

A Response in 2014

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Documenting a history of environmental education in Australia within an international context has been a research focus (some would say obsession) of mine since 1974, when I undertook a ‘needs for environmental education’ survey for the Curriculum Development Centre. Given the human-centred issues that launched the field (clean air and water, population), it was disturbing to see how it became characterised as nature focused from the 1990s onwards, to distinguish it from education for sustainable development (ESD). As we now look post-decade, we find that ESD is not yet integrated into mainstream education and sustainable development agendas, and the need to promote global citizenship is being added to the agenda. Most of the UNESCO priority action areas from 2014 look very familiar: policy support, whole-institution approaches, educators and local communities. The fifth area is Youth, a category that emerged in its own right for the first time in Agenda 21. Having been in this historical space for so long, I expect I will continue to document a history of the field for as long as I can, to see where the journey leads us.

Biography

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