



**The Assistant Director-General
for External Relations and Public Information**

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**To Non-Governmental Organizations,
Official partners of UNESCO**

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7 May 2013

Dear Partners,

The 191st session of the Executive Board ended a few days ago and was rich in discussions of direct interest to NGOs and our partnership. There was a general appreciation for the progress made in reinvigorating cooperation with NGOs, widening the scope of this partnership, and rendering such partnership more focused and action-oriented.

For the first time ever, Mr Patrick Gallaud, Chairperson of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee, addressed the Executive Board, at a plenary meeting, on behalf of the community of NGOs, official partners of UNESCO. He presented the conclusions of the International Conference of NGOs that was held in December 2012 as well as the new strategic orientations for the collective action of NGOs.

The Committee on Non-Governmental Partners (NGP), which met on 11 April, held a thematic debate on UNESCO's cooperation with NGOs in the field of water. The discussion highlighted how this cooperation is key in areas such as water education and water management, in reducing water hazards (droughts and floods), in promoting scientific research and dissemination of information, in setting policies at all level and in generating political will in all fields of water.

I am also pleased to inform you that the Executive Board decided to admit two NGOs as official partners with associate status: the Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (OCPA) (Mozambique) and B'nai B'rith International (USA). The Board also took note of the admission of seven new NGOs and two Foundations, which joined our network recently:

- Femmes Africa Solidarité
- Forest Peoples Programme
- Global Campaign for Education
- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs
- Ki-Zerbo Foundation
- Rencontres du Vietnam
- Surfrider Foundation Europe

- Fundación Celeste
- Indian Heritage Cities Network Foundation.

Open Access Policy concerning UNESCO publications

On 26 April 2013, the Executive Board of UNESCO adopted a new Open Access Policy for UNESCO's publications, making UNESCO the first UN agency to adopt such a Policy for its publications.

The intention is that all content (e.g. print, audio, video and multimedia) shall be made available for free online access, allowing any user in the world to freely read, download, save, copy, print, reuse, adapt and translate the full text of UNESCO's publications. By progressively releasing all publications with an open license, we shall provide governments, educational and research institutions, teachers and learners with a powerful opportunity to improve the quality of education as well as facilitate policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and capacity building, in particular in developing countries.

You will find useful information concerning this policy at this address:
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ERI/pdf/oa_policy_en.pdf

Contact: Mr Ian Denison (i.denison@unesco.org) or Ms Caroline Bordoni (c.bordoni@unesco.org)

3-7 June 2013 - 6th International Conference on Water Resources and Environment Research, Koblenz, Germany

The Conference is an independent platform providing scientists with a possibility to present and discuss their work in the fields of hydrology, environmental research, aquatic ecosystem research as well as water resources research and management.

On 6 June, the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme is organizing a session, during this Conference, dedicated to Water Security Challenges through Scientific Cooperation. This session is a contribution to the activities taking place during the International Year of Water Cooperation 2013. The session will emphasize the importance of scientific cooperation and develop a set of recommendations with a view to link scientific research and policy actions.

If you intend to participate in this Conference, please follow this [link](#).

Contact: Mr Anil Mishra (a.mishra@unesco.org)

10 June 2013 – Conference on the theme ‘From the Double Helix through the Human Genome to the Human Variome’, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

UNESCO is organizing this event in collaboration with the Human Variome Project Consortium to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the discovery of the double helix of DNA as well as the tenth anniversary of the completion of the Human Genome Project and the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the UNESCO International Declaration on Human Genetic Data and Human Rights.

UNESCO has joined forces with the Human Variome Project, the successor to the Human Genome Project. It aims to identify and collect information on human genetic variation and mutations as a basis to advance scientific understanding of the role of genetics in human disease.

To accompany the conference, an exhibition will be organized covering the history of genetics and the main topics covered in the conference with a series of images, explanatory texts and timeline representing the main milestones in the history of genetics.

For more information, please visit the following website:
<http://www.humanvariomeproject.org/>

Contact: Mr Casimiro Vizzini (c.vizzini@unesco.org)

19-21 June 2013 - 20th session of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC), Seoul, Republic of Korea

The 20th session of this Committee will be held at the kind invitation of the Government of the Republic of Korea.

During this session, IBC will continue its work on the principle of non-discrimination and non-stigmatization as set forth in Article 11 of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (2005). This principle will be used to transversally analyze new risks and responsibilities arising from progress in different areas of medicine, life sciences and associated technology. The session will also be an occasion for IBC to reflect on its work programme for 2014-2015, on bioethical concerns within the Asia and Pacific region, and on the role of bioethics in the post-2015 development agenda.

IBC was created in 1993. It is a body of 36 independent experts that follows progress in the life science and its applications in order to ensure respect for human dignity and freedom. This is the only international forum of its kind in the field of bioethics.

The session is open to the public and NGOs are invited to participate. More information will be available soon at the following address:
<http://www.unesco.org/shs/bioethics>

Contact: Mr Tee Wee Ang (email: ibc@unesco.org)

26-28 June 2013 - Global Forum for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy (GFPMIL) and International Conference on MIL and Intercultural Dialogue, Abuja, Nigeria

The Global Forum for Partnerships on Media and Information Literacy (GFPMIL) will articulate concrete partnerships to drive Media and Information Literacy (MIL) development globally; enabling the MIL community to speak as one voice on certain critical matters; and further deepening the strategy for MIL to be treated as a composite concept by providing a common platform for MIL related networks and associations globally.

With Africa as a global priority for UNESCO, GFPMIL will incorporate the International Conference on MIL and Intercultural Dialogue as the first global partnership project with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa.

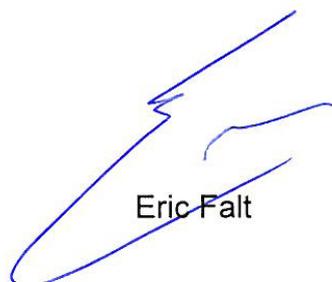
If you intend to participate in this global forum, please click on this [link](#) to access the online registration page as well as more information on the event.

Contact: Mr Alton Grizzle (a.grizzle@unesco.org)

UNESCO Publications

- The publication *Pressing for Freedom - 20 Years of World Press Freedom Day* is available in English at the following address:
http://publishing.unesco.org/details.aspx?Code_Livre=4979.
The French version will be available soon.
- The book *Journeys to School* reminds us of our responsibility to ensure that all children, everywhere, including the hardest to reach, can go to school. This book is available at the following address:
http://publishing.unesco.org/details.aspx?&Code_Livre=4973&change=E.
- *Tracking Key Trends in Biodiversity Science and Policy* is a multilingual publication which presents new knowledge and ideas in terms of biodiversity. It is available at:
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002205/220530E.pdf>

Yours sincerely,



Eric Falt