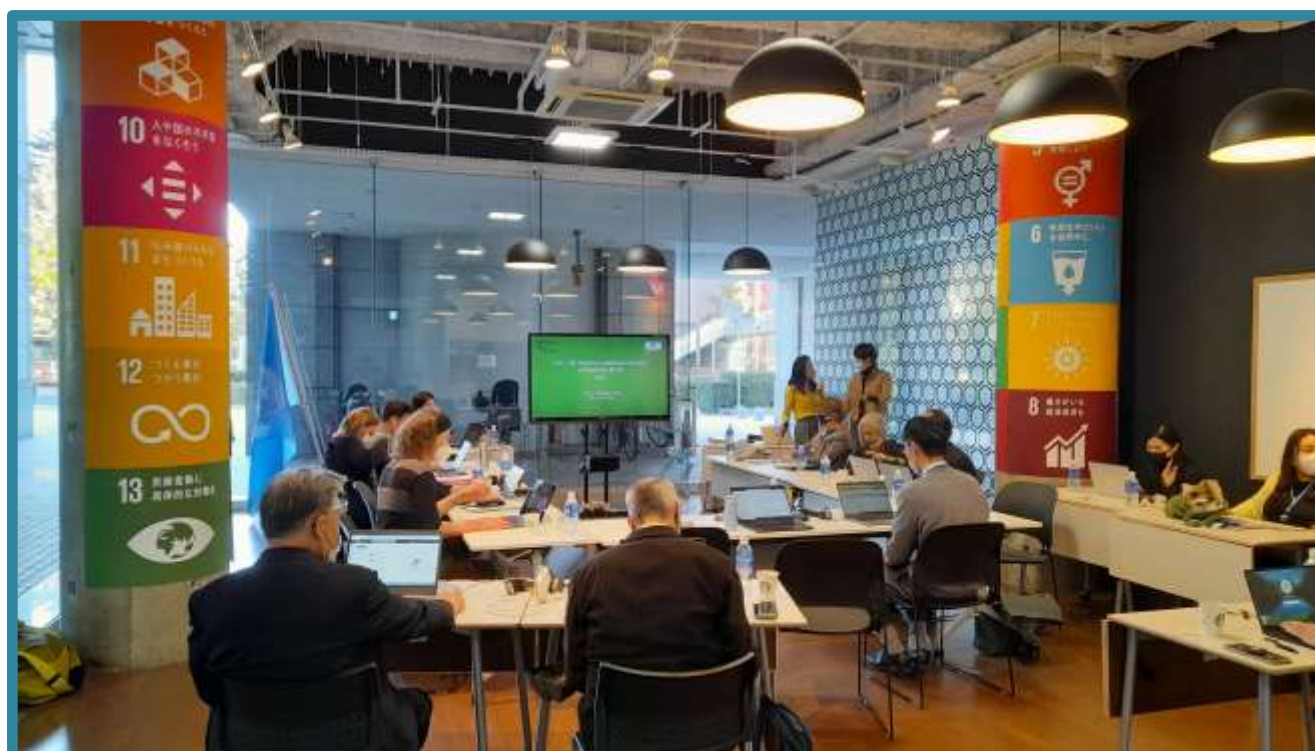




# Learning for Sustainability Scotland Annual Report

January - December 2022



17<sup>th</sup> Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the UNU Regional Centres of Expertise in Education for Sustainable Development meeting, December 2022, Japan

## 1. BACKGROUND

Scotland has a long-standing commitment to Learning for Sustainability (LfS) involving all aspects of learning: formal (e.g. schools, colleges, universities), non-formal (e.g. youth, adult, community, business) and informal (e.g. home, leisure). The UN's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-14) catalysed activity in all sectors through two Action Plans<sup>1</sup> co-ordinated by the Scottish Government. As the Decade came to its end, the LfS community in Scotland considered that the establishment of a Scotland-wide United Nations University-recognised Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) was the most appropriate way to continue the work of promoting and supporting the concept and practice of LfS in Scotland. The United Nations University unconditionally accepted the proposal to create Scotland's RCE in December 2012 and the first AGM of Scotland's UNU-recognised RCE, '**Learning for Sustainability Scotland**', was held on October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2013.

## 2. GOVERNANCE

The Learning for Sustainability Scotland ('LfS Scotland') Steering Group represents members: providing strategic advice and direction to support LfS Scotland's Vision, Mission and Objectives. Their roles and responsibilities are set out in the [LfS Scotland Strategic Plan 2020-25](#).

Our eight elected Steering Group members, elected in January 2020 and continuing in 2022, were:

- Andrew (Andy) Samuel (Abertay University)
- Dee Bird (Edinburgh Napier University Students' Association)
- Duncan Zuill (Levenmouth Academy, Fife)
- Fritha Gilbert (Fife Pupil Support Services)
- Laura Curtis-Moss (2050 Climate Group)
- Rehema White (University of St Andrews)
- Sara Smith (Royal Highland Education Trust)
- Ullrich Kockel (University of the Highlands and Islands)

Rehema White was re-elected Steering Group Chair in March 2020 and continued during 2022. During 2022, the Chair continued to be supported by Vice-Chairs Dee Bird and Laura Curtis-Moss. During the year, Rebecca Petford, who had been co-opted to the Steering Group from EAUC Scotland to provide Tertiary Sector expertise, was replaced by Lucy Patterson (to November 2022) and then Kathrin Mobius (November 2022 onwards).

Andy Samuel tragically passed away in an accident in September 2022. We miss his wisdom and commitment to justice in all contexts, and especially his deep understanding of dynamics between people and land on the West Coast of Scotland. He had strong personal as well as work connections there, and enjoyed nature immersion on sea and land as well as the music inspired by those places.

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government (2006) *Learning for Our Future: Scotland's First Action Plan for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* and (2010), *Learning for Change: Scotland's Second Action Plan for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*.

Task Group representation on the Steering Group during this period was:

- Further and Higher Education: Rehema White (University of St Andrews)
- Community and Sustainable Development Goals: Rehema White
- Heritage: Ullrich Kockel (University of the Highlands and Islands).

Laura Curtis-Moss continued to work as Scotland's RCE Youth Coordinator (from September 2017).

Professor Pete Higgins, University of Edinburgh and Director of LfS Scotland, managed the Secretariat. An Executive Group comprising the Director, Chair, Vice Chairs and the Secretariat met on a number of occasions to facilitate planning and action. Over this period, the Steering Group and Secretariat developed a [Strategic Plan](#) for LfS Scotland for the period from 2020-2025 and a work plan for 2021-2022. The Steering Group also reviewed fundraising activities, supported Task Group activities, led on and contributed to various policy consultations, engaged formally and informally with Scottish Government and contributed to national and global fora as detailed below.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

Learning for Sustainability Scotland has 943 members based in Scotland and a total of 1,064 subscribers (December 2022); comprising a blend of individuals, groups and organisations.

### 4. EMPLOYEES

During this period, Betsy King was employed as Development Manager (0.6 FTE), Jenny Haggarty as Administration and Finance Officer (0.75 FTE) and Kirsten Leask as Project Manager (1 FTE). Project consultants engaged by LfS Scotland were Mary Collacott, Sophie Coats, Catherine Dunn and Katie Grant (Bulletin).

### 5. RESOURCES

The University of Edinburgh has generously hosted LfS Scotland and provided administrative support as an in-kind contribution since its inception. This has included the provision of office accommodation for LfS Scotland staff within the Moray House School of Education and Sport campus, and full servicing for the Centre including payroll, HR, telephone and internet, IT support and the use of University meeting spaces. LfS Scotland operates under the University of Edinburgh's charitable status.

Other than this University of Edinburgh resource and support from grant for specific projects, LfS Scotland is self-funding. It has no recurrent direct grant for core activities from the Scottish Government or any other source, but continues to be free for members to join and receive the benefits of this membership. Every year the organisation secures funding to keep operating, and we were again fortunate this year to be successful in funding bids. Such grants, however, all require services to be delivered and there continues to be no core funding to support staffing. We produced the core provisions of LfS Scotland through University of Edinburgh resources, permitted overhead return and more general support from the Steering Group and other members.

During 2022, LfS Scotland's activities were supported through grant and fee-earning from projects (British Council, Cairngorms National Park Authority (via Heritage Lottery), Education Scotland's STEM CLPL Grant, Erasmus+ (2020-2023), EIS, GTC Scotland, University of Edinburgh and the 'QAA' - Qualifications Assurance

Agency for Higher Education). The LfS Scotland team and members of the Steering Group continue to develop additional proposals for longer-term funding.

## 6. ACTIVITIES

### 6.1 MAILING LIST AND BULLETIN

A [monthly e-bulletin](#) containing information on events, courses, resources, policy and funding news, the latest job vacancies and the work of different organisations in the field of Learning for Sustainability was compiled by Editor Katie Grant and distributed to members. Since March 2022, a quarterly [Policy and Research e-bulletin](#) has also been compiled for members.

### 6.2 WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We continue to update [our website](#) in line with comments and suggestions from members. Our online presence is further complemented by use of several social media platforms. Our [Twitter presence](#) was further enhanced in 2022, with an increase to 7,039 followers (December 2022). In addition, a Learning for Sustainability Scotland [LinkedIn site](#) was created which now has 635 followers (Dec 2022).

### 6.3 PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

The ongoing impact of the Covid19 pandemic resulted in most events and workshops organised by ourselves and others taking place online. During 2022, presentations and workshops were organised by, or delivered on behalf of LfS Scotland at the following conferences, webinars and seminars:

2022	Event	Presentation(s) by LfS Scotland	Event organized by LfS Scotland (many in partnership)
January	Building Leadership for Sustainability in the Teaching Profession – with GTC Scotland at the 2022 International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI)	X	
January	‘Stories for Sustainability’ transformational learning through the personal and political’, LfS Scotland AGM and annual gathering	X	X
January	Introducing Sustainability and Social Responsibility (UoE ‘Taking Action for a Sustainable World’)	X	X
February	Scotland’s Journey into Learning for Sustainability, Outdoor Learning and Play (at International School Grounds conference)	X	
February	‘Preparing the Ground: Getting Started with ESD in Your Institution’. EAUC Scotland TSN in Education for Sustainable Development / Learning for Sustainability Scotland Task Group in FE/HE	X	
February	‘The Imaginative Power of the Region: Learning for the SDGs together’ European RCEs webinar	X	X
February	College Sustainability (at EAUC Scotland Smaller Institutions meeting)	X	

<b>February</b>	How to Learn for a Better Future through youth work - school partnerships (webinar with Youthlink Scotland)	x	x
<b>March</b>	Taking action on Sustainability and Social Responsibility ( UoE Taking Action for a Sustainable World)	X	X
<b>March</b>	'Being and Belonging – Why Outdoors?' Royal Society of Edinburgh Early Years conference . Organising Committee and session chair	X	
<b>March</b>	Learning for Sustainability and GTCS Professional Standards 'What LfS means to me' (with GTC Scotland)	X	X
<b>March</b>	College Learning for Sustainability focus group (with EAUC Scotland and College Development Network)	X	X
<b>March</b>	Scottish Parliament (Scottish Futures Forum and Goodison Group) - Presentation for Education Committee - The School of the Future	X	
<b>March</b>	World Environmental Education Congress - Invited Session Chair and presentation		
<b>March</b>	Climate Crisis and Multi-generational Resilience Panel member (organized with the Alliance for Multigenerational Resilience)	X	
<b>April</b>	Learning for Sustainability in Scotland (UoE Return to Teaching course)	X	
<b>April</b>	'Planting the seeds: Whole-institution approaches to implementing education for sustainable development' EAUC Scotland TSN in Education for Sustainable Development / LfSS Task Group in FE/HE	X	
<b>April</b>	Learning for Sustainability and GTCS Professional Standards LfS and Professional Learning (with GTC Scotland)	X	X
<b>April</b>	Monitoring and evaluating education for sustainable development in Higher Education: Co-design workshop (with Universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh and Highlands and Islands, EAUC Scotland, SOS Scotland and SPARQS)	X	X
<b>May</b>	Co-creating a fair and green future with young people: Learning for Sustainability in action (webinar with Youthlink Scotland)	X	X
<b>May</b>	Taking Action on Sustainability (UoE, Taking Action for a Sustainable World)	X	X
<b>May</b>	Archaeology in Schools: Exploring local heritage. Learning for Sustainability ( Archaeology Scotland webinar)	X	
<b>May</b>	Learning for Sustainability and GTCS Professional Standards LfS and self-evaluation ( with GTC Scotland)	X	X
<b>June</b>	Scottish Parliament (Scottish Futures Forum and Goodison Group) - Education, Children and Young People Committee - Classrooms of the Future	X	
<b>June</b>	External consultancy for Erasmus Project - Sustainability and Environmental Education in outdoor sports. Ireland		

<b>August</b>	Supporting Community and Local Authority Sustainability Collaboration (with Sustainable Scotland Network, Global Ecovillage Network, GEN Deutschland, Ecolise and University of St Andrews)	X	X
<b>August</b>	'Engaging all College Staff with Sustainability' at CDN Virtual College Expo22 (with EAUC-Scotland)	X	
<b>August</b>	Summerhill School Centenary - International Festival of Childhood	X	
<b>August</b>	'Embedding Learning for Sustainability' (presentation to the Rights and Participation Network, convened by Education Scotland)	X	
<b>September</b>	LfS and the GTCS Standards Practitioners Group	X	X
<b>September</b>	Putting LfS at the Heart of Practice - Primary settings (with EIS)	X	X
<b>September</b>	Putting LfS at the Heart of Practice - Secondary settings (with EIS)	X	X
<b>September</b>	Putting LfS at the Heart of Practice – Early Learning and Childcare settings (with EIS)	X	X
<b>September</b>	Scottish Learning Festival, (with GTC Scotland)	X	X
<b>September</b>	Climate Sisters Exhibition Launch (with Climate Sisters, SCORE Scotland)	X	X
<b>September</b>	Learning for Sustainability and GTCS Professional Standards What LfS means to me' ( with GTC Scotland)	X	X
<b>September</b>	Making Connections through Learning for Sustainability (LfS) Supporting critically reflexive engagement with embedding LfS in professional practice (at TEESNet 2022 conference)	X	
<b>October</b>	'LfS and the future of learning in Scotland's land-based and aquaculture sectors' (with Scottish Government)	X	X
<b>October</b>	'Putting Young People at the Centre' roundtable (webinar with Youthlink Scotland)	X	X
<b>October</b>	European RCEs meeting, (Leeuwarden, Netherlands)	X	
<b>October</b>	Learning for Sustainability and GTCS Professional Standards: LfS and Professional Learning: towards a whole school approach' (with GTC Scotland)	X	X
<b>November</b>	Learning for Sustainability and the National Discussion on Education – LfS Scotland memberworkshop	X	X
<b>November</b>	Learning for Sustainability in Initial Teacher Education (GTC Scotland TEIs meetings)	X	X
<b>November</b>	'Climate Champions Day' (presentation to authority-wide teacher network, in collaboration with Dumfries & Galloway Council)	X	

<b>November</b>	Strengthening and Supporting Approaches to ESD in Universities and Colleges' EAUC Scotland TSN in Education for Sustainable Development / LfSS Task Group in FE/HE	X	
<b>November</b>	Learning for Sustainability: Joined-up learning for a better world (presentation at Froebel conference 2022)	X	
<b>November</b>	Developing a Whole School Approach to Education for Sustainable Development (for Erasmus ESD-SuV project teachers)	X	
<b>November</b>	Learning for Sustainability Scotland (for UoE MSc students)	X	
<b>November</b>	Scottish Futures Forum and Goodison Group Parliamentary meeting on contribution to the National Discussion on Scottish Education	X	
<b>November</b>	Joint Nature Conservation Committee - launch of 'Nature Recovery for Our Survival Prosperity and Wellbeing ' - advice for UK Government and Devolved Administrations at The Royal Society	X	
<b>December</b>	Connecting for Transformational Change through Learning – members' event, Leith	X	X
<b>December</b>	EAUC Scotland Winter Forum: ESD Policy presentation	X	
<b>December</b>	European RCEs 2021-22 (at 16 <sup>th</sup> Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs, Tokyo)	X	

## 6.4 WORKSHOPS, WEBINARS and EVENTS

The following offers more detail on some of the workshops, webinars and events organized during the year to give a flavour of the range of activities undertaken.

### 6.4.1 AGM January 2022

At the start of Scotland's 'Year of Stories', our Annual General Meeting gathered more than 100 members online to explore the theme *"Stories for Sustainability' transformational learning through the personal and political"*; providing a chance to re-connect with each other and the natural world and to share our experiences. Keynote storyteller, Dougie Mackay, focused on Stories Sustaining Culture; exploring how stories can help create a symbiotic relationship between past, present and future.

Some of our members also shared inspiring stories; including '1.5 MAX' – Tom Bird, Boroughmuir High School and Sustainability Partnerships; 'Local Women of the World'– Zarina Ahmad, climate and equalities communicator, and 'College Learning for Sustainability' – Katie Paget, Dundee and Angus College. 'Planet' and 'People' video 'story interludes' were put together by Ella Higgins. Small group discussions explored how to tell our stories in new ways in response to the ever-changing and challenging times we find ourselves in, and how to create stories with impact.

### 6.4.2 Youth work and Learning for Sustainability

YouthLink Scotland and LfS Scotland continued their jointly-hosted series of webinars; exploring the role of Learning for Sustainability in youth work settings.



COP26, held in Glasgow in November 2021, demonstrated that young people are vocal and active, demanding urgent and decisive change and holding leaders accountable, in particular to address the climate crisis. In May 2022, teachers, community and youth work practitioners from across Scotland joined our LfS Scotland/YouthLink Scotland webinar, ***Co-creating a fair and green future with young people: Learning for Sustainability in action***, aiming to explore how to support young people to become active change agents for the future they want. Lucia Ramon Mateo, Policy Manager in the Learning Directorate, Scottish Government, introduced the collaborative approach currently underway to strengthen Scotland's Learning for Sustainability Action Plan, with a focus on hearing from children, young people and educators. Inspirational approaches to working with young people in the co-creation of projects and programmes were shared by Sophia Georgescu from Children's Parliament, Euan Platt and Emma Bryden from Young Scot and Kirstin Thomson from North Lanarkshire Council. These were an important starting point for considering what effective co-creation looks like and discussing how to give young people more opportunities to engage in the co-creation of projects and programmes.

In October LfS Scotland and YouthLink Scotland co-hosted a roundtable discussion, ***'Learning for Sustainability and Putting Young People at the Centre'***; providing the opportunity for practitioners in the youth work sector to hear about and contribute to the current education and Learning for Sustainability policy agendas. Contributors included Professor Carol Campbell and Professor Alma Harris, co-facilitators of the Scottish Government/COSLA National Discussion on Education in Scotland and Lucia Ramon-Mateo: Policy Manager from the Curriculum Division at Scottish Government, who is leading on the refresh of the national Learning for Sustainability Action Plan. Mollie McGoran, MYSP and Vice-Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament and Sophia Georgescu from Children's Parliament shared more on the work being done to gather the views of young people with regard to the LfS Action Plan Refresh.

#### **6.4.3 Putting Learning for Sustainability at the Heart of Practice in education**

Three well-attended short, sector-targeted practice-sharing webinars were organised for groups of teachers and school leaders in September 2022, in partnership with The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS). These 60-minute online webinars aimed to support teachers and school leaders in early learning and childcare, primary and secondary settings in their understanding of Learning for Sustainability and to celebrate and share good practice examples of LfS in action. Educators from Dunblane Primary (Stirling), Lochardil Primary (Highland), Kilmaron School (Fife), Falkirk Council, Turnbull High (East Dunbarton), Fife Pupil Support Service, Auchterarder Community High (Perth and Kinross), Inverness High (Highland), Boroughmuir High (Edinburgh City), Dumfries & Galloway Council, Cowgate Under 5s (Edinburgh City), Colmonell and Ballantrae Primary and Stirling Council shared inspiring examples of practice.

#### **6.4.4 Learning for Sustainability and the National Discussion on Education**

2022 was a time of change in Scottish education, with welcome opportunities to examine, discuss and reflect on system-wide reform. The National Discussion on education in Scotland, co-launched on 20 September 2022 by the Scottish Government and CoSLA, invited 'everyone who has an interest in the future of our education system: children and young people, parents and carers,



practitioners, and those in the wider Scottish community to pause, to reflect and to contribute to a future vision for Scottish education’.

Learning for Sustainability Scotland’s online workshop attracted more than 100 members.

Participants heard from the Discussion’s national facilitators, Professors Alma Harris and Carol Campbell and considered the questions outlined in the Discussion’s Survey. Learning for Sustainability has a key role to play in these opportunities to co-design and co-create a thriving future for Scotland’s learners and the knowledge and expertise of members helped inform the [LfS Scotland response to the discussion](#); submitted in early December 2022.

#### **6.4.5 Planting the seeds: Whole-institution approaches to implementing education for sustainable development (LfSS/EAUC ESD Topic Support Network)**

In this workshop, working in partnership with EAUC, we brought together staff from universities and colleges to consider [how to engage all teaching staff and students with learning for sustainability](#); emphasise the necessity of creating an enabling environment and share examples of resources and training to support staff in implementing ESD. Case studies shared included SOS-UK’s 2022 ‘SDG Teach In’ campaign at West Lothian College; alternative pedagogies and assessment methods used in the University of Edinburgh’s online Sustainability and Social Responsibility Modules; EAUC Scotland’s subject specific ESD work; Climate Fresk at University of Strathclyde, the Global Ecovillage Network regeneration map used at University of St Andrews and mainstreaming ESD at De Montfort University, Nottingham.

### **6.5 YOUTH CO-ORDINATORS**

**6.5.1** In 2017, the Global RCE Network asked all RCEs to nominate a Youth Co-ordinator to help engage "youth" with the RCE network. In this context, “youth” is defined as being anyone under the ages of 35 or working with those under 35. The aim is to increase Learning for Sustainability Scotland’s engagement with students and young professionals with an interest in teaching and learning about sustainability, through development of a Youth Network. Laura Curtis-Moss is currently the Co-ordinator for Scotland’s RCE.

**6.5.2** In 2022, further links were made with RCEs in Europe to plan co-ordinated and networked responses to inspire youth to engage with learning for sustainability. Laura Curtis-Moss convened a discussion at the European RCEs meeting in Leeuwarden, Netherlands to consider how to extend and deepen youth engagement in RCE activities. Partnership working with YouthLink Scotland continued and an ongoing programme of webinars exploring how members can support youth action were developed.

**6.5.3** Regular contact was maintained with Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS)-UK and EAUC Scotland to ensure co-ordinated support for students’ sustainability action in Scotland. This included a formal partnership with University of St Andrews and others on a QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project on ESD.

## 6.6 COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

### 6.6.1 Learning for a Sustainable Future Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

LfS Scotland, in partnership with The University of Edinburgh and funded by the University and The British Council, developed and facilitated three 'massive open access online' courses hosted on FutureLearn. The five-week [Learning for a Sustainable Future](#) course, led by Dr Beth Christie, focused on personal reflection, local and global contexts, online community building, and action within individual 'spheres of influence'. This was offered in March 2022 and a revised version ran in October 2022; which, together have attracted over 5,000 participants. The October course will be offered again in 2023.

In the run-up to COP27 in October 2022, LfS Scotland worked with Zarina Ahmad, the Climate Sisters and SCORE Scotland to host the [Climate Sisters exhibition](#) at the University of Edinburgh. Visitors had an opportunity to interact with creative pieces produced by the Climate Sisters; including poetry, music, podcasts, sculptures, paintings, jewellery, filmmaking, fashion and photography. The pieces are creative responses to aspects of climate justice and other sustainability issues they care about. Following a launch event, young people from SCORE Scotland and the Climate Sisters held a MOCK COP27 with video footage and interviews incorporated in the November COP27 MOOC.

[Learning for a Sustainable Future: Live at COP27](#) offered participants an opportunity to examine what the Climate Change Conference at Sharm El-Sheikh was, why it was important, and consider how to support the co-ordinated aims and ambitions of the Conference through action. 'Live' insights into COP27 were shared with more than 2,700 global participants over the two weeks of the conference, and the material is still available as a legacy resource.

### 6.6.2 GTC Scotland Learning for Sustainability Hub

During 2022, LfS Scotland worked with GTCS Scotland to develop an ongoing national [Learning for Sustainability Hub](#), based on the GTC Scotland website, to catalyse the engagement of teachers in early years, primary, secondary, ASN and college settings with LfS in the GTCS Professional Standards at every stage of their careers.

The Hub aims to be an open, interactive, user-friendly 'one stop shop' that inspires teachers to 'Explore, Engage, Enact and Embed and Connect' with LfS as a key aspect of what it means to be a teacher in Scotland. During the year, three self-guided professional learning modules were constructed and launched: Module 1. '*Introduction to Learning for Sustainability*'; Module 2. '*Taking a deeper dive into LfS*'; Module 3. '*Leading Learning for Sustainability – a whole school approach*'. In addition, successful 'live' monthly 'Connect' sessions have been organised with inputs from inspirational professionals; complemented by an interactive map-based platform for practitioners to share their practice and interact with one another on an ongoing basis. Developments are supported by a cross-sectoral practitioner focus group.

### 6.6.3 College 'Introducing Action for Sustainability' course

In partnership with the College Development Network (CDN) and EAUC Scotland, LfS Scotland developed an [introductory, short, self-guided online course](#) to support all college staff in their understanding of sustainability, encourage and celebrate personal staff action in relation to

sustainability and encourage further engagement with sustainability processes and projects at their college. The course, hosted on CDN's 'Learn Online' platform, is freely available to all and is intended to be straightforward, enjoyable and memorable as well as useful for everyday life at home and work.

#### **6.6.4 Erasmus+ KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices**

##### **ESD SuperVision 4.0 (September 2020-2023)**

In 2020, LfS Scotland/University of Edinburgh was part of a successful Erasmus+ partnership proposal, led by the University of Vechta, Germany and working with RCE Oldenburger Munsterland (Germany); three secondary schools (Germany, Romania, Latvia); Casa Carpului Didactic Damborita (ITE institution Romania); Daugavpils University (Latvia); Italian Association of Sustainability Science (Italy); Vytauto Didziojo University (Lithuania); and Karlova University (Czech Republic). The project's focus is implementation of Education for Sustainable Development into school curricula through: 1) Capacity building for teachers and educators; 2) School development as a whole-institution approach and; 3) Policy making in relation to ESD in secondary schools.

#### **6.6.5 Erasmus + KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices**

##### **Sustainability Framework for School Self-Assessment "Jump into Sustainable**

##### **Lifestyle" (September 2020-2022)**

Since 2020, LfS Scotland/University of Edinburgh has participated in an Erasmus+ partnership project, led by the Lithuanian Children and Youth Centre and working with the University of Vechta, Germany; EESTI People to People (Estonia) and Vytauto Didziojo University (Lithuania). The project, completed in October 2022, has developed an online holistic sustainability framework for school self-evaluation - "*Jump into Sustainable Lifestyle*" - which aims to empower teachers and pupils to be change agents in today's complex world.

#### **6.6.6 QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project 2022-23**

In 2022, LfS Scotland began working in partnership with the Universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh and Highlands and Islands, SOS-UK, SPARQS and EAUC Scotland on a collaborative project aiming to: assess current approaches to and tools for monitoring and evaluation of ESD in UK universities; develop and pilot generic tools for M&E of ESD in universities; and share lessons learned. The project, funded by the Quality Assurance Association for Higher Education (QAA), will be completed in mid-2023.

#### **6.6.7 STEM and LfS professional learning**

In partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Council and North Ayrshire Council, LfS Scotland has developed '*Bringing the STEM Curriculum to Life: Learning for a Sustainable World*'; a four-module course funded by Education Scotland and Scottish Government to support the STEM Education and Training Strategy. The course, which runs from October 2022-February 2023, aims to support teachers and early years practitioners to weave together STEM, Learning for Sustainability and Developing the Young Workforce across their practice and the wider life of their learning communities.

## 6.7 POLICY ENGAGEMENT

LfS Scotland's Secretariat maintained formal and informal dialogue with a wide range of individuals from Scottish Government (members and officials) and its agencies during the year.

During 2022, LfS Scotland responded to consultations through its Task Groups and Steering Group members. Responses were submitted on behalf of members to:

- [Good Food Nation](#) (January 2022)
- [National Improvement Framework](#) (July 2022)
- [Draft Standard for Provisional Registration](#) (Lecturers in Scotland's colleges) (November 2022)
- [National Discussion on Education](#) (December 2022)

In October, LfS Scotland collaborated with the Scottish Government to provide an online workshop opportunity for members to share their views and experiences with the Scottish Government's [Commission for the Land-Based Learning Review](#) and to contribute to shaping the future of learning in Scotland's land-based and aquaculture sectors. Considered themes were: Education and Training; Skills Gaps and Shortages and Awareness and Perception of the Land-based Sector.

During 2022, LfS Scotland participated in Scottish Government workshops to review and refresh the [Learning for Sustainability Action Plan](#) for the Government's Implementation Group Vision 2030+ Report, as a member of the Learning for Sustainability Policy and Stakeholders network. In November, LfS Scotland was invited to join the Scottish Government's LfS Leadership Group to develop the refreshed LfS Action Plan to be launched in March 2023, and to monitor and evaluate its implementation.

In early 2022, LfS Scotland was invited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland to join a Working Party to revisit the current [Teacher Code of Professionalism and Conduct \(COPAC\)](#). This initiative will span from January 2022- September 2023. This will include engagement with a series of provocations offered by a wide range of speakers whose thinking and practices critically explore a range of issues related to ethics and professionalism; round-table discussion opportunities; and additional opportunities to consult with another group of colleagues, who have particular expertise in ethics in the teaching profession.

LfS Scotland continued to participate in [Scotland's Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) Network](#) development with LfS Scotland's Chair Rehema White as a SDG Network Steering Group member until June 2022. This coalition on sustainable development is open to all.

## 6.8 INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

LfS Scotland is Scotland's United Nations University-recognized Regional Centre of Expertise in ESD and one of the global network of 170 RCEs (December 2022). Betsy King was re-appointed as the RCE Regional Advisor for Europe to advise RCEs in the region and to review new RCE applications.

During 2022, there was regular contact with the Global RCE Network and European RCEs. We carried out the following international knowledge exchange activities:

#### **6.8.1 UK and Ireland RCEs**

During 2022, contact with RCEs in England, Wales and Ireland was maintained by email and online meetings.

#### **6.8.2 European RCEs.**

LfS Scotland provided support for the two-day European RCEs meeting held online in early 2022. The meeting was hosted by RCE Fryslan under the theme [\*'The Imaginative Power of the Region: Learning for the SDGs Together'\*](#). Bringing together participants from across Europe, the event focused on how education can support the transition to a sustainable society; and how regional ecologies, communities, resources, and cultures shape the context for sustainable development, and education for sustainable development.

After this successful inspirational online session in February 2022, an in-person meeting in Leeuwarden, Netherlands, in October provided the opportunity to come together to strengthen the bonds between the European RCEs, and discuss how to continue our cooperation more effectively. Action plans for 2023 were developed under the theme [\*'Greater than the Sum of the Parts; Strengthening the European RCE Network for ESD'\*](#). Improving communication between European RCEs continues to be a key issue and regular online newsletters were produced and circulated during the year

#### **6.8.3 17th Meeting - Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs**

As RCE Regional Advisor for Europe, Betsy King attended the meeting of the Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs held at the UN University, Japan. In addition to the evaluation of applications from candidate RCEs, agenda items included reviewing the progress, strategy, operational issues and challenges faced by RCEs; as well as intensively discussing strategic and operational matters to develop RCEs further in alignment with the Roadmap for the RCE Community 2021-2030.

#### **6.8.5 International Climate Conference COP27 November 2022**

The Learning for a Sustainable Future: Live at COP26 MOOC (see 6.6.1) provided an opportunity to highlight Scotland's and the global network of RCE's focus on Learning for Sustainability, with contributions from LfS Scotland members Zarina Ahmad, the Climate Sisters, Jennifer Ba, SCORE Scotland, Tom Bird 1.5 MAX, and the Climate Beacons initiatives as well as University of Edinburgh delegates. It was a major first to have the inclusion of a Children and Youth Pavilion at COP27, but there appeared less evidence of high level country commitment to climate and sustainability education. Unlike at COP 27 it seems that there may be a day that is dedicated to education at COP28.

### **6.9 PARTNERSHIPS**

In line with the partnership focus of the SDGs and our status as a network organisation with many active members, we continue to seek to strengthen our partnership working. We organised and ran events in partnership, and have developed stronger links with other organisations nationally and internationally.

Examples include working with:

- Tertiary education sector leading organisations such as the GTC Scotland, EAUC Scotland and the College Development Network;
- NGOs supporting education or other aspects of sustainability, such as the National Network of Outdoor Learning, International Development Education Association for Scotland, YouthLink Scotland;
- Schools and teacher education organisations such as Education Scotland, the Regional Improvement Collaboratives, General Teaching Council for Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework, Educational Institute for Scotland and several local authorities;
- UK level groups and organisations such as The British Council, TEESNet, SOS-UK and the Our Shared World coalition;
- International partners such as UNESCO ESD-Net and our Erasmus+ partners (see 6.6.4 and 6.6.5);
- University of Edinburgh’s international programmes;
- Community groups and organisations such as Global Ecovillage Network, Ecolise, and Transition Scotland
- National and local government departments and organisations such as Sustainable Scotland Network

## 6.10 TASK GROUPS

The purpose of LfS Scotland’s Task Groups is to enable members to work individually or together to carry out specific pieces of work or projects that relate to the Vision, Mission and Objectives of LfS Scotland. Covid19 continued to limit many Task Group activities during this period and a new, wider, approach to involving members is under consideration.

### 6.10.1 Further and Higher Education (Convenors: Christine Calder, Scott Strachan, Rehema White)

This is an ongoing networking group co-badged as one of EAUC’s Topic Support Networks to explore and share best practice in learning for sustainability within further and higher education settings, curricula and research practices and develop resources to support teaching and research staff to embed sustainability in their practice. Further and Higher Education groups plan both separate and joint meetings; attended by representatives from universities and colleges around Scotland, depending on the focus of the meeting. Three online events were held in 2022.

### 6.10.2 Curating Heritage for Sustainable Communities (Convenor: Ullrich Kockel)

The primary objective of the group is to develop a framework for sustainable heritage-based activity; especially in vulnerable ecological settings. It takes as its starting point an appraisal of the maritime heritage of the Northern Isles as a cultural resource for sustainable community development and care for that resource. The group is exploring the potential for community engagement with heritage, through creative responses to selected items. Members include Shetland Museums & Archives, Orkney Museum, Heriot-Watt University and various community groups.

The project has been very successful to date and has opened up new perspectives on sustainable development of community co-curated heritage. This has involved a “[New Connections across the Northern Isles](#)” exhibition in Orkney and Shetland and a Virtual Museum. Further proposals have been delayed because of Covid19.



### 6.10.3 Community and SDGs

Efforts in this area have focused primarily on contributions to the formal establishment of Scotland's SDG Network. This Network has an elected Steering Group including LfS Scotland Chair Rehema White. Changes in personnel delayed progress in 2022. To support the Community element, a workshop was held to explore how to strengthen collaboration between community groups and local authorities.

## 6.11 CONSULTANCY ACTIVITIES

Members of the LfS Scotland Secretariat and associates carried out the following consultancy activities, in order to support the wider core work of LfS Scotland.

**6.11.1** LfS Scotland (Kirsten Leask, Mary Collacott, Betsy King) was engaged by University of Edinburgh to deliver an 8-week long (April/June 2022) [Sustainability and Social Responsibility International Foundation Programme](#) for 24 international students. This programme will be delivered again in 2023.

**6.11.2** LfS Scotland (Mary Collacott, Betsy King, Pete Higgins) was engaged by University of Edinburgh [Sustainability and Social Responsibility Department](#) to deliver a 12-week online sustainability and social responsibility courses for staff January – May 2022. The course is under review for 2023.

**6.11.3** LfS Scotland (Kirsten Leask, Betsy King) have been engaged (August 2022- March 2023) by Highland One World to work with them on aspects of the co-design of a Climate Learning Framework specific to Cairngorms National Park. The overall [Cairngorms 2030: Heritage Horizons](#) project includes 24 projects that aim to bring about transformational change in the Cairngorms, benefitting people's health and wellbeing, taking action on climate change and enhancing nature across the National Park.

## 6.12 REPRESENTATION ON NATIONAL and INTERNATIONAL GROUPS

Secretariat or Steering Group members represented LfS Scotland on the following groups:

- a. **Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs** as Regional Adviser to the RCE Community (Europe) (from January 2020)
- b. **Scottish Government Learning for Sustainability Policy and Stakeholder Network** (member from June 2019- ongoing)
- c. **Scotland SDG Network** (Steering Group members from December 2020 to June 2022)
- d. **Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP) Education Sub Group** (member September 2022 and ongoing)
- e. **SCQF Credit Rating Project Steering Group** (member April 2022 onwards)
- f. **Teacher Education for Equity and Environmental Sustainability Network (TEESNet)** Steering Group member and Scotland representative
- g. **GTC Scotland COPAC Working Group** (from April 2022 – ongoing)
- h. **Education Scotland LfS Partner Forum** (member from June 2021)
- i. **Education Scotland Rights and Participation Network** (member from 2022)
- j. **RSPB Nature of Scotland Award** judge (Autumn 2022)
- k. **UK Our Shared World Coalition** member (from Autumn 2019, ongoing)
- l. **College Development Network Awards** Judge ( August 2022)
- m. **National Network of Outdoor Learning** (November 2019 and ongoing)

- n. **Blue-Action Societal engagement group** (member 2019 and ongoing)
- o. **College Development Network Climate Emergency Expert Group** (October 2019 and ongoing)
- p. **China Nature Education Network** expert adviser (2019- ongoing)
- q. **Scottish Government** - Scottish Biodiversity Programme Stakeholder Engagement Group (member September 2020 and ongoing)
- r. **St Andrews Prize for the Environment Steering Committee** (ongoing)
- s. **Royal Society of Edinburgh Education Committee** - Conference on Early Years Conference Planning
- t. **Field Studies Council** - Board Member and Chair (July 2020 - ongoing)
- u. **NatureScot** (Scottish Government nature agency) - Board Member, Chair of Scientific Advisory Committee (June 2021 - ongoing)
- v. **Joint Nature Conservation Committee** (UK) - Member (November 2022 - ongoing)
- w. **Island Schools Regional Stakeholder Group** – Panel Member (December 2022 – ongoing)
- x. **Local authority Learning for Sustainability network/advisory groups (Dumfries & Galloway, Fife, West Lothian)** – members (2019/2022/2020 – ongoing)

## 6.13 AWARDS

**6.13.1** LfS Scotland and partners received award success in the [2022 Regional Centres of Expertise in Education \(RCE\) Awards for Innovative Projects on Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\)](#).

The ‘Agents of Change Toolkit’ developed with partners University of Edinburgh, Dundee and Glasgow School of Art and Edinburgh City Council received an ‘Outstanding Flagship Project’ award. Our ‘Connecting Youth Work and Learning for Sustainability’ initiative in partnership with YouthLink Scotland received an ‘Acknowledged Flagship Project’ award. These awards are presented annually to RCEs that have made outstanding contributions to address local sustainable development challenges in their regions.

**6.14.3** In 2022, LfS Scotland Chair Rehema White (Fellow) and Development Manager Betsy King (Honorary Fellow 2022-24) received [EAUC Fellowship Awards](#). These Awards *‘aim to acknowledge and reward exceptional member contribution to the EAUC community while strengthening and deepening the community to become a more powerful movement of engagement, capacity and change’*.

**6.14.4** In 2022, Chair Rehema White received the Golden Dandelion Prize from the University of St Andrews for the module with the best sustainability in the curriculum at the institution.

## 7. NEXT STEPS

The Strategic Plan for LfS Scotland in 2020-2025 has been developed in the context of the [UNESCO Plan for ESD to 2030](#) and Global [Roadmap for the RCE Community 2021-30](#).

Priority activities are:

<b>1. We weave connections across sectors within Scotland and with our international partners</b>
1.1 Increase engagement in LfS in Scotland across all sectors
1.2 Share knowledge, achievements and opportunities for members
1.3 Organise and co-host events for members, within and across sectors
1.4 Coordinate task groups to address issues of concern and interest for our members
1.5 Share our learning with others across the UN RCE Network
<b>2. We co-produce, pioneer and practise new knowledge and approaches and curate materials and resources with and for educators, organisations and communities</b>
2.1 Play a leading role in debating, enabling and monitoring the UN SDGs in Scotland and beyond (especially but not exclusively SDG 4.7)
2.2 Contribute to the conceptualisation as well as the practice in this field
2.3 Develop and facilitate professional development for educators
<b>3. We advocate and provide strategic advice for effective learning for sustainability policy</b>
3.1 Lead on and contribute to policy debates in Scotland, UK and internationally
3.2 Provide advice to practitioners, policy and decision makers
3.3 Lead and contribute to expert groups to address LfS issues
3.4 Work with local authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives for progress across Scotland in sustainability capacities
<b>4. We lead, monitor and evaluate projects and programmes locally and internationally, often in partnership</b>
4.1 Pursue the implementation of LfS in the school sector, including teacher education at all stages
4.2 Support learning in communities and the Third Sector
4.3 Engage with the Further Education and Higher Education sectors to integrate and embed LfS
4.4 Undertake consultancy projects to progress LfS

## 8. MEMBERS' VOICES

We seek to inspire and inform members, to connect members and to work in partnership with members. We are driven by external policy and highlighted imperatives for LfS but we wish to respond to members' needs. We are always willing to hear new ideas or requests for Task Groups, communication or events. Please get in touch if you have any suggestions or if you wish to partner in a new venture.

In September 2022, we launched a Members' Survey to 'ensure that we are providing you with news about what matters to you and opportunities that you want to engage with'. Survey questions were designed to gauge opinion on the kinds of information that our members wish to hear about, the media we use to share this with you, the events and opportunities that we facilitate and share, and what we can do to make your membership more valuable to you. Key findings included:

- Members are keen to hear information relating to their own sector, but also relating to other sectors.
- Most of you get information from us via our monthly e-Bulletin or our website. Twitter was the most popular social media platform.
- You like attending our online events; with professional learning, sharing/networking opportunities and insights from popular speakers proving to be the most popular.
- You like our collaborative, open approach; with the monthly call-out for member contributions to the Bulletin being welcomed. You also like finding out what is happening across the many sectors involved in LfS; from events and networking to research and funding. One member commented that we 'provide the only holistic view of LfS for the whole education spectrum...which supports my learning within my own field and gives me an appreciation of the wider context'.
- Suggestions for enhancing your membership included:
  - The creation of additional 'bite-sized' communications on particular themes; such as podcasts.
  - An online platform for sharing ideas/resources and good practice on an ongoing basis.
  - Future events on themes such as climate change/climate justice, sustainable communities, rights-based learning, LfS in educational settings, the UN SDGs and biodiversity/nature-based solutions, and training/knowledge-sharing on lobbying/advocacy.
  - Online-only or 'blended' (i.e. a mixture of online and in-person) events. Evenings from 16:00 – 18:00 were the most popular time for events, with Wednesdays proving to be the most popular day.

We will use this feedback and seek input from our new Steering Group to shape our Member engagement strategy. Updates will be shared on an ongoing basis via the most popular platforms identified by members, and, as always, we welcome any additional ideas or suggestions you may have.

## 9. FINAL WORD

There continue to be many sustainability challenges facing our world. These manifest across Scotland and in our local places and affect all of us in different ways. Education continues to be essential to increase awareness, provide knowledge and strengthen the competencies we need to tackle these complex and uncertain problems. LfS Scotland has demonstrated this year that by working in partnership, across sectors and at global, national and local scales, we can create and share ways of learning to support us in creating sustainable futures. Whilst the depth of particular projects is facilitated by the commitment of the core team,

the breadth and diversity of the initiatives described in this report are due to you, our many and valued members. We look forward to working with you all to further enable transformative learning towards a sustainability transition. Wishing you all the best in your personal, professional and policy endeavours in 2023!

**Learning for Sustainability Scotland, December 2022**

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