in developing a supportive infrastructure**

- **Economic development** – Secure access to sustainable purchasing choices, reduce product costs, improve productivity and strengthen sustainable livelihood opportunities;
- **Technological progress** – Reduce resource consumption, promote product efficiency and dematerialisation;
- **Political settings & policy actions** – Provide supportive political framework for transition to sustainable consumption and low-carbon lifestyles, also ensure policy consistency;
- **Cultural & historical contexts** – Respond to deep-set codes of conduct that frame knowledge and behaviour;
- **Social factors and conditioning** – Address social meaning and symbolic value of material possession;
- **Psychological motives** – Address personal understandings of happiness and quality of life.

### Catalyzing Practice of Sustainable Consumption

*n.b.⁵*

**Procedural Steps for systematic development towards sustainable consumption**

- **Enable** – remove barriers to sustainable consumption, develop supportive infrastructure, educate and give information about how to consume sustainably;
- **Encourage** – reward good behaviour, penalise bad behaviour, and enforce minimum standards;
- **Engage** – involve the public, communicate and campaign, utilise media resources, stimulate community action;
- **Exemplify** – lead by example, develop good practice and achieve a policy consistency;
- **Catalyse** – building from the other four points, make major shifts in social and cultural habits to engender a cultural paradigm grounded in sustainable practice.

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*N.B.:* see notes on following page
Notes from Annex 1:


2 values were identified by authors as key concepts in the theories of responsible environmental behaviour and environmental citizenship


References


This Executive Summary is based on the IGES Policy Report

*Education for Sustainable Consumption in Northeast Asia: Strategies to promote and advance sustainable consumption*

Primary Authors: Mee Young Choi and Robert J. Didham