



UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

Transforming Education Summit

Solutions Day Session: The Role of Higher Education in Transforming Climate Education & Environment Lifelong Learning for All

17 September 2022, 13:00–14:30 EDT

SPEAKERS

OPENING REMARKS

Dr Shen Xiaomeng (UNU Vice-Rector in Europe and Director, UNU Institute for Environment & Human Security)

Dr Shen Xiaomeng is the UNU Vice-Rector in Europe (UNU-VIE) and Director of the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS). Before she rejoined UNU in 2020, she had worked with the International Bureau of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research at the DLR-PT (German Aerospace Center) for 10 years focusing on international cooperation, innovation policies, and multilateral science and technology development in Asia and Oceania.

Prior to that, Dr Shen worked with UNU-EHS with a focus on social vulnerability, environmentally induced migration issues, and water-related disaster and risk research from cultural perspectives.

Ms Stefania Giannini (Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO)

Ms Stefania Giannini was appointed UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education in May 2018, becoming the top UN official in the field. In this position, she provides strategic vision and leadership for UNESCO in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the Education 2030 Agenda, encapsulated in Sustainable Development Goal 4.

With an academic background in the Humanities, Ms Giannini has served as Rector of the University for Foreigners of Perugia (2004–2012), being one of the first and youngest women to hold this position in Italy. As Senator of the Republic of Italy (2013–2018) and Minister of Education, Universities and Research (2014–2016), she developed and implemented a structural reform of the Italian education system, centred on social inclusion and cultural awareness. She also has been closely involved in an advisory capacity with the European Commissioner for Research and Innovation.

FRAMING PRESENTATION

Mr Karma Galay (Officiating Secretary, Ministry of Education, Bhutan)

Mr Karma Galay currently serves as the Officiating Secretary for the Ministry of Education. He joined the Ministry of Education as Director General to the Department of School Education in 2020. In addition, he also served various roles including District Governor at Sarpang District (2017–2020), Director to the Department of Roads under the Ministry of Works and Human Settlement (2013–2017), Chief Program Officer for the Department of Local Governance under the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs (2009–2013), Chief Research Officer at the Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH Research (2007–2009), and Planning Officer for the Planning Commission (1995).

Mr Galay obtained his Master's Degree in International Policy Studies from Stanford University, USA, and holds a BA in Economics from Sherubtse College, Bhutan. He hails from Mongar in Eastern Bhutan.

PANELLISTS

Mr Markus González Beifuss (Undersecretary, Ministry of Universities, Spain)

Mr Markus González Beifuss is the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Universities in Spain. Prior to this, Mr Beifuss served as the Vice-Rector for International Policy of the University of Barcelona (2021), General Director for Immigration, Government of Spain (2010–2011), Legal adviser to the Spanish Constitutional Court (2005–2010), and Professor of Constitutional Law from the University of Barcelona (since 2001).

Mr Beifuss' areas of research and teaching include immigration, human trafficking, constitutional justice, and territorial organisation of power, and he has authored numerous publications in these fields. He received the Francisco Tomás y Valiente Award (1999) for research related to constitutional jurisdiction, given by the Spanish Constitutional Court and the Centre for Political and Constitutional Studies of the Spanish government. He has experience as an international expert of the United Nations Development Program and the Council of Europe.

Dr Philip Osano (Centre Director, Stockholm Environment Institute Africa, Kenya)

Dr Philip Osano is the Director of Stockholm Environment Institute Africa Center, and serves as the Chair of the Advisory Board of UNU-IAS. His interest is in environmental policy, development, and international affairs.

Dr Osano has 20 years of experience in applied research, project coordination, policy analysis, and teaching, and has worked in countries in Africa and Asia, as well as Canada and the United States. He is the co-editor of the book "Young People, Education, and Sustainable Development: Exploring Principles, Perspectives, and Praxis" published by Wageningen Academic Press in 2009. Dr Osano holds a PhD in Geography from McGill University, Canada, an MSc in Conservation Biology from the University of Cape Town, South Africa, and a BSc in Environmental Science from Egerton University in Kenya.

Dr Melissa Brown Goodall (Senior Director, Penn Environmental Innovations Initiative, University of Pennsylvania)

Dr Melissa Brown Goodall joined the Environmental Innovations Initiative in 2021 as its inaugural Senior Director. In this role, she is developing a strategic vision to leverage Penn's academic strengths and foster collaboration across disciplines to address the most pressing global environmental challenges of our time. Before coming to Penn, Dr Goodall was at Yale University – first with the School of the Environment, then with the Center for Environmental Law and Policy, and finally with the Office of Sustainability. Dr Goodall is the Director of the Global University Climate Forum and a Strategic Advisor to the Center for Governance and Sustainability at the University of Massachusetts Boston. She earned her PhD in Environmental Studies in 2015 and a joint degree in Resource Management and Administration in 1998 from Antioch University and her BFA in Acting from New York University in 1992.

Ms Brittany Vermeulen (RCE Youth Coordinator, RCE Greater Western Sydney, Australia)

Ms Brittany Vermeulen is a full-time staff member at Western Sydney University working in the field of Sustainability Education for the last 10 years. Her work includes designing and delivering ESD curriculum and student experiences for Western students, as well as previously leading a global youth programme (the RCE SDG Youth Challenge — Youth for the Goals) in her role as the Asia-Pacific RCE Regional Youth Focal Point. The programme addressed localised youth-led action on the Sustainable Development Goals across 12 countries. She has been acknowledged for her leadership with a Western Sydney University Vice-Chancellors Excellence Award in December 2021.

Dr Youssef Nassef (Director, Adaptation Division, UNFCCC)

Dr Youssef Nassef has led the adaptation workstreams under the UNFCCC since their inception. He possesses over 33 years of experience in diplomacy and international environmental policy, and is a seconded diplomat from the Egyptian Foreign Service.

While assuming progressively higher levels of leadership at the UNFCCC, he led UNFCCC support for several initiatives on adaptation. These include the inception and support for National Adaptation Programmes of Action and National Adaptation Plans; the Nairobi Work Programme — an international knowledge hub for impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation; and the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage. He recently created the Resilience Frontiers initiative which applies foresight for attaining post-2030 resilience.

Dr Nassef holds a PhD in International Technology Policy and Management, and a MALD in International Environmental Policy from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, as well as a MA in Middle East Studies and a BSc in Computer Science and Physics from the American University in Cairo.

Dr Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi (Director, UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability)

Dr Shinobu Yume Yamaguchi is Director of the UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS). Her fields of specialisation include international development and cooperation, ICT in education, reform and policy of education, science and technology policy, and the application of technology in world heritage site preservation. Prior to this post, Dr Yamaguchi worked at Tokyo Institute of Technology as an Associate Professor (2002–2006) and then full Professor (from 2006). In 2005–2007, she concurrently served as Advisor to the President. Before joining Tokyo Institute of Technology, Dr Yamaguchi worked for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), first at the Paris headquarters, and then in the Beijing Office. While with UNESCO, she was involved primarily in the development of education systems in China, Indonesia, Mongolia, and Pakistan. Dr Yamaguchi holds a PhD in Economics of Education from Columbia University (New York). She has authored or co-authored more than 200 publications and conference/seminar presentations.

CLOSING REMARKS

Ms Maki Hayashikawa (Director, Education 2030, UNESCO)

Ms Maki Katsuno-Hayashikawa is the Director of the Division for Education 2030 at UNESCO Headquarters. She has over 25 years of experience with UNESCO, UNICEF, and JICA, in managing global, regional, and national country level programmes on inclusive education, gender and education, ECCE, learning assessment and teacher education, as well as coordinating partnerships in education. Currently, she oversees UNESCO's global programmes on Gender and Inclusive Education, Higher Education, and Education in Emergencies, and leads the reform of the global SDG 4 coordination mechanism.